PAINT ROCK
FOREST RESEARCH CENTER

Invasive Species Policy

Approved by the Science Advisory Council on May 11, 2026

The Paint Rock Forest Research Center Science Advisory Council ("SAC") agrees that control of invasive species is critical to conservation and good management of Sharp-Bingham Preserve property and all lands managed by the Research Center.

We also recognize that control involves a number of practical decisions. Some invasive species, including Japanese honeysuckle and Asian stilt grass, are now beyond practical control — and attempts at widespread control would almost certainly compromise native populations. Other invasive species that present a lesser threat to native flora and ecosystems, such as Asian princess tree and balloon vine, would not be a first priority.

The following species posing a danger to the larger ecosystem will be prioritized for control:

- Chinese privet (Ligustrum sinense)
- Asian bush honeysuckles (Lonicera maackii, Lonicera fragrantissima, and other species and hybrids)
- Tree of heaven (Ailanthus altissima)
- Russian olive/Autumn olive (Eleagnus species)
- Cogon grass (Imperata brasiliensis)

Other invasive species may be added to this list in the future, including Japanese chaff flower. Several well-established invasive grasses, such as Eurasian fescues and Bermuda grass, may also become management priorities, though effective treatment may require larger-scale ecosystem restoration strategies that are not yet practical or feasible across the preserve.

The Paint Rock Forest Research Center will utilize an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to invasive species control, emphasizing early detection and rapid response, monitoring, targeted treatment, and long-term ecosystem restoration. For all priority species, appropriate herbicides may be used in ways that minimize impacts to soil health, water quality, native species, and surrounding vegetation. Spot-treatment methods will be prioritized over broadcast applications whenever feasible.

In coordination with The Nature Conservancy, prescribed fire, and other non-chemical methods of control should also be evaluated and employed where effective and practical. Management strategies should be adaptive and informed by ongoing monitoring, current ecological science, and the specific conditions of the preserve's forest, wetland, and riparian systems.

All invasive species management activities should comply with applicable federal and Alabama state regulations.