



## SE-EPPC

By Brian Arnold, President

I hope that all are well upon receiving this issue of *Wildland Weeds*. I always look forward to my issue arriving in the mail, and am thankful for the

work of Karen Brown in putting it together.

I look forward to serving as your president, and thank Nancy Loewenstein for her leadership over the past few years. I'm also thankful to her for serving as a resource to me in these early days.

From those of us fortunate enough to have work, the common theme I hear is how abundant the work load is. Often the abundance is due to shouldering additional responsibilities because of reduced staff or something of that nature. Times remain lean and it's hard to know what the future has in store. As our economy lingers in a vulnerable state, the challenge to bring focus to our common cause increases.

Fortunately, due largely to the efforts of EPPCs, awareness of the threats stemming from nonnative invasive species appears to be making a breakthrough, albeit a painfully slow one. In my state, Georgia, requests to the chapter for information and speakers appear to be on a slow but steady increase, causing me to believe that the message is getting through on some level. Other organizations, seeing the significance of the problem, are featuring nonnative invasive plant topics in their own programs. So I believe that there is reason to be encouraged. And when my encouragement is tempered by looking upon the privet filled woodlot bordering my home, I think about the philosophy used by the Longleaf Alliance, "Better is better." In our case, each parcel of habitat preserved brings about a "better" outcome than that which would occur if that same parcel were lost to invasive plants. So let us not allow the task at hand to overwhelm us, overwhelming as it may seem.

A year ago the Board of Directors initiated a project aimed at increasing state chapter dialogue and sharing of ideas with regards to invasive plants lists. Alix Cleveland, USDA liaison to the SE-EPPC Board and Program Manager with the US Forest Service, secured a Forest Service grant

to fund the effort. The journey met challenges that none of us anticipated but we are now wrapping up the final report. I believe we have a strategy that, when combined with commitment, will serve as a catalyst to improved transparency of invasive plant listing criteria. I hope you will join me in that commitment, and work toward a scenario in which the plant listing criteria of a given chapter is essentially validated by the listing criteria of the others. Doing so will, among other things, aid in defending the credibility of how the respective list was created. It may also ultimately lead to more consistency in regulatory listings of invasive plants among southeastern states. I appreciate the work of Kathryn Wilson, a University of Florida post-masters student (MS-Ag/Natural Resource Communication) for her diligent work on this project and for simply "coming through" for us. A report summary will be included in the next issue of *Wildland Weeds*.

Please consider getting involved with the efforts of the Council. Comments that I frequently hear from both laypersons and professionals within the invasive plant community is something like "I'm not an expert on invasive plants," spoken as though they are unqualified to accept any leadership role in the effort. Having reached the opinion that the need required is far greater than the short supply of invasive "experts" can possibly handle, I suggest to you that your help can in fact have significant impact.

If you're not "connected" to your chapter's board, or to the SE-EPPC board, consider attending a board meeting. In addition to gaining knowledge about issues that the board is addressing, it's a great way to get to know those already involved, and it allows them to get to know you. Then let nature take its course.

Mark your calendar for our Joint Annual Meeting with the Florida EPPC chapter: "Plant Wars, The EPPCs Strike Back" to be held May 21-23 in Panama City Beach, Florida. The FLEPPC folks are putting the wheels in motion for an excellent meeting in a beautiful location. I hope that you'll make every effort to attend.

Lastly, please remember to share our mission with others, and suggest that they join us. For by growing our membership, we strengthen our influence.



## KY-EPPC Update

By Beverly James, President

The KY-EPPC has been working on a few projects throughout 2012, with the main focus being an update of our plant list. We have adopted ranking criteria used by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and sent a

ranking spreadsheet with 191 species to 80 botanists, ecologists, and land managers throughout the state and neighboring states. This will hopefully provide a more rigorous system of ranking based on impact, biology and ecology, distribution, and difficulty of control.

We have once again collaborated with Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest to produce and distribute this year's "Least Wanted Poster". The invasive species chosen for 2012 was Sweet Autumn Clematis,