

**ALABAMA
INVASIVE PLANT CONTROL PROGRAM
GUIDELINES**

**FOR THE PROTECTION OF FOREST LAND
FROM INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES**

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION (AFC)

Revised 10/21/2005

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1 GENERAL PURPOSE AND SCOPE

With the timber destruction from Hurricane Ivan forestland is more susceptible to the spread of invasive plants. The threat of infestation increases with the amount of clearcut (openings) and invasive plants on or immediately adjacent to the forestland. For this reason areas that have suffered significant forest damage will be given priority in cost-share assistance to control invasive plants over less disturbed areas. Early control and containment of present invasive plant species outbreaks is the best management strategy.

The three invasive plants this cost-share assistance program will fund are Cogongrass, Privet, and Tallowtree. Cogongrass has rhizomes that allow the plants to quickly spread to disturbed areas and are so sharp they can pierce through a gopher tortoise's (a threatened species in Alabama) nest and eggs. The dense mats created by Cogongrass increase the area's flammability leading to more frequent and intense fires that could damage standing timber. Additionally, Cogongrass reduces the productivity of land.

Chinese and European privet are also a threat due to the dense thickets which monopolize available nutrients. The thickets prevent forest regeneration by blocking sunlight and eventually replace the native species. Cogongrass or Privet is more likely to be found in openings or along the edge of forests.

Chinese tallowtree, a shade tolerant tree, can grow in the forest understory and eventually replace merchantable timber. The advantages tallowtree has over native species is an early reproductive age (can disperse seeds by age 3) and a faster growth rate.

Federal funds granted to the AFC by the U.S. Forest Service will be used to financially assist forest landowners to control invasive plants. The funds will be used to reimburse landowners over a two year period for management practices that control Cogongrass, privet, or tallowtree. A priority system taking into account the invasive plant, amount of disturbance, and location of the infestation will be used to determine a landowner's priority and how the funds will be distributed.

2 PROGRAM DELIVERY OUTLINE

- A. The Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) agrees to do the following:
1. The state office will announce a landowner **signup period (Nov 1st- Dec 8th)** and will accept landowner signups at local county offices for the duration of the signup period. The local county manager will serve as the technical service provider (TSP) and will inspect the property and complete the **“Technical Needs Form”** within 30 days of receiving the signup form. **All Technical Needs Forms should be turned into the Regional Management Specialists by Jan 31st.** The TSP will determine from this inspection whether or not the application is eligible, the total ranking priority points accumulated using the ranking criteria listed on the technical needs form, and the acres needed by practice. All Technical Needs Forms should be completed or reviewed by a registered forester.
 2. The TSP will forward a copy of the **“Landowner Signup/Agreement Form”, Technical Needs Form, and stand location map** for each landowner application to the Regional Forest Management Specialist **by Jan 31st.**
 3. The Regional Forest Management Specialists, the Forest Health Coordinator and Assistant Forest Health Coordinator will meet on **February 14th** to compile and rank all eligible applications received using the preset ranking criteria to determine appropriate distribution of the funds. (In the event of a tie priority will be granted to the landowner with the smallest amount of infested acreage). The Assistant Forest Health Coordinator will create a database to track applicants and approvals and will send landowner approval letters and the conservation plan by **March 1st** with instructions on how to request final payment after the practice(s) is (are) completed. The Assistant Forest Health Coordinator will also send letters of disapproval to landowners not receiving financial assistance. A copy of both the approval and disapproval letters will be sent to the TSP and Regional Forest Management Specialist.
 4. Landowners must contact the local county office after each practice has been completed. Landowners have until September 10, 2007, to complete all practices. The landowner must complete the Alabama Invasive Plant Control Program- Invoice Form (including landowner cost), a W-9 Tax Form and submit invoices (complete with appropriate receipts) annually for a maximum of 2 years.
 5. The TSP will inspect the property to check for landowner compliance and record at the bottom of the technical needs form whether or not ALL practices were completed each year according to the control treatment. Partial practice completions will not be reimbursed. A copy of this completed form should be sent to the Regional Forest Management Specialist, who will then forward it to the Assistant Forest Health Coordinator.

6. The AFC County Manager will complete a material receipt with two copies of the Landowner's Invoice, the Landowner Signup/ Agreement Form the completed W-9 tax form and the completed Alabama Invasive Plant Control Program-Technical Needs Form and send it to the Regional Management Specialist. A copy of all records should be maintained at the county office. The Regional Management Specialist should forward the completed package to the AFC Assistant Forest Health Specialist.

3 LANDOWNER ELIGIBILITY OF FUNDS

A. A landowner is eligible for program assistance if **ALL** of the following are met:

1. The landowner is an individual, group, association, corporation, Indian Tribe, or other legal private entity owning not more than 5,000 acres of timber producing forest land. See the definition of a landowner in section 3C.
2. The landowner is not receiving federal cost-share or annual payments for the same forest land that is being applied for the Invasive Plant Control Program.
3. The landowner agrees to control the cost-shared area the invasive plant is/was on at their expense for an additional two years (until September 10, 2009) if needed.
4. No single landowner shall receive more than \$7,500 in total cost-share assistance from the program. Cost-share payments will be \$75 per acre per year for two years. (Therefore up to 50 acres can be cost-shared for a two-year period per landowner.)
5. Approved activities must be in compliance with conservation plan recommendations which will be provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission and a copy provided to approved landowners. A final inspection will be made by the Alabama Forestry Commission prior to payment. Landowners must provide invoices and evidence that activities were conducted.

B. A landowner is or becomes in-eligible for program assistance if **ANY** of the following are met:

1. If any landowner, successor, or assignee uses any scheme or device to unjustly benefit from this program, financial assistance payments shall be withheld or a refund of all or part of any cost-share payments otherwise due or paid to that person shall be secured. A scheme or device includes, but is not limited to, coercion, fraud or misrepresentation, false claims, or any business dissolution, reorganization, revival, or other legal mechanism designed for or having the effect of evading the requirements of this program.

2. If any landowner or successor takes any action or fails to take action, which results in the destruction or impairment of a prescribed practice for the duration of the practice the landowner becomes in-eligible. Cost-share payments shall be withheld or a recapture of all or part of any cost-share payments otherwise due or paid shall be secured, based on the extent and effect of destruction and impairment.

C. Definition of a landowner.

1. The landowner is an individual, group, association, corporation, Indian Tribe or other legal private entity owning not more than 5,000 acres of timber producing forest land (or a person who has received concurrence from the landowner for practice implementation and who holds a lease on the land for a minimum of 10 years). Corporations whose stocks are publicly traded or owners principally engaged in the primary processing of raw wood products are excluded.
2. The landowner owns forest land in Alabama, which was damaged as a result of one or more hurricane or tropical storm during the 2004 hurricane season.

4 TSP FORMS & Conservation Plan
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- A. The AFC foresters will use the Alabama 05-07 Invasive Plant Control Program “**Technical Needs Form**”. A copy of this form is located in the exhibits section of these guidelines. A technical needs form must be completed within 30 days of receiving the landowner signup.
- B. A **conservation plan** consists of the technical needs form, a stand location map(s), and specification sheets, as appropriate. Conservation plans will be completed within 30 days of landowner approvals. A forester must either prepare or review each conservation plan, as indicated by signature on the technical needs form.

5 APPROVED PRACTICES AND REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL POLICIES

- a. Consideration must be given to preserving and improving the environment. All Alabama Best Management Practices (BMP'S) for Forestry must be followed.
- b. Practices must be done in accordance with an approved conservation plan that complies with these Invasive Plant Control Program standards and specifications as determined by the Alabama Forestry Commission
- c. Herbicides used in performing practices must be Federally, State, and locally registered and must be strictly applied in accordance with authorized registered uses, directions on the label, and other Federal or State policies and requirements. Specific recommendations are listed in the Forest Management Sheets. More detailed chemical prescriptions may be obtained by contacting chemical herbicide applicators in your area.

6 TIMELINE

Nov 1-Dec 8 2005	Signup for landowners
Jan 31, 2006	Deadline for turning in Technical Needs Statements
Feb 8, 2006	Deadline for Management Specialists to send spreadsheets to the Assistant Health Coordinator
Feb 14-17 2006	Approved Landowners are determined.
March 1 2006	Deadline for approval and disapproval letters to be sent out.
Sept 10, 2007	All of cost-shared control should be completed
Sept 24, 2007	All material receipts must be received by the Assistant Health Assistant

7 EXHIBITS

Landowner Signup/Agreement Form
SWCD Form#3A Approval Letter
SWCD Form#3B Disapproval Letter
Invoice Form
Technical Needs Statement
Management Information Sheets:
 Cogongrass
 Privet
 Tallowtree

**Alabama 05-07 Invasive Plant
Control Program
Landowner Signup/Agreement Form**

AFC Rev 9/22/05

Landowner Name:
(Please print)

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

AGREEMENT #

County

(in which property is located):

Please Circle

Was your land damaged from hurricanes?

YES / NO

Do you own more than 5,000 acres in Alabama?

YES / NO

Is the stand enrolled in the CRP, EQIP, FLRP, or other programs where you have/ are receiving cost-share or rental payments?

YES / NO

List the acres for the practice you are applying for assistance:

Cogongrass

Chinese/ European Privet

Chinese Tallowtree

If approved, practices will be completed by September 10, 2007, according to program guidelines and requirements in order to receive payment. After the treatment has been completed, the landowner is responsible for maintaining the stand free of the invasive plant for an additional two years. Failure to complete approved work will result in the forfeit of all funds. Failure could also affect eligibility for future funds. The treatment practices will be prescribed by a Technical Service Provider and the area inspected and compliance approved before payment is made.

Landowner Signature:

Date:

AFC Invasive Plant APPROVAL COMMITTEE:

APPROVED: YES / NO

DATE APPROVED:

COMMENTS:

**513 Madison Ave
Montgomery AL 36130**

Date
Landowner Name
Address
City, AL Zip

Dear:

You have been **approved** for the Invasive Plant Control Program (IPCP) cost-share assistance funded through USDA Forest Service and administered by the Alabama Forestry Commission. The attached IPCP Approval Form shows the acres by activity that you have been approved. The “amount approved” on the form shows the funds that are obligated and will be available for payment after you complete the practice and provide the required documentation. The actual cost-share payment will be \$75/acre/year. The practice must be completed by September 10, 2007.

You must complete the practice according to the enclosed conservation plan prepared by the local County Forester. It will contain the requirements for you to complete the practice. Call your local forester if you have any questions either about the requirements or further assistance. If you can not reach the local county forester, contact Sarah O’Sullivan (334-240-9350) or myself for further assistance. Notify the local county forester when you have completed the practice so that a final inspection can be made and you can receive payment. You will need to provide invoices for your costs of completing the approved practices.

I wish you the best of luck in completing these approved practices and controlling invasive plants on your property.

Sincerely,

Timothy C. Boyce,
State Forester

Dear:

Your request for assistance through the Invasive Plant Control Program was not approved due to the following reason:

- You own more than 5,000 acres.
 - You are already receiving assistance from another government program for the requested area.
 - Other requests with higher rankings obligated all of the federal funds available at this time. If additional funds are received this year, your application will be considered using the same priority system. If additional funds are not received this year, you will need to sign up again under next year's program provided the program is funded.
 - Other:
-

I am sorry that we were not able to provide financial assistance. However, I urge you to take measures to control invasive plants on your property. Please contact us if you need any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Timothy C. Boyce
State Forester

**Alabama Invasive Plant
Control Program**

Invoice Form revised 10/19/05

Agreement Number:

**Landowner
Name:**

County:

Mailing

Address:

Telephone:

SSN#:

Enter the acres and total reimbursement amount for the practice(s) that you have completed and are requesting payment:

Herbicide Application(s) for Year ____ of 2

Species	# of acres controlled	Fixed Rate	Amount (\$)	Landowner's Cost
Cogongrass		X \$75/acre =		
Privet		X \$75/acre =		
Tallowtree		X \$75/acre =		
Total				

I have completed the required practices and am requesting that the above amount be reimbursed according to my approval under the Alabama Invasive Plant Control Program guidelines and requirements. I am also attaching a completed W-9 Tax Form and copies of applicable receipts. I understand that the Technical Service Provider must inspect my property to verify that I have satisfactorily completed the required practices and have controlled the invasive species as listed above.

Landowner Signature:

Date:

Alabama 05-07 Invasive Plant Control Program

Technical Needs Form

(Rev 9/22/05)

Landowner:

County:

Region: NW NE SE SW

AGREEMENT #:

Assessment of Practices Needed:					
APPROVED PRACTICES	Maximum C/S Rate	Acres Needing Treatment	Total Cost-share Needed	Practice Points	Practice Point Assignments
<i>INSTRUCTIONS: Approved practices include spraying the infestation with a recommended herbicide. The Herbicide and rates are listed in the Forest Management Sheets for Cogongrass, Tallow, and Privet, Attach stand map and appropriate management sheet to this form. Information to be completed by the designated technician is in the yellow-shaded fields. Complete this form, attach a copy of the applicant's "Sign-up Form", and mail to your Regional Forest Management Specialist.</i>					
	(Per Acre)	(Acres)	(\$)		
Congrass	\$75.00				5 points
Chinese/European Privet	\$75.00				3 points
Chinese Tallow	\$75.00				1 point
Harvesting Operations					2pts Salvage cutting or unsalvageable areas due to Hurricane Ivan, 1 pt Commercial Thinning, 0pt Pre-commercial or no thinning
Land Cover:					3 pts Forest-land, 0 pts Non-Forested
Location of Infestation					3 pts-Solely on landowner's property. 0 pts Not solely on landowner's property
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST-SHARE AMOUNT:					
TOTAL PRACTICE POINTS:					
Management Prescription:					
LATITUDE _____ LONGITUDE _____					
Designated Technician (Signature)		Review Forester		Date	
Assessment of Practices Completed: The landowner should provide an invoice to the AFC county office after both treatments have been completed. An AFC Representative must check the area to evaluate the treatment. An AFC Representative must recheck the area the following year and advise the landowner if an additional treatment is needed. IF needed the landowner will invoice the AFC following treatment and the AFC Representative will recheck.					
The year treatment has been completed:					YES / NO
The second year treatment has been completed:					YES / NO
Applicant has successfully completed all required practices:					YES / NO
Designated Technician (Signature)					Date

