

**Education and Outreach Working Group
2005 Cal-IPC Symposium**

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Cal-IPC's outreach and education activities and committees were summarized:

Educating legislators – National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week; California Invasive Weeds Awareness Week; Invasive Weeds Day at the Capitol.
Educating the public – web development, events, conferences, field courses, Speaker's Bureau, publications

A show of hands was conducted on how many people were interested in public outreach? (most); government outreach? (some); Speaker's Bureau/volunteer? (some)

Speaker's Bureau:

A suggestion was made to create regional coordinators for a Cal-IPC Speaker's Bureau. It was noted that quality control is important since Cal-IPC has a reputation to maintain. The Nature Conservancy has a PowerPoint presentation available; Wendy West will check and see how the implementation and utilization has gone and if lessons have been learned. Participants

encouraged Cal-IPC to get the general PowerPoint presentation out and available as soon as possible and not wait to make it “perfect”.

Who is the target? General public, gardeners, landscapers, contractors, architects, academics/students elementary to university level. Separate presentations will be available to target each specific audience Where is the audience? Homeowner’s associations, Lion’s Clubs, garden clubs, schools, etc. There is a huge need for educational materials (video, handouts, PowerPoint, etc.) for contractors, landscapers, builders and “on-the-ground” crews. Presentations at pest control continuing education seminars are another good educational opportunity.

How to get invasive weed education into schools:

Ways to reach out to educators include contact the teacher’s union, use email, contact education coalitions. It was suggested to conduct a pre-conference workshop for teachers. Teachers are often busy. Teacher interest may be a problem. If a program is complete, teachers will be more receptive. Support by work group attendees for student gardens was mixed. Getting kids out of the class is attractive to teachers. Teacher training can build capacity. Provide manuals, computer based materials. Link with current groups already doing environmental education including local coalitions. Any courses developed for schools would need to be linked to California state curriculum standards. Need to look at getting invasive weed training into environmental education programs that are utilized to educate new teachers while in college. The bottom line question is --- are teachers ready to teach about invasive plants? Are they aware of the problem or do we need to do more basic education to get them there?

Expanding California Invasive Weeds Day at the Capitol (March) and Awareness Week (July):
Dan Gluesenkamp discussed his area’s coordinated Weed Week outreach:

- They are making lists of all local restoration volunteer groups.
- WMA will do press releases for all groups with events that week to local media.
- Invite elected officials to attend these volunteer events.
- A participant from every district in their WMA will be asked to visit their supervisors at budget time and ask for funding for the WMA.

It was noted that California Trail Days has a successful “Day at the Capitol” event and could be used as a model to expand our event.

Other Education/Outreach Needs and Discussion:

- Conferences/events that Cal-IPC should have a presence at: Botany Society of America – California Conference 2006 (per Charles Blair), California Rare Fruit Growers (per Bethelyn Blade), California Garden Clubs, Inc., wine grape growers conferences, statewide mountain bike association (– do they have a conference?), special districts associations statewide conferences.
- Press releases should be increased; Cal-IPC should create news items for broad release and feed to local groups to distribute to local media; e.g. publicize volunteer opportunities; create a briefing statement with financial info for legislators; CSPAN website with a list of all media outlets; National Public Radio – audience may be more

involved than general radio audience; consider press releases and information to regional/local group newsletters (i.e. Sierra Club, garden clubs).

- Conduct a mail campaign. Action item: Christina Sloop volunteered her assistance on a mail campaign; she has connections with the direct mail industry.
- Legislator outreach/education: Local content can be especially compelling to legislators. Dan Gluesenkamp and Pete Holloran volunteered to put together a list of other (non-monetary) items to ask legislators to act on.
- It was suggested to create a video and/or public service announcement. The Nature Conservancy has a web based presentation that the public is allowed to use. Action item: Mietek Kalipinsky volunteered to contact Jerry Ashton about the presentation.
- It was suggested that some websites will pay for continuing education programs, with fees paid to the organization (i.e. Cal-IPC) providing curriculum.
- Find out what other groups are doing. Build on experience, do not reinvent the wheel!
- A suggestion was made to create ambassadors for Cal-IPC outreach.
- “Leave No Trace” organization was pointed out as a target audience. Currently without a stance on invasive species but are working on it. Action item: Aaron Morehouse volunteered to keep track of progress.
- Cal-IPC was suggested as a repository for content, such as photos and success stories. Jerry Asher’s photos and stories were good; ask him to contribute. Action item: Pete Holloran and Wendy West volunteered to gather success stories and get compiled into a professional format. Action item: Dan Gluesenkamp volunteered to research an upload site for pictures and stories.
- The internet was acknowledged as an important resource. Items that could be placed on a website include: photo clearinghouse (high quality for reproduction); info clearinghouse; digital library of publications available; bibliography; speaking points; fast facts; should integrate strongly with info that is already out there; no dead links; early detection notices with photos; documentation of actual costs of weed control; Best Management Practices (BMP) fact sheets.