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Steve Segrest  
Common Purpose Institute  
724 Argyle Place  
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February 7, 2003

Dear Steve:

Cogongrass is a major problem throughout much of the southeastern U.S. and infests over 500 million hectares worldwide. Specifically, cogongrass is a problem in pastures, rangelands, roadsides, rights of way, and reclaimed mining areas, but poses the biggest economic threat in forestry and natural areas. Over 1.7 million acres of public land in Florida have some level of cogongrass infestation. Cogongrass can spread through wind-blown seed and rhizomes, which can comprise 2/3 of the total plant biomass. The rhizomes are highly resilient and allow cogongrass to re-infest an area following removal of foliage by mowing, burning or herbicide treatment (imazapyr or glyphosate). Cogongrass management is complicated for several reasons and therefore the need to prevent infestation is imperative. Once land has been disturbed, it becomes extremely susceptible to infestation. Single methods of control do not work mainly because killing the foliage, by what ever means, does not translate into complete kill of rhizomes so re-sprouting almost always occurs. Attempts to integrate several control methods into an overall management system have been successful if re-vegetation with desirable plants species is the final step.

The key is prevention and containment through the development of effective integrated management systems. We applaud your continuing efforts to work cooperatively toward this end. Although we have made progress in our fight with cogongrass, additional research is needed to refine the re-vegetation component of any management system. We appreciate your willingness to cooperate with the University of Florida - IFAS and look forward to continuing this very important work.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg MacDonald  
Weed Scientist and Asst. Prof.

Donn Shilling  
Center Director and Professor

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