

**Wisconsin Recreation Best Management Practices for Invasive Species  
Advisory Committee  
Devil's Lake, Baraboo WI  
April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

**MINUTES**

**Participating Organizations and Participants** (listed alphabetically by organization):

Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs	Dave Newman
Friends of Devil's Lake State Park	Don Stoffels
Friends of Wisconsin State Parks	Kate Zurlo-Cuva
Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin	Rolf Utegaard
National Park Service	Pamela J. Schuler
North Country Trail Association	Bill Menke
Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center	Steve Hoecker
ORV Council	Rob McConnell
State of Wisconsin Department of Tourism	Will Christianson
The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin	Lisa Thomas
University of Wisconsin-Extension	Kris Tiles
Wausau & Marathon County Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department	Bill Duncanson
Wisconsin 4-Wheel Drive Association	Tim Krueger
Wisconsin ATV Association	Hank Wozniel
Wisconsin Conservation Congress	Edgar Harvey, Jr., Gary Severson
Wisconsin Council on Forestry	Fred Clark
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Bureau of Endangered Resources	Kelly Kearns
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Office of Forest Sciences	Darrell Zastrow, Jane Cummings-Carlson, Todd Miller
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Parks & Recreation	Kimberly Currie, Brigit Brown, Sherry Klosiewski
Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association	John Schnorr
Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycling Association	Harold Schmidt
Wisconsin Society for Ornithology & Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative	Bill Brooks
Wisconsin State Horse Council	Mindy Krolick
Wisconsin Wildlife Federation	George Meyer

**Why A Recreation BMP Track?** – Fred Clark, Brett Richardson and George Meyer

Fred Clark, a member of the Wisconsin Council on Forestry, and Chair of the Council's Forestry Invasive Leadership Team (FILT)'s provided an overview of FILT's four-track approach to Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Invasive Species in Wisconsin forests. The Forestry track has been underway since January 2006, has an Advisory Committee, staff team, and has begun drafting a technical document for foresters, loggers and landowners. A second track will focus on Urban Forestry and Horticulture, and a third will focus on Utility and

Transportation Rights of Way. The Recreation Track differs from the others in that the audience for the BMPs is the public, not resource managers. Consequently, the message will take a different, less technical form. And because recreationists are so diverse, different BMPs may need to be developed for different types of recreation. Similarly, the method by which the BMPs are communicated may vary user group to user group. The goal of the Recreation BMPs is fostering voluntary compliance. Back in the 1990's, a wide range of forestry stakeholders worked together to develop BMPs for Water Quality. They have been widely adopted by the forestry community and, as a result, have greatly improved water quality.

Brett Richardson, a staff member of Wildlife Forever, national non-profit conservation organization (based in Minnesota) dedicated to preserving our national wildlife heritage, offered that the aquatic invasives BMPs and its 'Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers' campaign could serve as a model for the development of terrestrial BMPs. Outreach of the Recreation BMPs could take a similar form to the Aquatic Invasive BMPs, namely, TV public service announcements, billboards, and print ads. Brett gave a summary of the work done by a Core Work Group – consisting of Fred Clark, Kimberly Currie, Kelly Kearns, Hank Wozniel, Gary Severson, Linda Parker (Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest), and himself – to date. They had identified a long list of potential organizations and sectors of outdoor recreation and invited them to participate. He expressed hope that many organizations which were unable to attend this meeting would participate in future meetings. The Core Work Group had begun to solicit funds for the project and has received pledges of \$15,000 from the US Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy, but need \$7,000 more before they can hire a Limited Term Employee to help coordinate the project, in the same way that Todd provides logistical and technical support to the Forestry BMPs. The Core Work Group's common assumptions are that the Recreation BMPs will be consensus-driven, educational, and voluntary. Brett explained that the Work Group anticipated two levels of stakeholder participation: 1) actively helping to draft BMPs and 2) review or comment on BMPs.

George Meyer, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (composed of 155 hunting, fishing and trapping organizations totaling 100,000 members) addressed why invasive species matter to all recreation stakeholders. As an example, he mentioned the loss of hunting on Pine Island over the years due to invasive species. He said that people relegate to government everything they don't want to do, but that government can't take care of everything by itself; the public *must* be involved if efforts are to be successful. Many people also think solely in terms of economics. However, they make the false assumption that everything will continue to function without the seemingly uneconomic elements. George wondered aloud how we can motivate people and read from Aldo Leopold who wrote "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." He stressed the need to act collectively as a recreation community to face the problem of invasive species. While many hunters, trappers, and anglers have developed a land ethic, it only takes one person to introduce a new invasive species. What is the cost of NOT taking action?

**Invasives/Vectors Hour** – Kelly Kearns and Jane Cummings-Carlson

Kelly Kearns, Plant Conservation Program Manager with the Wisconsin DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources gave a PowerPoint presentation, the first part outlining invasive plant

impacts on recreation, the impacts of recreation on invasive plants, and ways that recreationists can potentially prevent the spread of invasive plants.

*Invasive Plants* - Some ecological impacts of invasive plants:

- Modify natural community structure and ecosystem properties
- decreased species diversity and cause loss of wildlife habitat
- Alter fire, water and nutrient cycling regimes
- Cause long-term decline in tree growth and indirectly result in increased tree mortality

Some impacts of invasive plants on recreation include:

- Fishing, boating and swimming made difficult.
- Hunting/hiking land rendered impassable by invasive shrubs.
- Wildlife habitat, diversity and abundance reduced.
- Human health concerns from toxic and allergenic plants.
- Decreased aesthetics resulting in loss of tourism.
- Altered perception of “nature” once viewer is aware of invasives.

Some impacts of recreation on invasive plants include:

- Moving seeds/eggs/cocoons (feet, clothes, pets, equipment, etc)
- Disturbance predisposes land to invasives and causes decline of natives
- Soil compaction
- Edge effect

Among the most harmful invasive plant species in Wisconsin forests are:

garlic mustard, common and glossy buckthorn, black locust, shrub honeysuckles, Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, Dame’s rocket, and reed canary grass. Other species are on the way!

Possible Prevention Methods for “Pedestrian” Recreators:

- Clean off shoes, clothes
- Remove soil from camping gear, etc.
- When hiking, stay on trails
- Don’t walk from an infested area into an un-infested area

Possible Prevention Methods for Pet Owners/Riders:

- Clean animals’ hooves, fur.
- Feed weed-free forage to horses for several days before visiting a natural area.
- Keep animals on trails.
- Don’t walk from an infested area into an un-infested area.

Possible Prevention Methods for “Wheeled” Recreators:

- Clean vehicles, equipment, boots
- Stay on trails
- Avoid riding during wet or muddy periods
- Don’t travel from an infested area into an un-infested area

#### Prevention Methods for Land Managers:

- Minimize disturbance
- Clean vehicles, equipment, clothing
- Re-vegetate disturbed sites quickly
- Use native plants in landscaping
- Use weed free materials (seed, feed, mulch, gravel, sand)
- Provide information to visitors about invasives and what they can do to help

#### Desired Outcomes of BMPs:

- Land managers and users are aware of invasives and take action to minimize spread
- Avoid introduction of new species into un-infested and priority areas
- Local eradication of new infestations
- Slow the spread of existing infestations
- Maintain sustainability of forest ecosystems

*Invasive earthworms* - Kelly also elaborated on the array of ecological problems associated with invasive earthworms including the altering of soil structure, the loss of native plants, fungi, nutrients, and habitat for ground-nesting birds, amphibians and reptiles. The following are ways that people can help address the problem:

- ~ Spread the word; (can use Posters, PowerPoint shows, cards)
- ~ See: <http://www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/>
- ~ Prevent new invasions in forested areas where worms are not currently present
- ~ Report new invasion fronts or new species
- ~ Brush your boots (large and small) after each hike! Wash garden shoes before wearing them in natural areas.
- ~ Wash vehicle tires between sites to prevent spread
- ~ Avoid using ATV's, bikes, snowmobiles, etc. when the ground is wet or muddy
- ~ Dump your bait in the trash - NOT on the ground, or in water (worms can survive for months in water)
- ~ Require bait dealers to include information on proper disposal with earthworm sales
- ~ Substitute native North American worms for exotic worms as bait
- ~ Do not move compost or mulch from one area to another
- ~ Keep it in your yard or your neighborhood
- ~ Do not use mulch or compost in forested areas
- ~ Remove soil from purchased plants and throw it away.
- ~ Sterilize soil by freezing or fumigation when moving soil into un-infested forests

Jane Cummings-Carlson, Wisconsin DNR Forest Health Coordinator gave a PowerPoint presentation on invasive forest insects and diseases. Invasive insects and diseases have an advantage because our native species have not evolved defenses against the invaders. Impacts are difficult to predict since the full range of hosts is unknown. The economic and ecological impacts of invasives on forest ecosystems are difficult to predict because forests are complex ecosystems. Jane illustrated the notion of complexity with the example of white pine blister rust, which has a life cycle that involves both white pine and gooseberry (*Ribes* sp.) She also said that there was an intensive cooperative over 50 years (ending in 1967) to prevent damage to

white pine by attempting to eradicate gooseberry. White pine blister rust is currently widespread in Wisconsin, but generally not abundant or severe, in part because of the gooseberry eradication effort.

Currently, there are 20 invasive pathogens (diseases) and 360 invasive insects. However, the number has been increasing exponentially. Unfortunately, due to the vast increase in global trade, this trend is expected to continue. In addition, plant pathogens have evolved ways to spread that do not rely on host movement. Invasive insects and diseases that have been detected in the Lake States within the last decade include Asian long-horned beetle, emerald ash borer, common pine shoot beetle, hemlock woolly adelgid and beech bark disease. Sudden oak death, currently restricted to California, is moved in a variety of ways: nursery stock, wood and wood products, cut foliage/flowers, cut Christmas trees, greenwaste/ compost, potting media, and soil. The broad categories for addressing invasive species include: 1) prevention, 2) early detection and rapid response, and 3) long-term management. The movement of firewood is a principal means of spreading the emerald ash borer. In response to this finding, the DNR has issued a permanent rule that restricts people to using firewood that originated less than 50 miles away. However, state campgrounds constitute only 7% of all campgrounds in Wisconsin, so outreach to private campgrounds will be necessary. A primary way that the public can assist in reducing the harm caused by invasive species is by reporting early detections.

**Invasive Species Trail Walk – Fred Clark, Kelly Kearns and Jane Cummings-Carlson**

Fred, Kelly and Jane led a walk along a forest trail and pointed out a variety of invasive plants along the way. Jane passed around specimens of the emerald ash borer and Asian long-horned beetle. Devil’s Lake State Park identifying invasives species, vectors of transport and negative impacts to recreation areas and wildlife habitat.

**Facilitated Discussion – Kris Tiles**

Kris Tiles of UW-Extension facilitated group discussions related to next steps for the Recreation BMP Track. Participants went from table to table, providing feedback to five questions. At the end of the session, facilitators from each table shared an overview of the discussions. Notes from these small groups have been saved in a separate document. There was discussion about timeline and logistics related to the next meeting. The group decided to meet bimonthly. The participants noted which days and times were most convenient to meet:

**Potential Meeting Locations**

Location	Best	O.K.	Total
<b>Wausau/StevensPoint</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>
Madison	6	1	7
Eau Claire	3	3	6
Green Bay	2	3	5
Milwaukee	2	2	4
Rhineland	1	1	2

**Potential Meeting Times**

Time	Best	O.K.	Total
<b>Weekday</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>
Weekends	7	2	9
<b>Daytime</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>
Evening	1	3	4

There was also discussion about Committee structure. Brett mentioned the idea of two levels of participation: 1) helping to write the BMPs, and 2) reviewing them. He asked participants to record the level of involvement that interested them on a matrix of stakeholder groups vs. recreational activities (e.g., bicycling, motorized recreation, horses, etc.) The filled-in matrix is saved in a separate Excel spreadsheet. Several people mentioned their interest in interacting with members from other groups. Darrell proposed that the next meeting focus on determining what the products might look like as well as potential outlets.

## Homework

Hank suggested that we could get a jump on the work if each organization begins to draft potential BMPs for their activity area and shares them at the next meeting. Below are homework assignments for representatives of recreation-related organizations prior to the next meeting (tentatively June 11<sup>th</sup>):

1. Share partnership website with your organization's membership
  - Inform your members and affiliates that draft BMP products and Advisory Committee meeting minutes will be posted on:  
<http://council.wisconsinforestry.org/invasives/recreation.php> for their review
2. Find an alternate representative for your organization or stakeholder group in case you are unable to attend an on-site Advisory Committee meeting
3. Brainstorm Best Management Practices for invasive species that your recreational user-group can adopt before, during and after your activities
4. Identify successful marketing campaigns you have seen, and how those strategies could be applied to Invasive Species BMP outreach
5. List specific media and outreach opportunities to disseminate best practices for invasive species to your members, affiliates and general public. Please include any pertinent timelines, procedures, deadlines and contact persons for submitting story items.
  - Organization newsletter:
  - Radio program:
  - Website:
  - Listserve:
  - Press release:
  - Meetings or events:
  - Television program/personality:
  - Direct mail campaign:
  - Other:

Submitted by:

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WDNR