

Invasive Species Re-Treatment Cost Share Program

Wild Rivers ISC

Program Information

The Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC), as a multi-partner organization representing five counties in two states, is dedicated to the management of invasive species on our lands and waters through cooperation, education, prevention, and control. As part of this mission, WRISC has been offering management and control of priority invasive species for over a decade. A vast majority of this control has been entirely grant-funded and provided at no cost to landowners.

However, as time goes on, it is becoming difficult for WRISC to secure grant funding to cover the costs of follow-up treatments at sites that have already been managed for several years. Long-term management is a crucial component of any invasive species management plan, but unfortunately it does not typically fit well into the traditional two-year grant cycle. WRISC understands the importance of these retreatment activities, not only to protect our investment of previous management but also to ensure the success of the management in the long term to prevent these species from returning to pre-management levels.

In response to this, WRISC has developed an invasive species retreatment cost-share program. With funding from WE Energies' Mitigation and Enhancement Fund, WRISC will be able to offer retreatment management of priority invasive species at a 1:1 cost-share rate for any landowners whose property has received at least two (2) years of free, grant-funded treatment from WRISC in the past. In addition to management, WRISC will provide landowners with the resources they need to adopt these stewardship activities on their own property with customized management recommendations based on the target species and site conditions. In the future, WRISC hopes to incorporate restoration services into the cost-share model to further assist in rounding out the invasive species management on these sites and to better ensure natural habitat is restored over time.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the WRISC Retreatment Cost-Share Program, a landowner must meet the following criteria:

- Live or own property within the WRISC management area (Appendix A), which includes Dickinson and Menominee Counties in Michigan, as well as Forest, Florence, and Marinette Counties in Wisconsin.
- Property has received two (2) years of free, grant-funded treatment from WRISC for a priority invasive species. Treatment years may be non-consecutive. Please see the Priority Invasive Species List below for qualifying species:
 - Garlic Mustard
 - Invasive Knotweeds
 - Purple Loosestrife
 - Wild Parsnip

- Target invasive species is identified as Non-native Phragmites.
 - NOTE: This species qualifies regardless of the number of years of treatment received. Even if a phragmites stand has never been treated before, it may qualify for the cost-share program.
- Complete and submit application materials (listed below) by the deadlines laid out in the Program Timeline section.
 - Retreatment Cost Share Program Application
 - Landowner Permission Form
 - Proof of Property Ownership

Cost Sharing

Beginning in 2023, WRISC is offering this retreatment cost share program as a pilot program with funding from the WE Energies Mitigation and Enhancement Fund. This grant funding will allow WRISC to offer management at approximately a 1:1 cost share ratio.

The total cost for retreatment includes the following:

- **Standard Base Rate**
 - which is charged to all properties and covers the cost of travel, equipment, herbicide, insurance, permit fees, and staff time up to the first half hour on site
 - Base rate may vary annually
- **15 Minute Charge**
 - An additional charge for every 15 minutes of time on site after the first half hour
 - (\$25.00 / every additional 15 mins)
- **Site Condition Charge**
 - Additional charge for certain site conditions, sites requiring additional equipment or specialty herbicides, extra permitting, etc.
 - (\$25.00/site)
- **Discounts**
 - Pilot Program Discount
 - If you participate in the pilot trial run of our program (during 2023 and 2024) you will receive a 25% discount on all cost share fees for the life of the program.
 - Neighborhood Discount
 - If you and your neighbor(s) all enroll in the cost share program, whether to tackle a shared infestation or to address similar target species across multiple adjacent properties (separate, individually owned infestations), you may qualify for a 10% discount on cost share fees.

The base rate for the retreatment cost share program will be determined annually in January and approved by the WRISC Board of Directors in February. This rate is subject to change year to year to reflect the variations in cost of management, grant funding, organizational capacity, etc.

Standard Base Rate for 2024: \$250.00

A total cost estimate will be developed by WRISC staff during a free property site visit. WRISC staff will assess current conditions and review previous treatment information to make the most informed estimate. This estimate will be prepared on site utilizing the *Cost-Share Site Evaluation and Estimate Form*. The landowner will be provided with a copy of the estimate if present during the site visit, or via mail within one week of the site visit.

In the event that this cost estimate is inaccurate, WRISC will reimburse or adjust the cost to reflect retreatments that take LESS time than initially estimated. WRISC will NOT charge more than the originally estimated cost, even if the retreatment requires more time or more expense than initially estimated.

The maximum fee to be charged is capped at \$500.00.

Payment

Following the property site visit, the landowner will have the opportunity to complete and sign the Management Contract, which is included on the *Cost-Share Site Evaluation and Estimate Form*. This contract will need to be completed before any management takes place. ***The landowner is under no obligation to pursue management following the free site visit and estimate.*** If management is pursued, the landowner is responsible for payment of the amount indicated on the estimate. Payment can be made during the site visit upon receipt of the estimate, or any time prior to treatment. Payment is due at the latest one month after the date of treatment.

If the landowner makes a payment prior to treatment, and the estimate proves to be inaccurate (i.e. treatment takes less time than anticipated), the landowner will be reimbursed the difference. Reimbursement will be processed within one month after the date of treatment.

Payment methods accepted include:

- Check, made payable to:
 - Dickinson Conservation District
420 North Hooper St.
Kingsford, MI 49802
 - *Note: The Dickinson Conservation District is the fiscal agent of the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition and accepts payments on behalf of the WRISC organization.*
- Credit Card
 - Accepting Visa, MasterCard, and Discover

- Online
 - via PayPal at www.wrisc.org/costshare

Financial Assistance

We understand that although our cost share program is designed to be as affordable as possible, the price may be prohibitive to some. If you are interested in participating in our cost share program but are unable to meet the financial requirements, please contact us about financial assistance and cost waivers. We ultimately want to ensure that management of these priority invasive species can be maintained and are willing to work with dedicated landowners to find a solution.

We may ask for proof of enrollment in state assistance programs to verify eligibility for financial assistance.

Program Timeline

STANDARD BASE RATE DETERMINED

JANUARY

WRISC determines annual standard base rate for cost share program and updates program materials. WRISC Board of Directors approves the annual standard base rate for the current year at the February board meeting.

PROGRAM APPLICATION AVAILABLE

FEBRUARY 10TH

Program application is finalized following the board of directors meeting and is made available online and as hard copy.

PROGRAM APPLICATION DUE

MARCH 30TH

Program application and all associated materials are due. Incomplete applications or those received after this date may be denied.

APPLICATIONS APPROVED

APRIL 15TH

WRISC will review and finalize application approvals. Approved applicants will be notified and property site visits will be arranged. The number of approved applications is subject to change annually based on organizational capacity.

PROPERTY SITE VISITS

MAY – JULY

Property site visits will be conducted throughout the summer. The exact timing of these site visits is subject to seasonal variability and plant phenology. WRISC will communicate with landowner regarding

site visit scheduling.

A generalized timeframe for each species is included below:

- Garlic Mustard: May
- Invasive Knotweeds: July – early August
- Non-Native Phragmites: July
- Purple Loosestrife: July – early August
- Wild Parsnip: May – early June

RE-TREATMENT MANAGEMENT

MAY TO OCTOBER

Treatments will be conducted in accordance with the best management practices for each invasive species. Treatment methods will vary from site to site but will be determined and communicated to the individual landowner as part of the site evaluation.

A generalized timeframe for the treatment of each species is included below:

- Garlic Mustard: May through June
- Invasive Knotweeds: Late August to Mid-September
- Non-Native Phragmites: September to Early October
- Purple Loosestrife: August
- Wild Parsnip: June through July

PAYMENTS DUE

ONE MONTH POST-TREATMENT

All payments are due no later than one month after the date of treatment. Any reimbursements due to the landowner as a result of inaccurate estimates will be processed no later than one month after the date of treatment.

TREATMENT REPORTS

DECEMBER

Program participants will receive a treatment report and follow-up materials.

FOLLOW-UP SITE VISIT

MAY – JULY (NEXT YEAR)

In the year after management, WRISC will follow-up with participants to assess re-treatment success from the prior year. This may be a phone call, email exchange, or in-person site visit.

Appendix A. WRISC Management Area Map

