

Conservation Congress 2014

The Results

Protecting Our Environment from Invasive Species: Prioritizing IDNR's Resources in This Effort

Recommendations:

1. Fill the current vacancy of IDNR's Terrestrial Invasive Species Coordinator currently housed within IDNR's Division of Natural Heritage. This position has been vacant for three years. Since invasive species pose one of the greatest threats to IDNR's lands, this position should be given high priority.
2. Employ invasive species strike teams to combat invasive species on IDNR lands, in particular to protect and manage resource rich areas, and to serve as an Early Detection and Rapid Response System for IDNR.
3. Provide funding and cost-share opportunities through a grant program for Cooperative Weed Management Areas, Non-Governmental Organizations and other groups specifically addressing invasive species. Collectively, these groups have proven to be an effective means of managing invasive species on a regional scale.
4. IDNR serves as a leader in facilitating better interagency coordination and communication on invasive species management and education efforts. A specific example was working with IDOT to combat roadside invasive species such as teasel.
5. Education/outreach campaigns. Develop and make available, in printed and online formats, information and plant identification resources for the public in Illinois. These resources should include common names, pictures, and key characteristics for identification.
6. IDNR support for permanently establishing May as Illinois Invasive Species Awareness Month through a legislative process.