



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May XX, 2010

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois Invasive Plant Species Council is declaring May to be Invasive Species Awareness Month. The Council along with many conservation organization and agencies in Illinois are working together to promote awareness of the impact of invasive species to Illinois' diverse landscape. The organizations also want people to understand the economic and environmental costs we all bear due to the spread of these species. Invasive species are recognized as one of the leading threats to biodiversity and impose enormous costs to agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and other enterprises, as well as to human health.

Illinois is a prime area of the country to be impacted by invasive and exotic species because of its connection to the Great Lakes, Illinois River, Ohio River, Mississippi River, and a road and rail transportation hub. Invasives are reported to cause over \$137 billion of environmental damages and economic losses every year in the United States. They are considered to be a severe and insidious form of environmental pollution. Increasing public awareness of invasive species is an essential goal because prevention and early intervention are the most effective and cost efficient approaches to address the economic and ecological impacts of exotic invasive species.

Invasive species continue to take a toll on Illinois' natural lands, waterways, and parks. It is hoped this proclamation will raise awareness and provide opportunities for citizens of Illinois to participate in invasive species awareness events around the state and learn more about what they can do help defeat this threat. To learn more about the Council and activities planned for Illinois Invasive Species Awareness Month go to www.illinoisinvasives.org.

***Please consider inserting a quote from your agency administrator about the problems with invasive species and the need for Invasive Species Awareness Month into this press release.**