Cogongrass sites eradicated exceeded new detections in 2014.

Cogongrass was detected in Sumter County for the first time in 2014. There were 76 new spots detected in 2014 bringing a total of 867 known cogongrass spots in Georgia scattered across 56 counties. The 867 cogongrass spots encompass a total of 208 acres. There were 26 fewer detections as of January 1, 2015 as compared to January 1, 2014. Furthermore, there were 103 sites eradicated in 2014 with only 76 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, 444 spots are eradicated, 110 spots have been negative for two years, 119 spots have been negative for 1 year while the remaining 194 spots are active. Overall, approximately 77% 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.

![2014 Cogongrass Status Summary](image)

What are some unique cogongrass sites that have been detected?

The most common cogongrass detections are within thinned pine stands and along road and utility rights-of-ways. Approximately 92% of all known cogongrass in Georgia has been detected in pine stands or rights-of-ways. However, there have been some unique detections made in such places as pastures, pond dams, urban settings, flower beds, welcome centers, wildlife food plots, and within the sand dunes along the coast. It is these sites that intrigue many thoughts and ideas concerning the movement and spread of this exotic, invasive species. Images of a few of these unique sites are shown on the next page.
Photos: coastal sand dunes (top left), Interstate Welcome Center (top center), Closed nursery (top right), flower bed (bottom left), homeowners yard-fence (bottom center), hillside next to a high school baseball field (bottom right).

Physical characteristics associated with identifying 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 detections over an eight year period from 2007-2014:
The majority of cogongrass detections have been made during the flowering season ranging from April to early June. However, as indicated from the graph below, Natural Resource professionals and landowners detect many spots during the dormant season (February-March) while carrying out management activities such as plowing/harrowing firebreaks and prescribed burning.

What are the top ten cogongrass counties in Georgia?
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 ten ranking counties by number of detections.
What is the cogongrass status in the top 10 Counties?
Approximately 77% of all known cogongrass spots in Georgia are considered inactive. However, this percentage varies among counties. The graph below displays the activity for the top counties. The state map at the bottom of the page shows the activity for each county.
Cogongrass detections per county in Georgia:

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 2015 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.
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.

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