

# Nebraska's Invasive Species

## Legislative and Policy Issues

### Brief Synopsis

What are our current strengths for invasive species management in Nebraska?

- Cooperative learning from good examples
- Coordination among folks working on invasive species (this is also a weakness)
- Watershed approaches...involving entire watersheds (even other states, but breaking into smaller manageable units)
- Growing awareness
- Getting past barriers (turf battles, past failures) and moving forward
- In-state expertise on ID, control, management of invasive species
  - Includes bringing new technological tools and research to bear on the issue

## What are the legislation or policy challenges, State and Federal?

- Coordination and information sharing
- Eliminate turf battles
- Understanding of limits and abilities of available programs, and improving flexibility (eg. block grants)
- Fragmented legislative approaches
- Include short and long-term approaches; need for education and outreach for long-term success
- Maintain balance to protect natural resources using sound science
- Legal obligations of landowners (regulatory) and balancing those with any programs that can provide incentives
- Legislation supported by broad coalition
  - Managing invasives to improve native ecosystems

## What would this groups “priorities” be for trying to forward legislative and policy issues in Nebraska? Federally?

### NEBRASKA

#### Vehicle/Opportunity

- LB701 Task Force Report for future legislation and funding

#### Legislative/Policy Priorities

- Formalized cooperation and information sharing in the state (among Fed, State, Local, NGO's, landowners) about invasive species efforts and funding opportunities
  - Nebraska Invasive Species Task Force
  - Invasive Species Office or Czar
  - **UNL Coop Unit currently taking this role**
- Emphasize importance of Education and outreach (thinking long-term)
- Search for links to markets where waste products from invasive species control and management efforts could have added value

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#### FEDERAL

- Opportunities: Block Grants and Farm Bill
- Seek to increase available funds for invasive species management efforts.
- Federal flexibility to allow states/local areas to use federal funds in most effective manner.

Next Steps for addressing legislative or policy issues:

- Develop a coalition of interested parties
  - The broader the better
- Have the coalition develop legislative or policy proposals
- Take advantage of opportunities (eg. LB701)...timing is everything!