

Howard Garves, Sparta TSP (Vice Chair); **Michelle Komiskey** District Conservationist, USDA NRCS; **Tim Wilder** Fort McCoy Endangered Species and Wildlife Dept.; **Ben Johnston** Volunteer, Landowner, **Randy Poelma**- Environmental Science Program Manager, Ho-Chunk Nation, Black River Falls; **Andre Paquett**, Landowner, Jefferson TSP; **Bryce Richardson** Monroe Co. Land Conservation; **Skip Frazee** Landowner Sparta TSP; **Sean Davison**, WI DNR Forester, Tomah; **Brad Gilbertson**, City of Sparta, **Joey Esterline**, Landowner, Adrian TSP; **Dave Ohnstad**, Monroe Co. Highway Dept; **Mic Armstrong** Soil Conservation Technician, USDA NRCS and Scribe

Megan Mickelson (MCISWG chair) is away Fire Training,

Howard Garves chaired the meeting. No new faces to introduce. Welcomed **Josh Benes** on a conference call from Central Sands RC&D.

Additions to Agenda- Phragmites discussion and Amur Maple mapping.

Mic Armstrong reported on the Field pre-meeting. A group of hardy souls braved the cold and a little snow to make the trek from the Amundson Park Shelter across the splendid bridge erected by Reinhard Mueller and the 5 shovel men to the newly opened walking/ bicycle trail ceded by US Silica to the city. The trail provides a link to the Sparta Elroy bike trail for outdoor enthusiasts from the west side of the City and creates a wonderful route back to the Sparta Depot or to the La Crosse River Trail. The new trail to Hammer Road skirts the sand mine and you can glimpse the huge dredged lake that one day will also become City property and maybe you will get a glimpse of the dredge boat itself. We examined the new bike repair station on the south side of Reinie's bridge; everything seemed to be working- tools etc ready for a cycling pit stop, although we noted, sadly, someone had already managed to break the glass cover to the pressure gauge.

Along the way we stopped and learned about Common (European Buckthorn) *Rhamnus cathartica* **Armstrong** pointed out the distinctive black buds, the miniscule thorns in the branch axils, and the distinctive branching angle. Side by side with a shrubby black cherry the bark is similar but usually cherry (*Prunus* species) have some black growths scattered around the branches. **Ben** observed that when you cut below the bark of buckthorn the flesh is yellow. Native species that could be confused with buckthorn include Winterberry (*Ilex reticulata*) and Alder. No winterberry was noted but we did look at an Alder (*Alnus* species) with distinctive cones and catkins.

We examined a small Eurasian honeysuckle (*Lonicera* species) and snapped a branch to demonstrate that the stems on alien honeysuckle are hollow- if it had been a native (Twinberry) the stem would be solid.

We found several Japanese Barberries (*Berberis thunbergii*), at this time of the year they often have berries and can be spotted easily, however soon the birds and other critters will have taken the berries spreading them more and more throughout the woods.

Barberry has nasty thorns. Those of us who made the trip to Meyer's farm on Holiday Road last year remember how impenetrable a mess these plants become if not managed.

We also found a Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) by the river - another red berried alien that can turn a beautiful woodland into a thorny nightmare.

Mic flagged some of the Barberry and the Multi flora with pink ribbon, (he will do more when needed) and we discussed some options for the City of Sparta to begin a management program. **Brad** and **Ryan** from the City were both there and would be able to do some backpack work, The Frisbee golf club have also expressed a desire to help but repeated efforts to contact them did not result in any showing up for this meeting. One option would be cut stump treatments, someone would cut invasive shrubs with a chain saw or metal bladed weed eater, and someone else, (likely), would follow up with a herbicide application. This could be using a small pump sprayer or a 3-4 gallon back pack equipped with the correct nozzle.

Ben brought a pvc pipe "dauber he has constructed which would be perfect for cut stump treatments. Here is the link <https://www.stewardshipnetwork.org/sites/default/files/wand.pdf> but talk to **Ben** directly to get practical tips and feedback as he puts his through its paces.

Basal application is probably going to be more practical in these woods. Using either a back pack or a smaller hand-held pump sprayer- (see notes from our Scott township workshop), the applicator sprays the correct herbicide mix around the bottom of the invasive shrub, this is probably 6" to 2 feet depending on the size of the plant. Anything bigger than 1" diameter will need to be sprayed all the way round, smaller plants just a swipe along the side will kill. Multistemmed plants will need each stem to be coated. The Dauber might work for this too, but on thorny plants it will likely mean a lot of replacement of sponge tips.

As to herbicides the MIPN database <https://www.mipn.org/control/> is a good resource, In summer time you can use a water based solution,, however in winter this will freeze and the best option is to use Bark Oil as the carrier. As to the best triclopyr or other herbicides, quantities to use in this situation, feedback on the rates etc we should defer our local experts that have presented at our field days.

The group returned to the parking lot and marveled at **Mic's** custom buckthorn walking stick started at our June workshop and now in service.

Garves On the matter of the New Chairperson- no one wanted to take the position at this time. We agreed **Megan Mickelson** does a fantastic job keeping things organized and we will always have a vice chair to run meetings whenever needed. Table the item until January.

Recap of Scott Township Training Although there was pretty much no participation from the township residents we still filled the hall and had a successful event (see previous doc..). We should be more careful in the planning process. Work with **Sharon Folcey** regarding future township training sites, Chuck had thought we should provide a map of the invasives on Township roads, Scott Township really isn't amenable to the internet mapping we are using, there wasn't much for WIFI around there, **Ben** thought he could put something together on paper.

Bryce thought Little Falls Township would be a good site for a future training with past wind damage and fire events- the Sparta School Forest would be a possible venue. Mic

added that we have already done a lot of invasive mapping there for school events and Reinie is working on flush toilets. (For now, there are outhouses).

The report on the Scott Township Field day can be found at

<https://monroe.uwex.edu/agriculture/monroe-county-invasive-species-workgroup/>

County Cost Sharing Progress

Mickelson has written a letter for the successful applicants.

Armstrong reported that Prochazka withdrew the application. They won't have time to do anything before the end of the year.

Paquett and Johnston plan on visiting Justin Trails to see what was done

Poelma would do a check on the Arena project

2019 applications were received from Howard Garves and John Komiskey. The application period was still open at the time of this meeting. Discuss/ form Committee in January.

Armstrong proposed the next meeting would be an 'Annual Meeting', the idea being to assess what we have accomplished and prioritize action items for 2019. **Ohnstad**, offered to host the meeting at the Monroe Co Hwy Dept Conference Room, 803 Washington St. on the 24th January. We will start early-1p.m and commence with a demo of mapping sites and species mapped in Monroe Co. (Invite **Brandon**??)

On the phone **Josh Benes**.. outlined the progress they have made in the Central Sands CISMA- now called Central Wisconsin Invasive Partnership (CWIP). They are still figuring out which counties will be in the partnership- Monroe has its own CISMA and so is out, (Adams, Juneau, Marquette, Portage, Waushara, Wood Counties. I believe, are in). There could be participants that sign both MOUs (e.g. Fish and Wildlife Service or Fort McCoy). They will have a website and Social Media sites soon.

Contact josh.benes@goldensandsrccd.org

Wilder mentioned that **Jim Raiten** was at The Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference in Rochester and learned more about protocols for clean fill from quarries. He is also going to the National Conference on Invasive species in Tennessee and will report for our next meeting

Johnston was also in Rochester and recounted a presentation on the use of herbicide infused paintballs to manage invasive plants on inaccessible Hawaiian mountain terrain.

Display **Komiskey** will check with NRCS State office on the status of the table top display

Phragmites. **Armstrong** reported that he has been mapping the few infestations we have in the county and that Ann Pearce needed more info to validate the occurrences as it is difficult to ID them from photos alone. Phragmites is a **Prohibited** species in Western WI,

There is a good Extension publication #WY-080-296 on Phragmites, we should get some for the leaflet box.

Armstrong has been a weed watcher for a while and was amazed that he had never noticed the large area of Amur Maple making its way along both sides and the median of the interstate just west of Tomah. Now it is at least on the map:

<http://www.eddmaps.org/distribution/viewmap.cfm?sub=3965>

A good place to look is County M, where you can probably find the mother trees- a hedge around a private residence. **Ohnstad** said he could alert the DOT as they were working in that area.

MOU Wilder suggested we customize the signature page and resend the final MOU. **Armstrong** will take care of.

Logo: Andre Paquett has been working on the logo using some specialized software. He presented some nice images and several suggestions were offered as well as an offer from Wilder to provide some high-quality photos that may fit the template. We will revisit in January.

Armstrong mentioned that we now have a contact with the Sparta 4H group that would be amenable to projects such as Purple Loosestrife Biological Control. (Add to Annual Meeting Agenda).

Wilder reported that a crew from Fort came out and treated the County Hwy A Japanese Knotweed on the right of way and, with permission, the neighboring private property. They were still working with the property owner on the Jackson Pass (Hwy 16) knotweed population and were making progress there. **Brad Gilbertson** lamented his crew were down due to a logging accident and were unable to retreat the Knotweed by Perch Lake. They will have on the to do list for next fall as well as the patch behind the library.

Not on the agenda.

CISMA Conference call on 11/30/18: Megan gave the MCISWG report to a statewide conference call. Here is Megan's Summary:

MCISWG ATTENDANCE Those participating in Monroe County Invasive Species Working Group included: Mic Armstrong, Ben Johnston, Megan Mickelson

CALL OBJECTIVE IPAW and WIFDN updates, DNR updates including new personnel introductions, CISMA updates which included organizations such as ourselves.

IPAW, WIFDN SUMMARY Spring meeting to be held at Oshkosh Coughlin Center, April 2-4th. Includes a workshop to empower citizens to engage decision-makers about invasives, a CISMA meeting, and an AIS Coordinators Meeting. IPAW mentioned that they can cover travel expenses for one vehicle carload from organizations, as well as lunch being free to participants.

- Anne Pearce:

- busy summer/fall presenting at field days. Keep her in mind for future trainings and field days.
- Trainings statewide for Right of Way Managers
- Michele Jasik:
 - Requesting articles for newsletter. (MCISWG potential here to introduce the group on a statewide platform, including new logo)

DNR UPDATES New personnel introduced; lot of new faces.

- Kelly Kearns:
 - Seeking additions or deletions for NR40 species
- Matt Wallrath:
 - NR40 species for sale- when approaching sellers of NR40 listed species, please follow protocol for reporting
- o **GRANTS:**
 - Mike Putnam: WMA grant. April 1st deadline, 2-year grant. 3:1 matching for a project of \$20,000.

CISMA UPDATES

- Mickelson provided a brief update on MCISWG. Mentioned our 2 successful events this past year, landowners successfully completing cost-sharing projects for 2018 and more landowners eligible for cost-sharing in 2019. Roadside survey of Scott Township, as well as the ID session that corresponded. Trainings for townships and highway department on GLEDN and EDDMaps. Sparta City's successful treatment of Japanese Knotweed along the riverway. Future of the group to be determined in an annual core group meeting sometime in January, which will lay the ground work for the following 2019 year with goals and objectives.

NEXT MEETING IS OUR ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 24TH 1 p.m. Monroe Co Hwy Dept Conference Room, 803 Washington St. Sparta, WI 54656. (608) 269 8739 for David Ohnstad, Highway Commissioner.