Steve Clubine welcomed the Sericea Lespedeza Work Group to Clinton, MO at 1:30 p.m. on September 20, 2007. Twenty individuals representing Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma were in attendance (see below). Each person introduced themselves.

Brent Jamison, Missouri Department of Conservation, gave a presentation on “Sericea lespedeza control: impacts on non-target forbs.” The study was initiated at 6 sites in Missouri in 2004. Each site has the following treatments: late summer burn, spring burn + June Remedy, spring burn + May PastureGard, spring burn + September Escort, and untreated. Summer fire decreased sericea lespedeza density in some, but not all locations. Forb richness declined in all treatments, including the untreated plots, most likely due to dry weather.

Kevin Bradley, University of Missouri Weed Scientist, gave a presentation on “Evaluation of herbicides and application timings for long-term control of sericea lespedeza.” PastureGard, Sumount, Remedy, and Escort were applied at 3 vegetative growth stages, prebloom, and during full bloom. Timing did not influence sericea lespedeza control rated 1 year after treatment. PastureGard at 2 pts/acre reduced sericea density 73-86% 1 YAT. Sumount at 2 pts/acre was the least effective treatment. Dr. Bradley cautioned that rates of metsulfuron (Escort XP) greater than 0.4 oz/acre can damage tall fescue. The new formulation of triclopyr is called Remedy Ultra. The product is still applied at 2 pt/acre but contains a methylated seed oil carrier rather than petroleum distillates. Milestone did not work on sericea, but Milestone plus Remedy worked well. For data, visit the UMC website. Rand Swanigan, MODOT, commented that they had good luck with Milestone at 6 oz/acre. Walt did quick mathematics to arrive at $19/acre at that rate for Milestone vs Escort at 0.5 oz/acre and $5/acre.

Brad McCord, Missouri Department of Conservation, covered two topics. First he discussed an attempt in the Missouri legislature during 2007 to designated sericea lespedeza as a noxious weed. Sericea was attached to a bill considering the designation of spotted knapweed as noxious. The bill failed.

Brad also discussed the Missouri Department of Conservation Private Landowner Assistance Program - Policies. This program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners implementing habitat management projects. Cost share is 75% for all practices except those with flat rates. Cost share practices include alternate watering systems, early successional management, herbaceous vegetation management, fencing, herbaceous vegetation establishment, prescribed burning, tree/shrub establishment, woody vegetation control, etc. The maximum cost share is $15,000/landowner/year. While the program contains no specific assistance for sericea lespedeza control, several may include sericea control as part of habitat improvement, e.g. herbaceous species control and herbaceous establishment.

State Reports:

Kansas: Jeff Vogel, Kansas Department of Agriculture provided a handout showing the progression of estimated infested acres in Kansas from 2002 through 2006. Reported acreage is down about 100,000 acres which may be due to better control or less reporting. Kansas has county option to apply chemical on sericea and landowners can get assistance through EQIP as part of a larger plan.
Walt Fick, Kansas State University, briefly described 4 ongoing studies including the impacts of annual mowing on sericea density, burning + herbicide impacts on soil seed bank, fall herbicide application on seed viability, and patch-burn-grazing impacts on sericea density and utilization.

Jerold Spohn and Pat Beavers, Ft. Riley, reported on acres of sericea treated at the installation in 2006 (6400 acres of which 5,100 acres was by aerial) and thus far in 2007 (4800 acres all by ground). Probably will treat only 2,000 acres/year in the foreseeable future. Return of tanks from the war may change control success when the tanks begin playing games again. Sericea surveys are conducted using GPS-PDA instrumentation. Sericea populations are designated as light, moderate, or heavy. Late September treatment with Escort showed very little leaf defoliation but increased control by the second year. Sites that were 84% sericea and 1% forbs are now 15% forbs. They felt one shouldn’t be afraid to sacrifice some forbs in sericea infestations because sericea will eliminate them anyway and most will eventually recover.

Terry Lyons with the Tulsa District, Army Corps of Engineers, emphasized sericea treatment in high public visibility areas. Hay leases are being used in some areas to prevent sericea from going to seed. An August 15 burn followed by dry weather seemed to kill some sericea.

Jeff Davidson, Greenwood County Extension, indicated the Tallgrass Legacy Alliance had hired an individual to oversee the sericea spot spray program.

**Oklahoma:** Jim Harris, Tulsa District, Army Corps of Engineers, indicated they had not viewed sericea lespedeza as a very big problem except in Kansas.

**Nebraska:** Mitch Coffin, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, indicated that sericea lespedeza is not a state-wide noxious weed in Nebraska, but three counties have designated sericea as a county noxious weed. Eight counties in southeastern Nebraska report about 1500 acres infested with sericea. Mitch noted that this is probably a low estimate. A new weed management area in southeast Nebraska is helping increase public awareness of sericea lespedeza.

**Iowa:** Karen Viste-Sparkman, reported scattered sericea lespedeza populations at the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, located about 20 miles east of Des Moines. They are concerned about the possibility of sericea seed in native plant harvests used to reseed areas. They had 3 interns spot spraying sericea during the summer. Treated areas are GPSed and the refuge is trying to increase awareness about sericea lespedeza in Iowa.

**Missouri:** Jason Hurley and Rich Abdoler at Truman Lake indicated they were considering haying densely populated areas of sericea. Brian Miller reported on situation at Prairie State Park. Over 500 acres of reseeded sites and/or mineland reclamation sites were sprayed for sericea. They are primarily using PastureGard. Burning is conducted in spring and summer. Sometimes they burn first and then spray. Light grazing with 130 head of bison in a patch-burn-grazing approach (about 1/3 of the grazing unit) doesn’t seem to decrease sericea (bison won’t eat sericea). Sericea populations have probably declined slightly since the late 1990s, fewer solid stands but still scattered plants. Rand Swanigan with the Missouri Department of Transportation raised the question about different seed production potentials between scattered individual plants and plants growing in a monoculture.
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Twelve individuals participated on the scheduled field trip. The group stopped at the Taberville Prairie to view and hear a discussion about patch-burn-grazing taking place at this location. Management is aimed at enhancing prairie chicken habitat. Some sericea lespedeza exists at the site.

The main part of the tour was to view plots on the Schell-Osage Conservation Area. This is one of the sites where an ongoing study exists to determine the impacts of summer burning, spring burn + Remedy, spring burn + PastureGard, and spring burn + Escort on sericea lespedeza density. Forb richness is also being monitored.

Attendance: Pat Beavers and Jerold Spohn (Ft. Riley); Jeff Vogel (Kansas Dept. of Agr.); John Gann (MO landowner); Jim Harris (Tulsa District COE); Terry Lyons (Kansas COE); Brian Miller (Prairie State Park, MO); Walt Fick (KSU); Karen Viste Sporkman (Neal Smith NWR, IA); Mitch Coffin (Nebraska Dept. of Agr.); Rich Abholer and Jason Hurley (MO COE); Rand Swanigan (MODOT); Kevin Bradley (UMC); and Kathy Cooper, Brent Jamison, Brad McCord, and Steve Clubine (MDC). Also in attendance were a landowner couple from Missouri that didn’t sign up. They sais they had been at other sericea lespedeza working group meetings and were disappointed that we usually talked about chemical rather than biological control or choosing to live with the species.

Submitted by,
Walt Fick
Kansas