

Governor Jon S. Corzine
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Corzine:

I am writing to urge you to release **an official list of invasive species for New Jersey**. An appropriate list has been published by the Department of Environmental Protection in its 2004 publication, "An Overview of Nonindigenous Plant Species in New Jersey." It has been published on the DEP website with the address as follows: <http://www.state.nj/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/Invasivereport.pdf>.

I would like to commend the impressive work of the New Jersey Invasive Species Council. They have been working since 2001 to develop a strategic plan to solve a global dilemma that causes an estimated \$290 million per year damage to New Jersey agriculture and untold harm to our natural areas by altering forest structure and causing local extinction of our precious native plant heritage. Invasive species are considered the greatest threat to biodiversity after outright habitat destruction.

The Invasive Species Council defines an invasive species as any plant or animal that is non-native to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. The Council has produced a report dated June 8, 2007 pursuant to Executive Order #97 with proposals for a comprehensive management plan. This report has been under review by the Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Protection for over a year. We would like to appeal to you to advise them to release an **official list of invasive species for New Jersey** regardless of the management issues under dispute.

New Jersey has the largest port facility and the highest opportunity for invasive species influx on the eastern seaboard of the United States. We are the only state in the Northeastern United States without an invasive species plan. Without an official list, it is impossible for public education efforts by gardening groups, environmental groups and volunteers from multiple non-profit organizations to move forward. No one agency or organization can possibly accomplish the work that is necessary to control current and new infestations of invasive species. It is imperative that the public, in the role of consumers, property owners and volunteers, be made aware of the measures they can take to prevent and eradicate invasive species infestations.

Our neighboring states, most notably Delaware and a consortium of New England States, have devised public information programs to involve their citizens in the battle against invasive species. New Jersey's environmental track record, although impressive, has failed to seriously address this issue publicly. Volunteers are anxious and waiting to take up the responsibility of public engagement.

Please help us by requiring the responsible agencies to release an **official list of invasive species for the State of New Jersey**.

Thank you for your attention to this appeal.

Sincerely,

Cc: Charles M. Kuperus, Secretary of Agriculture
Lisa P. Jackson, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection