Invasive Plants in Managed and Natural Systems: Linking Science and Management

03-185

Background:

Invasive species, both aquatic and terrestrial, often interfere with military installations ability to utilize their lands for training. Expertise from specialists and technology for invasive species removal need to be combined in order for land managers to find successful methods for invasive species management. The Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) and the Ecological Society of America (ESA) realized the need to link science and management and planned to bring the two together to promote invasive species control.

Photo from USDA's Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests
Invasive Species: Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*)

Objective:

Legacy Resource Management Program funded this project to help scientists, land managers, and volunteers together to discover and learn the best methods for managing and removing invasive species from military installations.

Summary of Approach:

The WSSA and ESA co-chaired the Invasive Plants in Natural and Managed Systems – Linking Science and Management conference held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, November 3-7, 2003. There were three objectives of this conference:

1) To promote interdisciplinary exchange of scientific information among all researchers working with harmful invasive plants,
2) to enhance dialogue between scientists and resource managers to identify research gaps and accelerate implementation of new science for the management of invasive plants, and
3) to foster broad cooperation on the science and management of invasive plants.
4)

Attendees of this conference included ecologists, weed scientists, agricultural scientists, land managers, botanists, weed management specialists, extension personnel, agriculture and natural resource educators, nursery professionals, biological control investigators, and others who deal with invasive plant issues. The conference entailed plenary sessions, symposia, workshops and tours. Examples of invasive species and management efforts were provided on the tours to parts of southern Florida.

Benefit:

The link of science and management for the control of invasive species promoted military readiness through training on installations. The conference provided primary, intermediate, and long-term benefits. Training opportunities, information about recent scientific management achievements, and identifying sources of technical expertise were primary benefits from attending the conference. The ability for land managers to raise issues of concern on their installations for future consideration and identification of gaps in research and technology transfer were intermediate benefits provided. The long-term benefit of this conference was the general advancement of the military in the struggle to manage and control invasive species effectively and inexpensively that results in ecologically stable landscapes capable for multiple purposes.

Photo from USDA's Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests
Invasive Species: Sacred Bamboo, Nandina (*Nandina domestica*)

Accomplishments:

Through this conference military installation land managers were able to obtain information that would allow them to better manage their lands and management strategies that help maintain readiness through training. This project also developed and provided the *Weed Technology: A Journal of the Weed Science Society of America, Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests: A field guide for identification and control,* and abstracts from *Invasive Plants in Natural and Managed Systems: Linking Science and Management* in conjunction with the 7th International Conference on the Ecology and Management of Alien Plant Invasions.
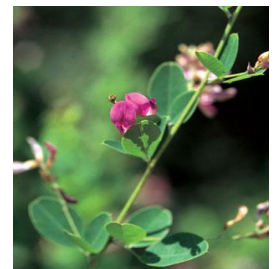
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Photo from USDA's Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests
Invasive Species: Shrubby Lespedeza (*Lespedeza bicolor*)