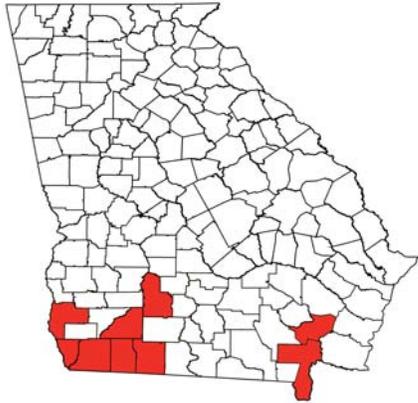


# COGONGRASS: A NEW THREAT TO GEORGIA

Be on the lookout for cogongrass, *Imperata cylindrica* (L.) Beauv., an aggressive weed that is starting to spread in Georgia. Recently cogongrass infestations have been found in several Southwest Georgia counties. Many of these infestations are due to the spread of plant material on contaminated equipment from adjacent states. Cogongrass is already infesting large areas of Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi, reducing wildlife habitat, forage potential, and biodiversity. Cogongrass is considered one of the “World’s Worst Weeds” and is listed as a Federal Noxious Weed by USDA-APHIS-PPQ.

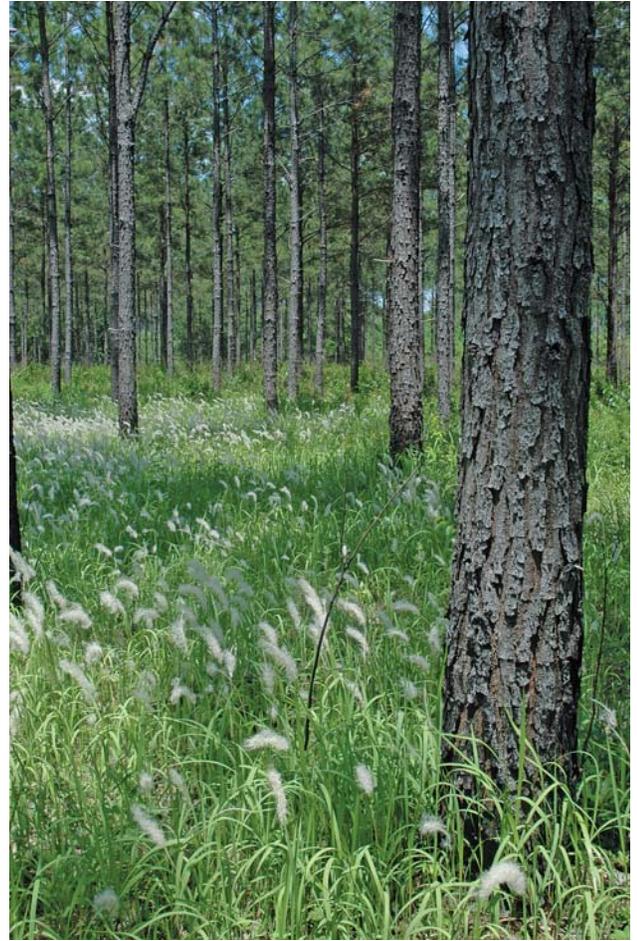


**Infested Counties  
November 1, 2005**

## Cogongrass harms your land by:

- Invading a wide variety of habitats including forests, pastures, roadsides and ditches
- Spreading rapidly, forming thick mats, excluding all other vegetation and reducing wildlife habitat
- Being extremely flammable: Creating hazardous wildfire and prescribed burn conditions.
- Being extremely difficult to control once established

**Help control cogongrass in Georgia** by learning what it looks like, minimizing the spread of the seeds or rhizomes and promptly reporting any suspected infestations to your county Georgia Forestry Commission Forester or Cooperative Extension Service Agent.



**Forest Infestation (May)**  
Photo by Chris Evans, UGA



**Roadside Infestation (June)**  
Photo by Wilson Faircloth, USDA ARS



**Off-center midrib on long leaf blades (1-4 feet)**

Photo by Chris Evans, UGA



**Fluffy white seed heads**

Photo by Mark Atwater



**Sharp-pointed rhizomes (roots)**

Photo by Wilson Faircloth, USDA ARS



**Circular-shaped infestations**

Photo by Charles Bryson, USDA ARS

## What to do if you think you have cogongrass:

- Contact your local Georgia Forestry Commission Forester or your County Extension Agent as soon as possible.
- Do not mow through or near the area that has cogongrass, especially if it is flowering, as this may aid in dispersing the seeds.
- Do not do any soil work, such as disking or grading, in or near the area that has cogongrass. You could carry fragments of roots to other areas, spreading this noxious weed.
- Do not attempt any prescribed burns in areas with cogongrass before consulting with GFC personnel
- Be sure to thoroughly clean any/all equipment that has been used in or near the infestation site.



**GA-EPPC**  
[www.gaepc.org](http://www.gaepc.org)



**GEORGIA  
INVASIVE SPECIES  
TASK FORCE**

Prepared by Chris Evans, David Moorhead, Chuck Bargeron and Keith Douce, The University of Georgia - Bugwood Network, November 2005 in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, USDA APHIS PPQ, Georgia Department of Agriculture and the Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council.

**For More Information on Cogongrass in Georgia, go to [www.cogongrass.org](http://www.cogongrass.org)**