

# Headway on Capitol Hill Against Invasive Species

Constituents from more than 25 states gathered in Washington, DC in March to advance efforts toward protecting native ecosystems through awareness, education and control of invasive plant species. At NIWAW VI, more than 150 participants, including representatives of government agencies, non-profits, private industry and landowners, spent the week lobbying state legislators and attending briefings with federal agencies including the United States Department of Agriculture, Department of the Interior and the Army Corps of Engineers.

A series of presentations on regional success stories spotlighted exemplary use of resources, collaboration and community outreach to help reduce the impact of invasive weeds. These presentations were sponsored by FICMNEW, the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds.

An awards reception took place at the United States Botanic Garden, sponsored by FICMNEW, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Botanic Garden. Six organizations and people were honored at this year's event:

Gary Johnston, National Park Service (NPS) received a FICMNEW award in recognition of his outstanding work in the area of invasive plant management. Johnston has served the NPS for 25 years. As a FICMNEW co-chair for four years, responsible for operations, he played a principal role in the development of the *Pulling Together Initiative* and the conceptualization of the Early Detection and Rapid Response System for managing invasive plants in the U.S.

Gina Ramos, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) also received a FICMNEW award. Ramos has advised the BLM Washington D.C. office as a weed management specialist for more than four years. Also serving as a FICMNEW co-chair, she has helped implement numerous FICMNEW programs, including work-planning retreats, Weeds Across Borders conferences and the Early Detection and Rapid Response System.

Both Johnston and Ramos are active leaders in the Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition (IWAC) and serve on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's *Pulling Together Initiative* steering committee.

Rob Hedberg, Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), received the Invasive Weeds Awareness Coalition (IWAC) award for his superior work in generating awareness and education related to invasive plant management. As Director of Science Policy at WSSA, Rob's leadership has promoted collaboration and ongoing research among scientific and weed management communities nationwide. Chairing IWAC, Rob was the driving force behind the coordination and subsequent success of NIWAW VI. He also co-organized one of the most successful invasive species conferences in 2004, *Invasive Plants in Natural and Managed Systems-Linking Science and Management*, which attracted more than 800 participants.

Dale Bosworth, USDA, Forest Service, received the joint FICMNEW-IWAC award in recognition of his leadership supporting invasive plant management in the U.S. Bosworth is the 15th chief of the Forest Service and has worked there nearly his entire life. Under his leadership, the Forest Service has elevated the invasive species issue to one of the top four being addressed by that agency. Bosworth spearheaded the completion of the *National Strategy and Implementation Plan for Invasive Species Management*, which raised the national standard for invasive species management.

The City of Baltimore received the Community Spirit Award by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and FICMNEW for its exceptional work in vegetation management. The city has made remarkable efforts to foster cooperation and partnerships in the area of invasive plant management through its *Pulling Together Initiative* Grant Program.

Bonnie Harper-Lore, U.S. Department of Transportation, received the North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) award in recognition of her work implementing the Weeds Across Borders program, a campaign to create collaboration among countries bordering North America. With a strong commitment to integrated roadside vegetation management, Harper-Lore's leadership has been instrumental in the successful execution of the campaign.

*Adapted from a report by Andrea Cuff, Padilla Speer Beardsley*

## THANK YOU

to the following sponsors for supporting this issue of *WILDLAND WEEDS*:

Helena Chemical Company .....	p. 8
SePRO Corporation .....	p. 2
Syngenta Professional Products .....	p. 28
BASF .....	p. 21
Dow AgroSciences .....	p. 7
Earth Balance .....	p. 19
R&K Pump Containers .....	p. 12
UAP Timberland .....	p. 26
Applied Biochemists .....	p. 10
Allstate Resource Management .....	p. 19
All Terrain of Florida .....	p. 19
Applied Aquatic Management .....	p. 26
Aquatic Vegetation Control .....	p. 26
Great Outdoors Publishing Company .....	p. 19
Pandion Systems .....	p. 26