

Midwest Invasive Plant Network Receives National Invasive Species Award

The Midwest Invasive Plant Network (MIPN) has been chosen as the recipient of the 2013 Education and Awareness on Invasive Species Partner Award from the United States Forest Service's National Forest System Invasive Species Program. This national award recognizes a partner or cooperator with the Forest Service who has demonstrated outstanding cooperation and achievements related to environmental education and awareness of invasive species issues at the national, regional, or community level.

“The control of non-native invasive species is a daunting task. Strong partnerships are crucial for the Forest Service Eastern Region in this endeavor,” says Jan Schultz, Invasive Species Program Leader for the Forest Service's Eastern Region. “MIPN has been an essential partner, a source of invaluable information, and also a compass for the entire Midwest regarding the control of invasive species. They are essential to the success of our work. Thank you MIPN.”

Formed in 2002, the Midwest Invasive Plant Network has been instrumental in developing and strengthening local invasive species efforts by providing technical guidance, webinars, workshops, publications, and tools for use throughout the Eastern United States. MIPN has significantly increased the ability to control invasive species throughout the Midwest, and has played a key role in the expansion of Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) across the region.

“The Midwest Invasive Plant Network is a non-profit group funded by grants, memberships and donations. Our mission is to reduce the impact of invasive plants in the Midwest. As this is a Herculean task, we couldn't do it without the help of federal, state and local partners. While this collaboration isn't easy, MIPN has always prioritized working to bring groups together as this will give us the best chance of accomplishing our mission. The fact that US Forest Service has bestowed this award on MIPN is a tremendous accomplishment as they recognize the effort and results of our efforts over the past decade”, says Mark Renz, Extension Weed Specialist for the University of Wisconsin and current MIPN president.

MIPN continues to craft numerous education and awareness products and programs related to invasive species identification, prevention and control in the Midwest. Kate Howe, MIPN Coordinator, explains the network's approach to education, “Through the use of technology, we are expanding the availability of our educational tools. MIPN utilizes websites, smartphone apps, email listservs, webinars, and online mapping tools to help provide information on invasive species to the people who need it.”

To learn more about the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, visit their website at <http://www.mipn.org/>.