

WIRSC Update

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BOD Meeting 4-1-2015
Governor Thompson State Park (Crivitz, WI)

Since the Last Meeting

- Goodman-Armstrong Creek High School Adopt-a-Spot Talk (Feb 12)
- Musky Club Presentation (Feb 21)
- Kingsford High School Env. Science Class Invasives Presentation (March 19)
- Spring WI AIS Partners Meeting, Steven's Point (March 24)
- WI CISMA Meeting, Steven's Point (March 25)
- Marinette Garden Conference (March 28)

Upcoming Events

- Wisconsin Lakes Convention (April 23-25)
- Bay College Career Day (April 29)
- Florence Garden Conference (May 2)
- Dickinson Outdoor Extravaganza (May 2)
- CBCW Training (May 20?)
- Crandon Garlic Mustard Workday (May 22?)
- WRISC Annual Meeting (June 3)

WE Energies Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (MEF) Strike Team

We have just started our newest grant, funded by the WE Energies Mitigation and Enhancement Fund. This two-year grant will fund a great deal of work in the Menominee River Watershed including education/outreach, continued mapping, and invasive control work. This grant funds a good portion of the Coordinator's time and will also support a seasonal employee to conduct mapping, control, and help oversee the Rapid Response team (a returning WRISC employee, Brian Hewlett has been chosen for this position and has accepted).

WMA Coordinator Grant – Wisconsin

This grant is due to expire in May 2015, but many of the funds have already been used. The Coordinator and Treasurer will be looking at grant deliverables and remaining funds to be used.

Strategic Plan Status: The draft has been reviewed by all action teams and a call put out to all members of WRISC at the last board meeting, in emails, and on the website. Hopefully a final document is not far off.

Increase membership base, diversity, and involvement:

Action team meetings have continued, as has WRISC's use of the website and facebook page (see below more more details).

WMA Control Grant – Wisconsin

Just after the last board meeting we submitted an interim report on this grant. While reporting on it, we received more clarification regarding what can be considered "private property" for the purpose of this grant. We had hoped to include a UW-Marinette property with this project, but have heard back from grant organizers that this is considered public property.

On the other hand, we have received applications for two more properties in Florence County, and an inquiry for a third. The Coordinator has completed a full draft invasive management plan for the Cline property outside of Crandon, and has

made significant headway in the Mueller mgmt. plan (property in northern Forest county). So currently, 2 properties will begin implementing their mgmt. plans this year, and 4 properties will be surveyed and have mgmt. plans written. We still have room for maximum of 3 additional private properties to enroll in the program.

Citizen Based Monitoring Grant, Adopt a Spot - Wisconsin

The Coordinator gave a classroom presentation to students at the Goodman-Armstrong Creek high school in February. Some final items still need to be coordinated with the teacher there to choose properties for all of the classes and schedule field trip days this spring. Master gardeners in Marinette County will be adopting the Harmony Arboretum and the Coordinator is in the process of scheduling a training/field day with them. Another possible Adopt a Spot location is the community garden in Florence, the Coordinator is working with Margie Yadro to get a field day at this location. With all of this interest (and with multiple classes at Goodman-Armstrong Creek adopting properties) we are set to meet our goal of 6 citizen groups adopting properties to monitor for invasives: Crandon HS Env. Science Class, UW Marinette Keith West's class, Northern Lights Master Gardeners, Goodman-Armstrong Creek HS (3-4 groups).

With help from the Education action team, a final sign design was created, and two signs were ordered. We will order signs for the remaining groups and use any additional money to order blank signs that can be customized with vinyl lettering. This grant is set to expire end of June. Although it is a small grant (max \$5,000) we will likely apply for another award in May (if it is offered) to continue this work in Wisconsin since there is currently no other grant that could maintain this specific outreach to areas outside of the Menominee River Watershed.

GLRI – Rapid Response

The Coordinator has continued working with action teams to update the Priority Species list. Two summer staff have been hired to work apx 16 hrs/week during the summer under this grant. We submitted an annual performance report for this grant at the end of March. We are still waiting for the final agreement with the USFS for a second, new fiscal year rapid response grant.

GLRI – Boat Wash

Two summer staff have been hired to work apx 22 hrs/week during this summer throughout the grant. A 2015 boatwash agreement with the WDNR was completed and just needs to be signed by a WRISC representative. At the end of March we submitted an annual performance report for this grant. We have also been in communication with Marinette County regarding a second boatwash grant award (new fiscal year) that will be used for a boatwash operator to be based out of Marinette county. We have recently received the final paperwork from the USFS and will be moving ahead with this shortly.

Misc.

Newsletters: The education/outreach action team will be working on an April newsletter.

Summer Staff Hires: In March, the Coordinator and Ann Hruska (Administrator for WRISC's fiscal agent) reviewed WRISC's grants and the summer staff hours allocated to each. We determined that three summer staff hires would be needed to fill our summer staff needs. One position will be for a longer term, lasting through September and into October. This individual will take on a larger variety of work, including invasive mapping, control, management of GIS data, and oversight of other summer workers. The other two positions will split their time between rapid response control work and boatwash operation. Additional part time help may be used for specific Michigan Grant projects.

A single job posting was put on the WRISC website, distributed via email, put on the UW Nelson Jobs Board, and made its way to several college/university mailing lists. For the three positions, two former employees will be returning, Brian

Hewlett and Joe DeClark. With Brian’s experience in mapping invasives he will take the longer term position. For the third position, we received several applicants: local individuals, undergrad students, and a few recent college grads. Applications were reviewed as received, and 6 students/recent grads were interviewed by phone for the remaining position. The first individual we offered the position to declined, and the offer was then made to Kayla Obremski of Sheboygan, WI, who has experience as an Environmental Educator at Maywood Environmental Park and a B.S. in Biology from UW-Green Bay. Hruska is also exploring additional local high school and college applicants for part time assistance on summer projects for WRISC and the DCD.

WI AIS Partners Meeting/CISMA Meeting: In March the Coordinator attended the Spring WI AIS Partners meeting in Steven’s Point. New this year, the Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin (IPAW) also organized a meeting of representatives from Wisconsin Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) to take place the day after the AIS meeting. Both meetings were highly productive. There were updates from state representatives on items such as the NR40 updates, the new AIS grants structure, Non-native Phragmites Control, and others. Both meetings also had some excellent discussion on how CISMAs and AIS partners can benefit each other, and on the needs of different CISMAs. WRISC Coordinator Emily Anderson gave an update on WRISC’s activities in 2015, as well as some recent concerns (invasives on roadways, pesticide use by CISMAs, and some 2015 target species). She also assisted in a presentation on invasive plant mapping by introducing the group to the MISIN website and capabilities of MISIN.

Michigan Invasive Species Grant : Our application for this grant was approved! We requested \$146,000 for a large two-year project (which included a large portion of contract work for aquatic surveys and mgmt. planning). We were awarded \$126,000 and, according to suggestions from the grant committee, reduced our budget in the area of lake surveys and mgmt. planning. We were also asked to clarify some of our proposed match, and needed to secure signatures for some of our letters of support. We have done that and are waiting to hear back if our changes are approved and when we will receive the final paperwork.

Website/Facebook: The WRISC website has continued to be updated primarily with information regarding board and action team meetings, but the new partner invitation and request for input on the strategic mgmt. plan were also put on the homepage. The WRISC website had **244 visitors in February** and **174 visitors in March**. The image to the upper right shows the pages most frequently visited in March (since we had our seasonal jobs posted on the website, that received a lot of traffic). Lower right shows a summary of the pageviews overall and during the month of March.

Content		Pages	Entrance	Exit	Downloads	Events	Media
/	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	143					+741%
/job-postings-2	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	83					+655%
/Documents	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	31					+520%
/apps/calendar/	Calendar	17					+750%
/about-wrisc	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	13					0%
/apps/calendar/showMonth?callD=214...	Calendar - April 2015	10					+400%
/contact-us	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	8					0%
/wrisc-partners	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	7					+75%
/board-of-directors	Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coali...	5					0%
/apps/calendar/showMonth?callD=214...	Calendar - May 2015	5					+400%



The coordinator has also been working with the Kingsford High School Env. Science Class to have the students create invasive species profiles to add to the WRISC website.

Facebook has continued to receive regular updates of invasive articles, links, pictures etc. The WRISC facebook page has gone from 132 likes (at the last BOD meeting) to **134 likes**. The graph below shows the total reach for our facebook page for the months of February and March, where our average reach was 28 (very close to that of December/January).

