



December 03, 2014

WRISC Meeting Minutes

1. Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 10 AM at the Marinette County Courthouse by WRISC Chairman Dick Peterson of Lakes Township. Members of the Board of Directors participating included: Vice Chairman, Greg Cleereman, Marinette County Conservationist; Secretary, Margie Yadro, Florence County Conservationist; Treasurer, Ann Hruska, Dickinson Conservation District; Aaron McCullough, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR); Steve Janke, US Forest Service; and, Corrin Seaman, University of Wisconsin Extension (UWEX),

Florence County. Board members: Mick Mlinar, Florence County Lakes and Rivers Association, and Brian Bousley, Menominee County, were excused. Also attending the meeting were: WRISC Coordinator, Emily Anderson, Dickinson Conservation District; Charlene Peterson, Shakey Lakes Association; Tracy Beckman and John Preuss, Lumberjack Resource, Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council; Scott Reuss, UWEX, Marinette County; Ron Yadro, School District of Florence County/ANSWERS; and Keith West, Professor UW-Marquette.

2. Approval of the Agenda: Hruska asked for an addition to the agenda as item (D) under New Business to consider adding Starry Stonewort to the WRISC Invasive Species Priority List. On a motion by Cleereman, supported by McCullough, all were in favor to accept the agenda as amended.

3. Approval of the previous WRISC Meeting Minutes: On a motion by Hruska, supported by Cleereman, all were in favor to approve the October 1st, 2014 Meeting Minutes as submitted by Secretary M. Yadro.

4. ACTION TEAM REPORTS:

A. AIS: Team Leader M. Yadro stated that the group met through a November 13th conference call and that she appreciated more counties taking part. Members discussed several new AIS discoveries within the WRISC service area along with next season's grant proposals and revenue sources that are currently being identified and applied for such as watercraft inspectors, AIS monitoring and mapping, and treatment projects. It was suggested that additional Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funds could provide expanded boat washing facilities to offer more coverage to the southern WRISC counties in 2015. Coordinator Anderson reported that the two existing WRISC pressure wash units were winterized and put into storage at the Florence WDNR station per a 2014 WRISC Partnership agreement which will be up for renewal in April. M. Yadro asked that the Education & Outreach Team consider taking on the future development of additional informational signage especially as funds are currently available in a GLRI project. Hruska shared a picture of a painted boat landing pavement stencil along with discussing several other public signage options. Anderson felt that each Action Team should consider reassessing their group's priorities and goals in January.

Terrestrial and Monitoring: Anderson provided a November 3rd Team meeting summary that featured a newly developed "Road Crew Outreach" presentation/packet that has since been made available on the WRISC website at www.wrisc.org. The "Adopt a Spot" program also showed recent interest with the Northern Lights Master Gardeners and the Goodman-Armstrong Creek High School both signing up and beginning training and mapping of designated locations within the service area. Anderson further explained that this program may also be used to provide properties for WRISC's Private Forest Control projected funded WRISC's WMA Control grant. In mapping, Anderson reported that most of the data collected in 2014 has been compiled and will soon be sent to WRISC Partners and submitted to the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network (MISIN). Coordinated mapping software options continue to be explored.

Organization & Development: Team Leader Seaman hosted the conference call meeting on November 12 beginning with an update of the WRISC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Following was a more detailed review of chemical applicator licensing and permits necessary for both Michigan and Wisconsin. M. Yadro asked to include a review of liability waivers for landowners and

volunteers and agreed that a WRISC chemical application policy may be necessary for the future. Attempts will also be made to streamline scheduling and hosting Action Team conference calls. Anderson plans to revisit merging the WRISC Strategic Plan and a Management Plan into one working document. The Team continues to review the benefits of pursuing nonprofit status; and, proposes an official "Letterhead" for the organization.

- B. Grants Update:** Hruska confirmed with Janke that the 2014 fiscal year GLRI Grant funds have been tentatively approved at \$45,000 requested for continued boatwash activities, though the rapid response control funds have been slightly reduced to \$25,400. Workplans and responsibilities will need to be designed to primarily include boatwash operators, vehicles, mileage and supplies. It is believed that these federal funds can be used as a match with related state and local grants. Rapid Response control resources are expected to remain consistent with what was available in 2014 along with a new We Energies Strike Team Grant award that is expected to help fund some Coordinator time as well as specific mapping and control duties. Several other small projects are being written as well though funding is somewhat thin for this January. Hruska was excited about this grant round application for the new Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program where local funding was requested for the next 2 years. More should be known about the grant status around mid-February and Hruska has been very pleased with the grant match opportunities offered. Additional rapid response locations and forest management grant projects were discussed in addition to Lake Management Plans could become a priority for Michigan counties if funded. M. Yadro also mentioned the possibility of looking at a Diver's Assisted Suction Harvest boat that could be written as a Rapid Response grant project; or, exploring similar services and equipment with other WRISC Partners.
 - C. Action Team Scheduling:** Anderson reported looking for a streamlined system to schedule each of the Action Teams in the off months of the Board of Directors' meetings. Though all appreciated the increased participation on Teams, scheduling became more of a challenge. Anderson will send out a doodle poll for the immediate future and see how that works.
 - D. Action Team Sign-Up Option:** Anderson developed a signup sheet for the WRISC Action Teams with a description of their mission, goals and activities and who has been participating. All were encouraged to add their contact information for interest in any or all teams.
- 5. WRISC Coordinator Update:** Anderson distributed a handout summarizing recent events attended. A winter newsletter is also planned that she will coordinate through the Education & Outreach Team. Input was requested regarding potential focus species and highlighting Partner efforts. The distribution audience includes a mailing list anticipated to reach over 200 email addresses along with information being post on the website and facebook. Additional print copies generally go to events or specific locations as well as articles supplied directly to area newspapers. Newsletter suggestions should be communicated to Anderson.
- A. Strategic Plan update:** Anderson provided examples of the WRISC Strategic Management Plan which was written into grants that are approaching deadlines. Anderson gave a brief example of its current status and will work to meet the upcoming grant deliverable though more input will be sought from Partners in the future including "Strategic Actions" proposed for reaching the group's goals and objectives. The Board reviewed the planning format and will continue to provide guidance. Anderson stated that she had recently found the strategic action approach helpful in forming grant applications.
 - B. UMISC Report:** Anderson provided informational materials from the recent Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference (UMISC) and reported signing up many attendees to the WRISC mailing list. She also participated in a brainstorming session which involved a variety of CWMA's in different development stages and descriptions. Several WRISC Partners also attended the Great Lakes Conference in Marquette as well where Anderson who presented information on WRISC. No other CWMA's were known to be multi-state. Michigan is now referring to these groups as CISMAs (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas).

- C. Letters of Support:** Anderson shared the Letters of Support for recent grant proposals that involved mutual support to Upper Peninsula CWMA projects including the Western Peninsula Invasives Coalition (WePIC) and the Eastern UP CWMA. Other letters were offered for the UP RC&D and the Michigan Lakes and Streams Association proposals. Anderson asked for guidance in developing a support letter procedure. It was decided that as Coordinator Anderson can use personal judgment in providing formal support of projects that align with WRISC mission and goals, signing the letters as the WRISC Coordinator. In cases where a letter offers a financial or material support, Anderson will communicate with Hruska before committing WRISC resources. All others support letters should pursue Board of Directors' approval and the Chairman's signature. Anderson will also continue to contact Board members by email for comments when possible and as letter submission timelines allow.
- 6. OLD BUSINESS:**
- A. MOU 2015 Update:** Janke had been in contact with the US Forest Service grants and agreements specialist and asked for the template of standard clauses that will be needed to update the WRISC MOU. He believes there are a couple of new provisions and will communicate any further suggestions to Anderson and the Organization & Development Action Team. The Forest Service is currently working on another 4-county CWMA MOU developing at this time with the Timberland Invasives Partnership (TIP). M. Yadro also gave a brief summary from the Florence County Corporate Counsel which had no objection for the County to sign on to the document that was currently drafted.
- B. Road Crew Outreach:** An information packet was developed specifically to reach out to local road crews to assist in managing invasives in road right-of-ways. The packet also included a survey questionnaire and a contact sign-up sheet. As limited grant resources are currently available for this type of outreach effort, WRISC members were asked to help make local contacts and to raise awareness that this information with additional links and training modules will also be posted online. M. Yadro commented on a previous discussion with WDNR to promote additional transportation resources for roadside mowing and suggests this type of focus be ultimately added to the developing WRISC Strategic Management Plan.
- C. Pesticide Application Requirements:** Anderson thanked Reuss for his assistance in looking at a variety of state level regulations for applying herbicides and pesticides and understanding who has property management authority. The Organization & Development Action Team is considering a chemical application policy that should include certification, permits, landowner agreements and waivers, etc. Additional application certifications are being pursued. Anderson will research future needs for Rapid Response Team crews. She will also pursue Michigan reciprocity whenever applicable. After discussion with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), Anderson reported that the Dickinson Conservation District does not appear to need additional licensing if only applying non-restricted chemicals. This item will be reviewed for future integration into the WRISC Strategic Management Plan and look for management consistencies and priorities with Partners across the region.
- 7. NEW BUSINESS:**
- A. Letters of Support:** reported above.
- B. Conference Call Status:** Anderson will continue to research expanding remote access to meetings. She asked for volunteers willing to try out new systems.
- C. Discussion Nonprofit pros/cons:** Originally discussed by the Organization & Development Action Team, Beckman provided more detailed information about 501©3 status and suggests that the group makes sure it is worth the time and money. As a potential benefit, M. Yadro and Cleereman believe that this status change would make WRISC eligible for WDNR AIS grants though some Partners already have this distinction. Hruska reported that the Dickinson Conservation District currently provides many of the administrative/financial management functions and cash flow which is something to consider if WRISC continues to expand and becomes an independent nonprofit

organization. Anderson added that exploring this nonprofit status was identified in the initial WRISC Management Plan. The Dickinson Conservation District is willing to continue in its current capacity as these options are reviewed. Chairman Peterson asked that this be brought back to the Board as more details become known.

- D. Invasive Species Priority List:** Hruska raised awareness of new species on the radar and sees the potential benefits to add these to the WRISC priority list especially for grant proposals. Anderson asks for Action Teams to revise their priority lists. M. Yadro motioned to add Starry Stonewort to the WRISC priority list, supported by Cleereman. All were in favor.
- 8. Partner/Member Field Season updates:** Several Board Members commented on invasive species management efforts within the region. A possible Giant Hogweed patch is still being reviewed for positive identification. Additional Phragmites treatment is coming up and waiting for the weather to cooperate. More Wild Parsnip is being documented throughout the region.
- 9. Any Other Business:** Hruska asked to include a Treasurer's Report be added to future Board of Director Meeting Agendas and reports that there are currently \$182 in undesignated WRISC funds with an additional \$30 invoiced from meeting registrations. Donations can now be made online. Hruska will try to add a grants report to the website. Chairman Peterson noted his appreciation of improvements to the website, and for the detailed reports and meeting minutes. He was very pleased that there are 23 Partners are currently signed on to the WRISC MOU and hopes to see a goal set at 30 Partners for next year.
- 10. Future Agenda Items:** as noted above.
- 11. Adjournment:** With all business completed, on a motion by Hruska, supported by M. Yadro, the next WRISC Board of Directors' meeting will be on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at the Dickinson Conservation District Office in Kingsford, MI at 10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Yadro, WRISC Secretary