



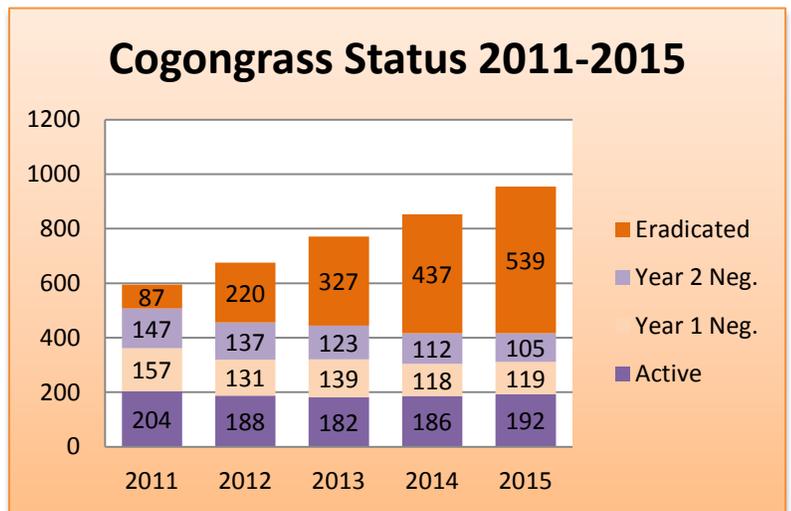
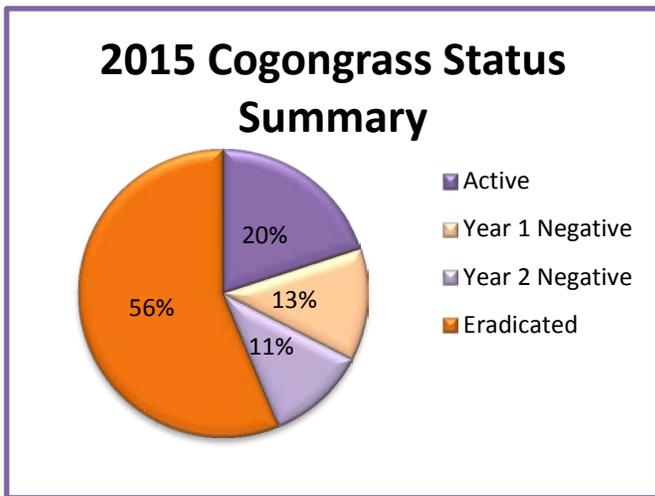
Cogongrass in Georgia Winter 2016 Update

January 1, 2015-December 31, 2015

Mark McClure, Forest Health Specialist

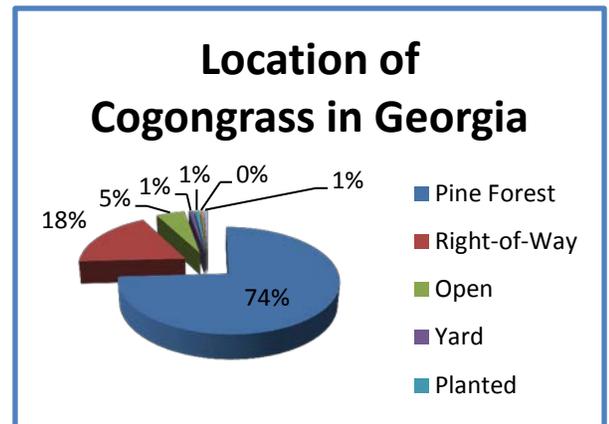
Cogongrass sites eradicated exceeded new detections for fourth consecutive year.

Tift and Webster counties in south central and southwest Georgia were the only two counties reporting cogongrass in 2015 for the first time. There were 88 new spots detected in 2015 bringing a total of 955 known cogongrass spots in Georgia scattered across 58 counties. The 955 cogongrass spots encompass a total of 231 acres. There were 12 more detections in 2015 compared to 2014. **However, there were 102 sites eradicated in 2015 with only 88 new detections.** This marked the fourth consecutive year that the number of cogongrass spots eradicated exceeded new detections. These figures reflect positive results in herbicide treatments. The status and treatment for each spot is at varying levels. The Georgia Forestry Commission recognizes a spot as eradicated after three (3) consecutive years of finding no cogongrass resprouts. Presently, **539 spots** are eradicated, **105 spots** have been negative for two years, **119 spots** have been negative for 1 year while the remaining **192 spots** are active. Overall, approximately 80% of all known spots are now negative for cogongrass. Any landowner with questions regarding the status of the cogongrass spot(s) on their property should contact their Regional Forest Health Specialist.



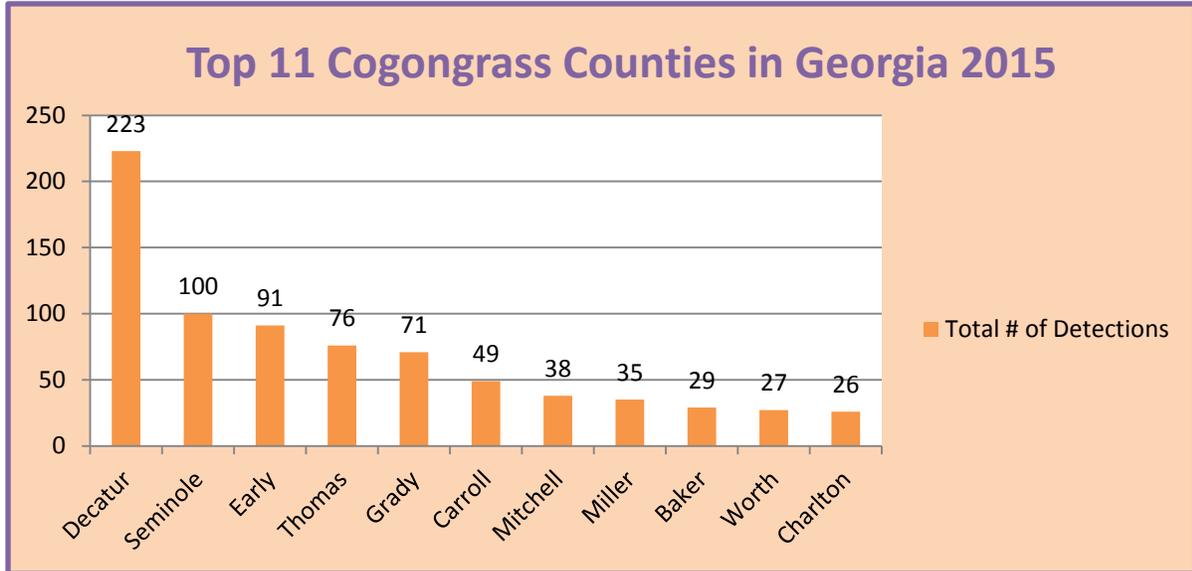
Where are cogongrass sites being detected?

The most common cogongrass detection in Georgia is located within thinned pine stands or along road and utility rights-of ways. Approximately 74% of all cogongrass detections have been in thinned pine stands while 18% in rights-of-ways. An additional 8% have been unique detections in such places as pastures, pond dams, urban landscapes, flower beds, welcome centers, wildlife food plots, and within the sand dunes along the coast. It is these sites that intrigue many thoughts concerning the movement and spread of this exotic, invasive species.



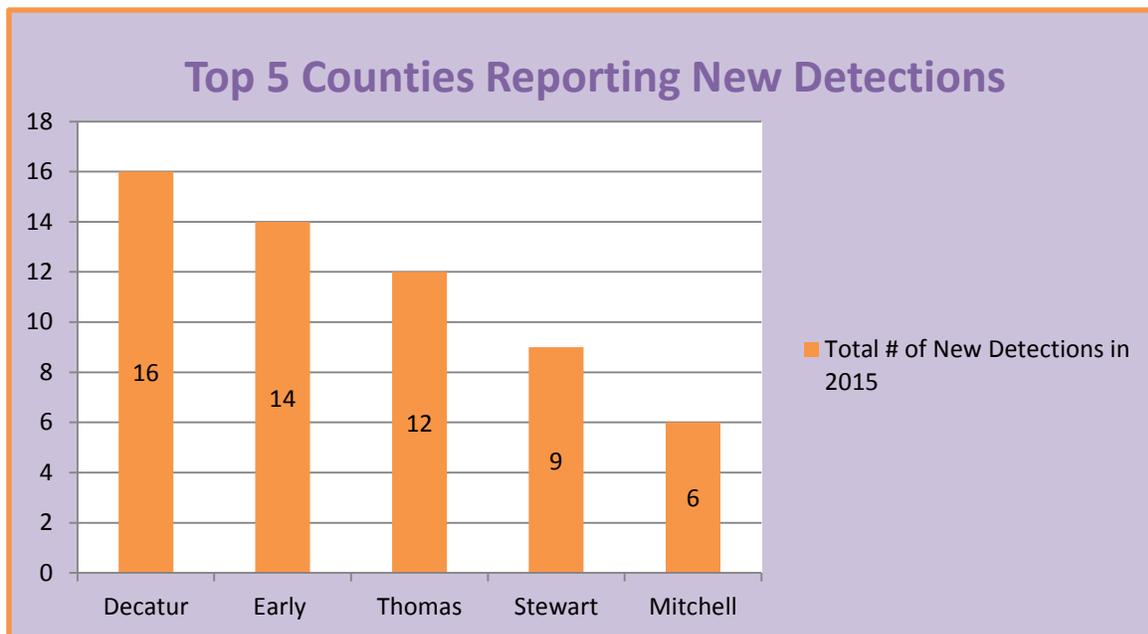
What are the top cogongrass counties in Georgia in regard to total number of detections?

The southwest corner of the state continues to be the cogongrass epicenter in Georgia. Decatur, Seminole, Early, Grady, Thomas, Miller, Mitchell, Baker and Worth counties are all located in southwest Georgia. Carroll County in west Georgia and Charlton County in southeast Georgia complete the top eleven ranking counties by number of detections.



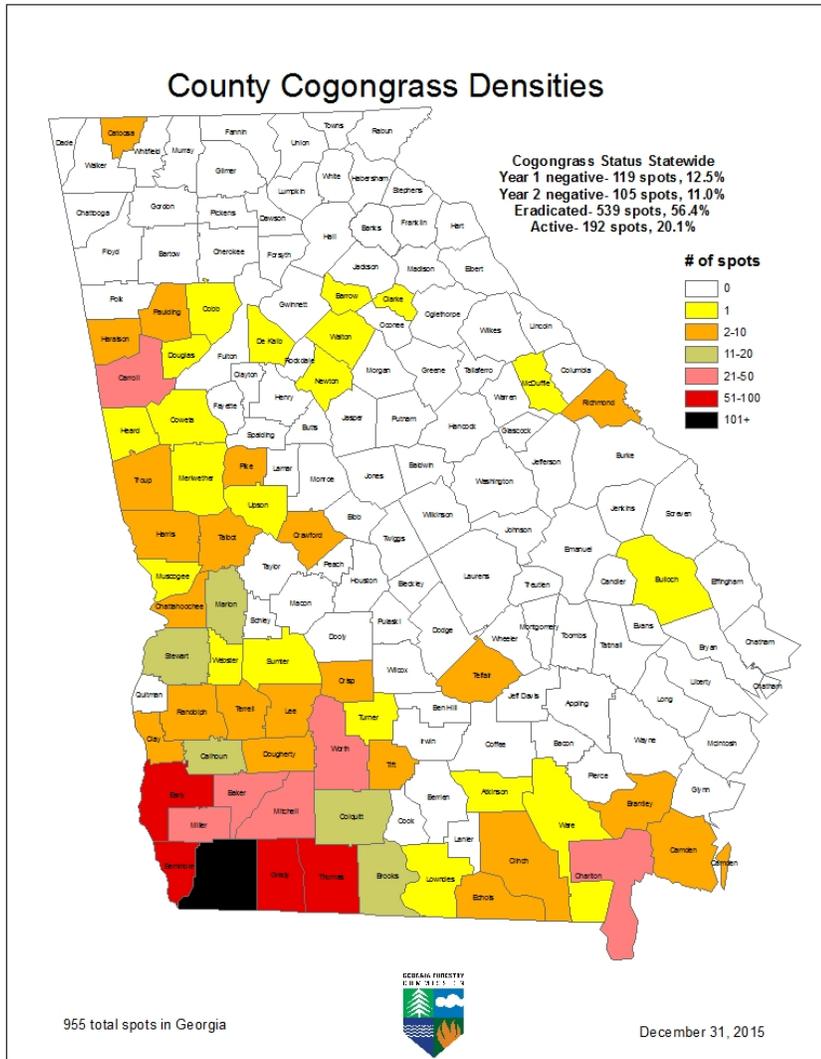
What were the top reporting counties in 2015?

The top five reporting counties in 2015 were located in southwest Georgia. Decatur, Early, Thomas, Stewart and Mitchell counties were the top five counties reporting new cogongrass detections.



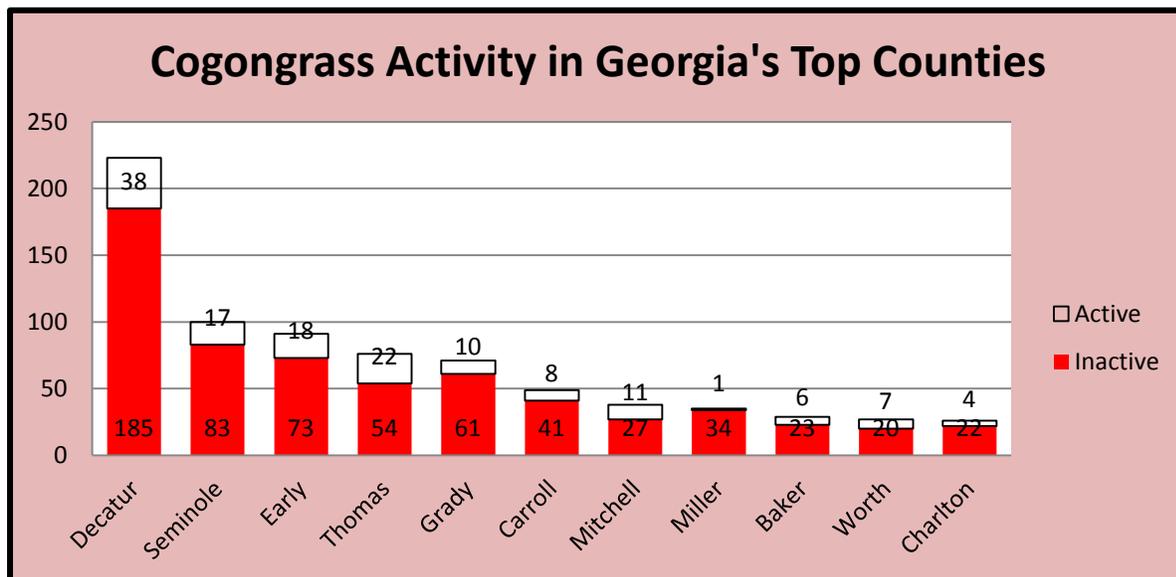
What counties in Georgia have cogongrass and how much?

The map below identifies cogongrass detections in each Georgia County.



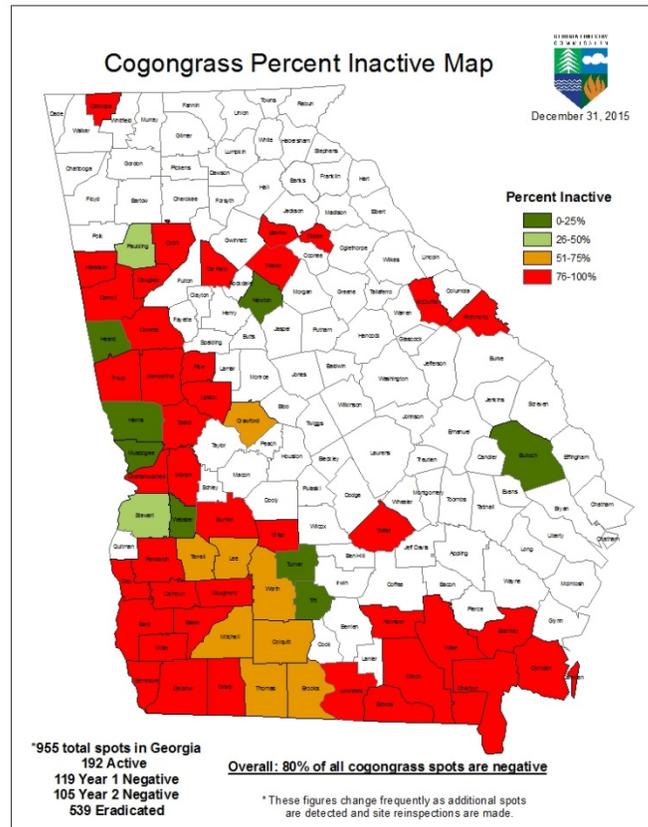
What is the cogongrass status in the top counties?

Approximately 80% of all known cogongrass spots in Georgia are considered inactive. However, this percentage varies among counties. The graph below displays the number of active and inactive spots for the top counties.

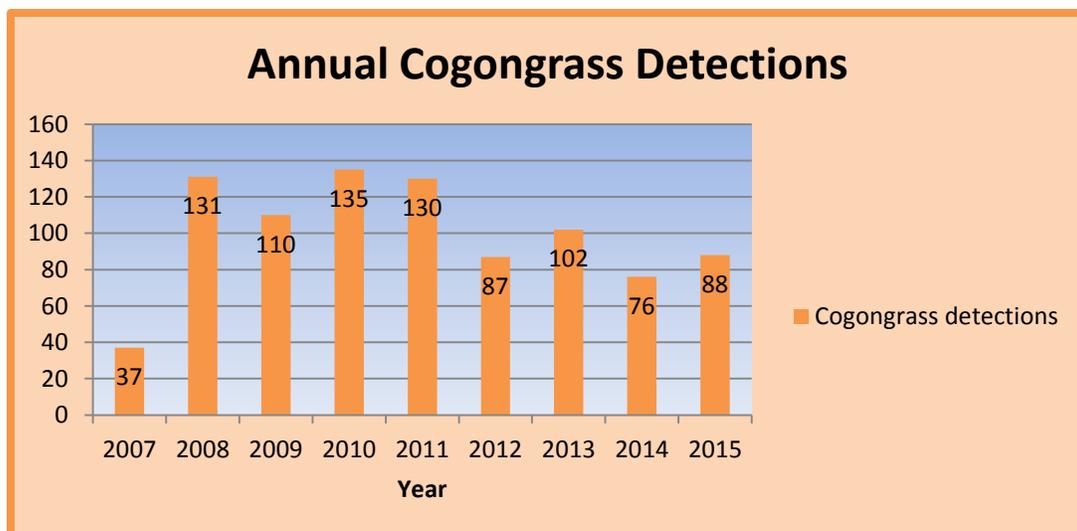


The Cogongrass herbicide treatment program has been effective for nine years. What percent of cogongrass is now inactive in each county?

The map below displays the amount of cogongrass in each county that is inactive. Cogongrass in all counties shaded red is 76-100% negative. In other words, less than 24% or less of the total number of spots are still active. Counties shaded orange have 51-75% of the total spots inactive while light green shaded counties are 26-50% inactive. Lastly, counties shaded dark green have 0-25% of the total spots inactive.

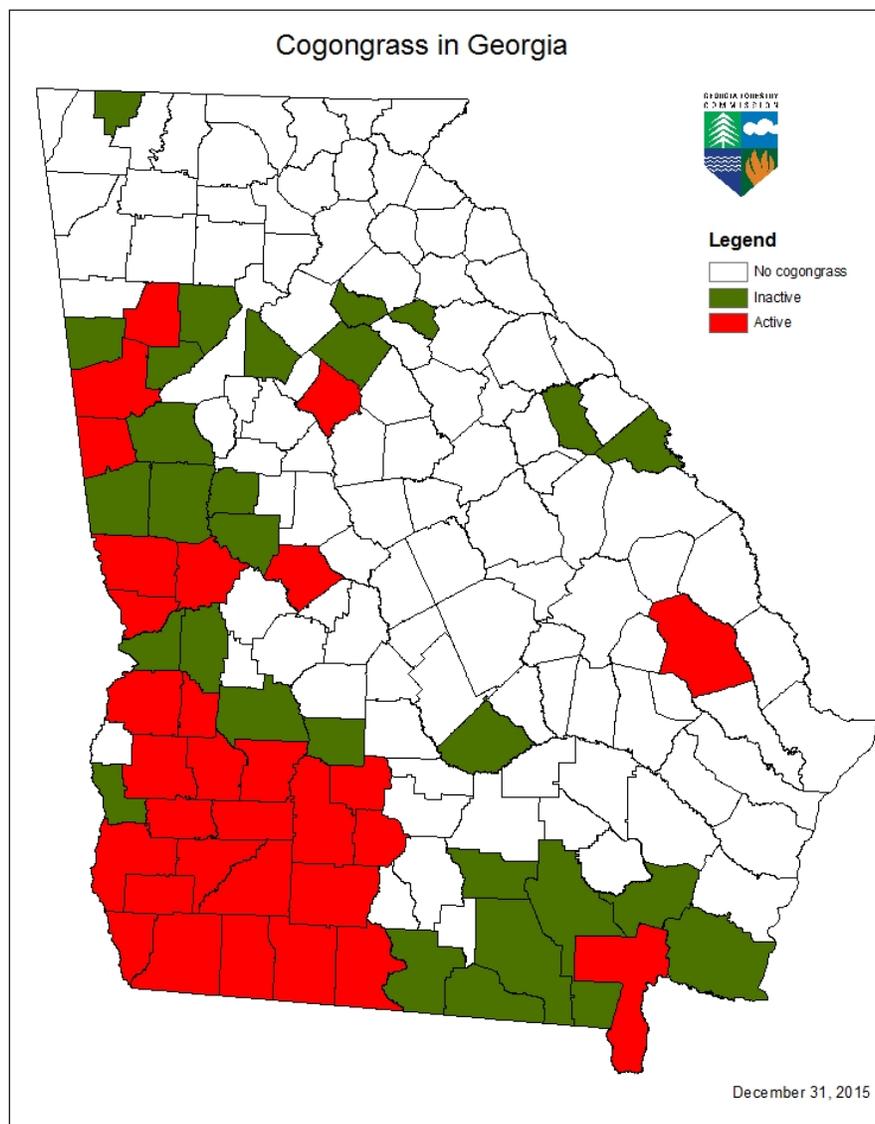


How many cogongrass spots have been reported annually since the Georgia Forestry Commission began its lead role in 2007? The graph below shows annual detections since the year 2007.



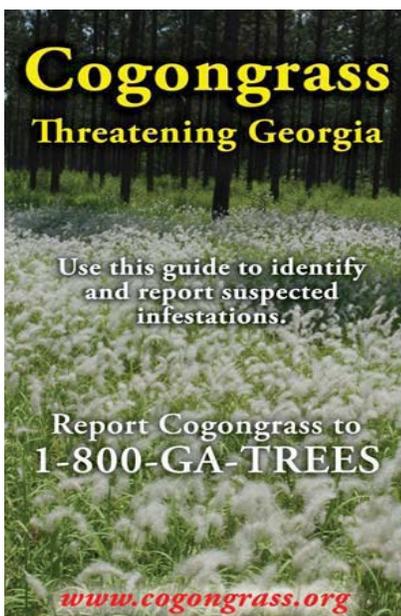
Georgia cogongrass facts as of 2015:

- The Georgia Forestry Commission will continue to treat new cogongrass detections for landowners.
- All cogongrass spots are being monitored and treated annually until eradicated.
- Workshops, presentations, field days, etc. continue to be delivered to further educate Georgia citizens on identifying and controlling invasive species. Georgia Forestry Commission Forest Health staff alone delivered the cogongrass message to over 120 groups in 2015. Many more programs were delivered by our task force partners.
- 80.3% of the total number of spots is negative (yr. 1, yr. 2, or eradicated)
- 81.1% of the total cogongrass acreage is negative.
- The average size cogongrass spot is between 0.10-0.25 acres. The largest spot treated in 2015 was approximately four (4) acres in size.
- Fifty eight (58) counties have had positive cogongrass detections. Twenty eight (28) of fifty eight (58) cogongrass counties are now negative. Map below displays counties with active (positive) cogongrass spots in red and counties with inactive (negative or eradicated) in green. Counties shaded white have no cogongrass detections.



How to identify cogongrass:

Spring flowering season is the most common time to detect cogongrass infestations. Cogongrass primarily flowers between April and early June. The white, fluffy seed heads are visible from a distance. However, the distinct golden brown coloration in late fall through winter following frost makes cogongrass visible during the colder months of the year. Cogongrass is most difficult to detect during the growing season. However, the most distinguishable feature of cogongrass is its dense, sharp, pointed rhizome root system. Therefore, it is recommended to dig the rhizomes to make a positive identification.



Cogongrass identification brochure and pocket ID available from the Georgia Forestry Commission. Contact your local Forestry Commission Office or Regional Forest Health Specialist to obtain copies of these publications.



How do I report a potential cogongrass spot?

Call your county Georgia Forestry Commission office or contact your Regional Forest Health Specialist. A resource professional will visit the site to make a positive identification. The Georgia Forestry Commission will continue in 2016 to spray all cogongrass detections at no cost to the landowner. Landowner's are required to sign a spray agreement with the Georgia Forestry Commission to legally allow resource professionals to access the property and spray the identified cogongrass. All positive detections are monitored annually until eradicated.

Landowners are encouraged to share information concerning cogongrass with their family, friends and adjoining landowners. It is important to realize that invasive plants such as cogongrass invade natural ecosystems and displace natural plant communities. Therefore, invasive species have a negative impact on our forest resources.

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The map shows the state of Georgia divided into three color-coded regions: North (green), Southwest (blue), and Southeast (yellow). Each region is further subdivided into county boundaries.