**Reduce Risks from Invasive Species Coalition (RRISC)**

**Hosts Second Annual Congressional Reception**

By Rick Otis

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Washington, D.C. – In cooperation with Representatives Mike Thompson (D-CA) and Dan Benishek (R-MI) as Co-Chairs of the Congressional Invasive Species Caucus, RRISC recently hosted its second annual Congressional reception and awards program in Washington DC with a crowd of nearly 150 Congressional and federal agency officials in attendance.

Award recipients included Congressmen Dan Benishek (R-MI) and Mike Thompson (D-CA) for Outstanding Achievement by Elected Officials in recognition of their joint leadership of the Congressional Invasive Species Caucus; the Lake County, California, Water Resources Department for Outstanding Achievement by a Local Government Agency; the Great Lakes Fishery Commission for Outstanding Achievement by an Intergovernmental Entity; Wake WorX LLC of Fort Lauderdale, Florida for Outstanding Achievement by a Private Sector Company; and the Nebraska Weed Control Association for Outstanding Achievement by a Non-Profit Organization. Information on award winners can be found at <http://www.rrisc.org/whats-new-5/>.

Attendees learned how the economy, environment, and public health in every Congressional District are harmed by Invasive Species and how the award winners are making a difference in this fight.

Representative Thompson stated, “I congratulate the award winners on their achievements and thank RRISC for its leadership on this important issue.” Representative Benishek added, “The Congressional Invasive Species Caucus, which Congressman Thompson and I Co-Chair, is pleased to work with RRISC to increase public understanding of the problems caused by invasive species, and to recognize the progress being made across the country on this significant issue.”

At the event, RRISC demonstrated a ground-breaking web site developed by the Center for Invasive Species & Ecosystem Health at the University of Georgia that allows the public and Members of Congress to learn which invasive species affect their individual Congressional Districts. <http://www.eddmaps.org/tools/choosedistrict.cfm>

The event was sponsored by Syngenta, the Wine Institute, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Dawson and Associates, and WakeWorX LLC.

**About Reduce Risks from Invasive Species Coalition**

The Reduce Risks from Invasive Species Coalition (RRISC) seeks to reduce the risks posed by invasive species to the economy, environment, and public health by educating Americans about those risks and promoting cost-effective non-regulatory risk-based strategies for reducing them.

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