



NEWS

from the CENTER FOR INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

August 2008

In This Issue

- Notes from the Director
- What We Do: Our Services
- National Conference Recognizes Growing Number of CWMA's
- Invasive Plants and the Farm Bill
- New Journal from WSSA
- Flowering Rush in the Flathead River Basin, MT
- Watch Out for Spatial Invaders
- Learning About Invasive Plant Management Online
- CIPM on the Web
- Help Us Improve Our Website

Notes from the Director

by Liz Galli-Noble



It is with pleasure that I write the opening article for the Center for Invasive Plant Management's new online newsletter. This is one of several new products being launched and important changes being made at the Center in 2008. Under new leadership, the Center is creating new staff positions, retooling established program components and, like many of you in the invasive species world, seeking new and collaborative funding opportunities.

STAFF CHANGES

I was appointed as the Center's new Director in mid-March 2008. One month later, the Center was fortunate to retain Janet Clark, creating the new position of Assistant Director for Policy and Publications for her. In addition, Dr. Erik Lehnhoff recently accepted the new position of Assistant Director for Research. Erik will function as the Center's research leader and scientific advisor, and will start work in August. In July, Mara Johnson left her Technology Transfer Coordinator position to pursue other interests. Mara made many positive contributions during her three-year tenure. Finally, Mary McFadzen, Connie Bollinger, Dianne Brokke and Melissa Brown round out our experienced team.

PROGRAM RETOOLING

Established in 2000 for the purpose of promoting ecologically-sound management of invasive plants by facilitating collaboration and partnerships among scientists, educators, policymakers, and land managers on a regional basis, the Center is housed within the Land Resources and Environmental Sciences Department at Montana State University-Bozeman. For the past eight years, the Center has benefited from sound leadership, a dedicated and professional staff, and success in fostering positive and productive partnerships with many invasive plant groups throughout the West and nationwide.

Program changes are being initiated in an effort to build on and strengthen the Center's past successes, while enabling us to expand and adjust our program to suit the ever-changing needs of our partners, and accommodate our required shift from congressional appropriation to new and more diverse sources.

Specific short-term goals of the Center are to

- support regional investigations that address broad-scale invasive plant management issues by seeking research grant opportunities with help from the Center's in-house science advisor, Steering Committee, and Science Advisory Council
- coordinate efforts to develop a multi-state approach for early detection and rapid response

- reinstate our Research Seed Grant Program (if funding can be secured)
- grow our outreach capacities by restructuring our website, producing this bi-monthly online newsletter, developing additional online learning opportunities for land managers, and more.

The Center will continue to serve as

- the western regional hub for invasive plant information dissemination
- the link between scientific researchers, natural resource managers, and policymakers
- a voice for western invasive plant entities in the national policy arena.

Yet, no matter how well we provide these services, the Center is only as good as the scientific soundness, relevance and applicability of the information we generate and receive, and the timeliness and efficiency by which we disseminate information to our audience. Therefore, we ask our partners to please continue to share your management experiences and insights, research findings, project outcomes, publications, and other important invasive plant information with us. By doing so, new communications tools such as this online newsletter will be relevant and worthwhile. Please subscribe and tell your friends and colleagues!

What We Do: Our Services

We support the efforts of those involved in invasive plant management by bridging knowledge gaps in science, management, and policy through leadership and counsel, collaboration and facilitation, and consulting and contracting.

National Conference Recognizes Growing Number of CWMA's

Grassroots-led Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA's) are germinating across the United States, as recognized in a recent national conference held in Reno, NV. "People-Powered Projects: National CWMA Conference" brought together individuals from 37 states to compare notes and learn more about this growing trend. The presentations have been compiled into a slideshow that can be found on the Center's website.

The Center hosts a listserv for discussions and information regarding CWMA's. Those interested in joining the listserv should contact cipm-webmaster@montana.edu.

Invasive Plants and the New Farm Bill

In May 2008, Congress passed the Farm Bill, which is the primary agricultural and food policy tool of the Federal government. The comprehensive omnibus bill is passed every several years by the U.S. Congress and essentially provides direction to agencies within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The "Title II. Conservation" section of the 2008 Farm Bill provides a number of new management and funding opportunities for invasive plant projects.

- "Work groups" chaired by the **local Conservation District** may be open to participation from diverse interests. These work groups set priorities (potentially including invasive plant management) for funding and also serve as subcommittees of the Natural Resources Conservation Service's state Technical Advisory Committees.
- Weeds on **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** lands have long been a concern of land managers. Prescribed grazing to control invasive plants will now be allowed on these lands within certain parameters.
- Chemical control along wetlands enrolled in the **Wetlands Reserve Program** now may be allowed "to meet habitat needs of specific wildlife species."
- Through five-year contracts, the **Conservation Stewardship Program** provides funding for improving "priority resource concerns," including invasive plants, in a producer's area or watershed.
- The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** offers payments to producers to improve lands and waters, now including some forested land. "Great significance" may be accorded to invasive species management. In addition, the EQIP program includes provisions for Conservation Innovation Grants that demonstrate "innovative technologies and approaches."

More information about Farm Bill programs, including the complete text of the legislation, can be found on the USDA's Farm Bill website.

New Journal from WSSA

Invasive Plant Science and Management —a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to informing scientists, natural resource managers, and educators—was recently launched by the Weed Science Society of America.

The new journal is intended to fill the need for more and broader information about invasive plants in natural areas. *Invasive Plant Science and Management* focuses on invasive plant biology, ecology, management, and restoration of invaded non-crop areas, as well as on educational, sociopolitical, and technological aspects of invasive plant management. Case studies, reviews, and interpretive summaries bring a practical, applied twist to the journal.

Dr. Joe DiTomaso, Non-Crop Weed Specialist at the University of California-Davis, serves as editor, assisted by associate editors from academia, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations who offer broad expertise and vision. Janet Clark coordinated production of the journal through a contract between the Center and the Weed Science Society of America.

Browse articles in the current issue, find subscription information, and consider the Call for Papers.

Flowering Rush in the Flathead River Basin, MT

In 2007, the Center allied with Virgil Dupuis of Salish Kootenai College and Peter Rice of the University of Montana to address the threat of flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus* L.) to the spectacular Flathead River Basin of northwest Montana. Flowering rush is an invasive aquatic macrophyte that has substantially impacted recreational activities in this popular resort area and threatens to impact fish, wildlife, and native plant species of biological and cultural importance.



The partnership's work was initially funded by a three-year grant from the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service's Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program. This interdisciplinary project interweaves research, management, and outreach components to effectively understand the local population, create science-based management options and

increase awareness.

This project continues to grow, most recently with a 2008 award by the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund to test management options. In May, Mara Johnson, the Center's former technology transfer coordinator, brought further attention of the issue to an international audience by presenting a paper on flowering rush at the 2008 Weeds Across Borders (WAB) Conference in Banff, Alberta. The paper will be published with the 2008 WAB Proceedings.

Watch Out for Spatial Invaders!



In 2006, the Center awarded Katharine Suding of the University of California-Irvine a grant for approximately \$30,000. The Center had sought proposals that incorporated the concept of thresholds into decision-making for improving invasive plant management.

The result of Suding's project, entitled *Managing the spread of invasive plants: Application of the threshold concept in a spatially-explicit model tool*, is nearly as fun as Space Invaders but far more informative. The Spatial Invasion Simulator allows managers to input characteristics of particular nonnative and native plants to simulate different management scenarios in a web-based, spatially

explicit simulation.

The model was presented at the 2007 Ecological Society of America/Society for Ecological Restoration annual meeting in San Jose, California. The abstract was published as Harpole, W. Stanley and Katharine N. Suding. 2007, "Consequences of Positive Feedback for Spatial Assembly Dynamics and Restoration" in the conference proceedings.

Learning About Invasive Plant Management Online

In collaboration with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Center developed two learning websites for the National Wildlife Refuge System. These websites provide a wealth of information and resources on invasive plant management and include interactive elements such as case studies, video clips, and quizzes. The website Managing Invasive Plants: Concepts, Principles, and Practices, will be available later this summer for refuge staff and other natural resource managers. The website Learning and Lending A Hand: Volunteers and Invasive Plants, is available now for volunteers and the public.

CIPM Online

The presentations from the National CWMA Conference held in Reno this past April are now available on our website.

You can view the PowerPoint presentations with audio, or download the audio to an iPod or similar listening device.

Thanks to Elizabeth Brusati at Cal-IPC for some new additions to our Spanish Language Resources page. These much-needed resources are hard to find, so if you know of any, please submit them to cipm-webmaster@montana.edu.

Links to **six** additional calendars have been added to our Calendar of Events page making it easier for you to find the particular meeting you are looking for.