



2007 SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Support and Funding

- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation awarded a fourth PTI grant to the Carolinas Beach Vitex Task Force for \$40,000. A NFWF Keystone Grant for \$128,500 was awarded to North Carolina for beach vitex eradication/restoration.
- The US Fish & Wildlife Foundation awarded Clemson University a Stewardship Grant in the amount of \$135,000 for beach vitex removal on 71 sites along the SC coast.
- Additional funding: \$15,000 Town of Pawleys Island, \$50,000 NRCS, \$20,000 Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) donated to Clemson University 300 sweetgrass plants to be used for dune re-vegetation. The NRCS grant enabled Clemson to purchase a new chipper to replace one borrowed from the University.

Permits and Policy

- Ordinances continued to be introduced to deter the further planting/spread of beach vitex (SC: Kiawah Island NC: Holden Beach, Pine Knoll Shores)
- Beach Vitex is going through the process of being considered as a State Noxious Weed by the NC Dept. of Agriculture.

Research and Monitoring

- Locations of beach vitex on NC/SC beaches continued to be reported by Task Force and sea turtle volunteers and recorded in a geographical data base maintained by North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. Monthly updates of Task Force activities/progress/photos are posted on the website at www.beachvitex.org.
- Clemson University continued research on beach vitex growth characteristics and sand accumulation. Eradication methods were fine-tuned for most effective control.
- Clemson continues to survey areas of SC coastline not monitored by sea turtle volunteers. Other surveys conducted by SC DNR, Environmental Science class at Myrtle Beach's Academy for Arts, Sciences and Technology.

Beach Vitex Removal/Restoration

- Hundreds of beach vitex seedlings were removed on NC/SC beaches by Task Force volunteers
- Under the NFWF/SSPD grant and FWS/Stewardship Grant, beach vitex has been injected with herbicide on 166 lots, the dead debris cleared from 74 lots and the dunes replanted with native vegetation on 66 sites.
- Bald Head Island declared that it had won the war against beach vitex but will continue to monitor the island for seedling regrowth.
- Volunteers continue to hand remove beach vitex seedlings after positive identification.

Outreach and Education

- Task Force members in NC/SC continued to present talks and workshops to a variety of audiences along the Carolinas coast and the country.
- The 4th Beach Vitex Symposium was held March 20 at Hobcaw Barony, Georgetown, SC. A Summer Beach Vitex Symposium/Field Review was held on July 11 in Southport and Bald Head Island, NC.
- Extensive media coverage has continued to raise public awareness about beach vitex and the need to control it. Beach vitex was featured in numerous newspaper and magazine articles (*Wildland Weeds, Clemson Impacts, Coastal Heritage/SC Sea Grant, SC Wildlife Magazine, Southern Living Magazine, Land & Water Magazine, Baruch Foundation Newsletter*) and on several television news programs.
- Huntington Beach State Park kept the FWS beach vitex DVD on continuous play and estimates it has been viewed by approximately 17,500 visitors.
- Beach vitex was featured as one of 5 invasive plants on the 2008 poster for National Invasive Weed Awareness Week (NIWAW).

Awards

- The Carolinas Beach Vitex Task Force received the 2007 Community Spirit Award from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the Pulling Together Initiative Grant program.
- The NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) presented Melanie Doyle their Sustainability Award - Large Project, for her work with the NC Task Force.