

Ramsey County Cooperative Weed Management Area Meeting

Monday, November 22 2010, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD)

2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, MN 55117

I. Meeting opened at 1:05 pm

A. Attendance/ Introductions:

1. Attendees @ RWMWD:
Ann Hutchinson – City of Maplewood, John Moriarty - Ramsey County Parks, Dana Larsen-Ramsay – H.B. Fuller, Simba Blood – RWMWD, Carole Gernes – RCCWMA
2. Attendees via conference call:
Monika Chandler – MN Dept of Ag., Nancy Duncan – NPS Mississippi River, Laura Van Riper – MN DNR, Tony Cortilet - MN Dept. of Ag.

B. Review of Agenda

II. Action Items

A. Partner Updates

1. Carole updated her activities:
 - a. Possible *Didymo*. sample from Maplewood site identified as *Lyngba* and/or *Osillatoriales sp.* (blue-green algae) by Matt Lindon of MPCA and Mark Edlund of the Science Museum Field Station.
 - b. Yellow iris was removed from the “Not Wanted” flier and replaced with Oriental bittersweet. Oriental bittersweet added to the “Not Wanted” booklets (iris not removed). The Oriental bittersweet flier is now posted on the Soil and Water District/RCCWMA website, but the “Not Wanted” flier hasn’t been updated yet, due to some computer problems. It should be up soon. When asked about the “Not-Wanted” booklet being posted, Carole said that was planned but not figured out/ done yet.
 - c. Seven “Not Wanted” booklets given to RWMWD’s LEAP Award winners.
 - d. Attended MN/WI Invasive species conference. A total of 80 “Oriental bittersweet fliers and 30 “Not-Wanted” fliers taken from reference table along with the sample copy of the “Not-Wanted” booklet.
 - e. Presented “Incoming” Power Point; (brought quiz board, pressed plants and fliers) at the MN Naturalists Association Conference, 11/14 in Hudson. Only 8 attendees; eight of each flier and 14 booklets distributed. Most questions were about buckthorn. Received a request to use RCCWMA photos.
 - f. Contacted Sarah Jaycocks from MN Master Gardener program. She proposed meeting to discuss coordinating invasive plant info for their programs.

2. Monika sent out a mass Oriental bittersweet education email to tree care, nursery and MN Landscape Assoc members. She is also following up on a new Oriental bittersweet infestation found in Winona MN. She visited the site last Thursday (11/18). The bittersweet covers acres in a city park and adjacent resident property. It has not been treated yet. She is working on local educational outreach. Monika also mentioned a possibility of a Star/Tribune article in the spring. There will be a January meeting to discuss how to approach this issue. Monika will forward the link to the MDA webpage on Oriental bittersweet/American bittersweet identification. Carole will forward the link to RCCWMA members.

B. CWMA Budget/Grants

1. Carole reported approximately 421 hours/\$6315 of grant used as of 11/19/10.
2. Discussion of future funding possibilities:
 - a. Carole mentioned finding due dates/being put on notification list for PTI (Pulling Together Initiative), Upper Mississippi Watershed Grant and various National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants. The next BWSER grants for 2012 are due in September. The last grants awarded were only for starting CWMA's.
 - b. Carole asked if anyone was aware of other possibilities:
 - i. John suggested checking into DNR Conservation Partner Planning Grant; Eco-resources Dept./Division that Sharon Pfiefer used to run.

III. New Business/Open Discussion

- A. Carole opened discussion on a proposed Maplewood Invasive Plant Monitoring Program in Maplewood. This program could serve as a prototype to expand within the CWMA. The program would include educational workshops for Public Works and Parks employees and citizen monitors. Recruitment of monitors would include current Maplewood volunteers, Master Naturalists and possibly Master Gardeners. Citizen Monitors would receive free training for an agreed time commitment. A reporting/ database protocol would be developed, perhaps using CitSci (www.citsci.org) or other system. (the complete proposal is included at the end of these minutes).
 1. One question asked on Ginny's behalf: "Does this fall within the scope of the RCCWMA's mission, and is it a project that grant monies could be used to help develop?"
 - a. John thought that it could be done on a matching money basis.
 - b. Nancy agreed that it did fall within the scope of the grant responsibilities, including the garlic mustard and buckthorn monitoring and removal activities.
 2. Monika suggested writing a weekly local paper article as part of the education piece. This is done in Pope County to educate residents about invasives. The articles include photos and background information. Lillie News was suggested for Ramsey County.

3. Monika brought up new/other campaigns such as meadow knapweed and spotted knapweed and that education is the most important component. We need to stop the spread of these species by humans moving them around – most are not being sold by nurseries, i.e., tansy. Movement is mostly through human activities like mowing. Some like Oriental bittersweet is sold, but not on purpose - more because it is mislabeled/identified. Most species are being reviewed and evaluated by regulators and being placed into categories: regulated, prohibited, specially regulated, prohibited and eradicate. Miscanthus is not up for review now. It may be hard to evaluate. Tony Cortilet would know the progress. Laura said that anyone can suggest a species to evaluate and to contact Tony to suggest species.
4. No one in the group had used the CitSci website. The Department of Ag uses the EDD mapping system to map locations of early detection invasives. EDD has a Google mapping platform. Alisha Crull is interested in data sharing through CitSci and that may be easier for citizens to report data – it cuts out the middleman.
5. A Maplewood project manager could/should decide which species to put in and develop a training protocol for volunteers.
6. Carole brought up the survey of metro area city buckthorn program database being created by Andy Jeger-Lehner from the city of Burnsville. She did not know if/where/when that data would be available but would try to find out.
7. Laura brought up the testing/availability of garlic mustard biocontrols. Bugs were being tested, but release would be pretty far out; data would be resubmitted next year and then it would take maybe a year to read/review.
8. Maplewood would need to estimate the number of hours it needs from the grant and determine how it would transfer to different municipalities.
9. Suggestions of who should be involved/recruited: recruitment should start with Parks and Environmental Commissions; others like Shoreview Green Community, Master Naturalists. Trainings for Ramsey County could be done at Tamarack Nature Center, when expanding later. Maplewood should be the prototype. Training should be open to everyone; the Watershed Advisory Committee (WAC) should be involved. Next year (2012), other cities could become involved.
10. Details of who is doing what part will need to be worked out, for example will there be a lead person in public works and parks? Hours and focus are important, as is the way to get workers to care about the problem. Dana suggested to pose the new training as “this is now part of your job... deal with it now or deal with, for instance, mowing wild parsnip when it is everywhere and the associated health risks”. Simba’s suggestion was to pose the problem as “This is nasty to get on your skin. Take care of it now to make your life easier.” Incentives such as coupons to Bleachers, DQ or Twins games could be offered. Talk to Public Works superintendents. Monika discussed MNDOT’s end of the year debriefing meeting, where they discuss what went well, what needs more work, what

could have been better, how to mow in the presence of weeds, etc.” Their annual meeting is already done for this year (now it is plowing season). They are actively looking for invasives – there is a full time person on board with that responsibility. Tony Cortilet joined the group. It was suggested to ask Dewayne Jones to do a presentation. Someone added that Steve Pavek is the person from DOT who does these presentations. Ann Hutchinson left the group to attend another meeting.

B. Tony stated that spotted knapweed, wild parsnip, tansy and Grecian foxglove will be listed. Tony offered to outline his Changes in the Minnesota Noxious Weed Law Presentation, that members missed at the MN/WI Invasive Species Conference:

1. All species that were already legally on the list have been reviewed and have been placed into one of the following categories:
 - a. Prohibited noxious weed:
 1. Control: Management needs to be in place to prevent spread, for example, mowing to prevent seed development. Management for species is defined.
 2. Eradicate: Must be treated and destroyed, i.e., Grecian foxglove and yellow star thistle.
 - b. Restricted: Cannot sell or transport; i.e., the 2 buckthorn species and their cultivars. Removal is not enforced.
 - c. Specially regulated plants (a new category):
 - These are plants that should be controlled in areas where the public could come into contact with them and be harmed, i.e., poison ivy along trails and roadsides. This may include borderline species that may be a problem in certain areas, like Norway maple. Species specific labels may define locations where these species should not be planted.
 - d. There will still be a nomination process at the county level.

County commissioners can petition to add weeds to the list. The petition needs to back up the request with research and present it to the advisory committee. The committee makes a decision one way or another. All reviews are kept in a database. Can petition every year for both the county listings and statewide.

Current list/system has been in place since 1895. There are 2 -3 big changes since. Petitioning to the commissioner takes up to 4 years now. One change is to update annually. One risk is that the enforcement list may get too long.

Protocol was developed (late 1990s) to add species after undergoing a risk assessment by the Noxious Weed Advisory Committee. The committee members represent 15 agencies/industries affected by noxious weed listings such as the nursery and landscaping industry, farmers groups, MNDNR, forestry groups, seed industry, MNDOT, Dept of Agriculture,

Extension, city, and county groups, etc. Factors taken into consideration include background, invasiveness, politics, health, industry/economic, impacts. After the list is in place, the committee will oversee any petitions for additions of species not already listed. The changes will reduce the amount of time it takes to get a new plant on the list from four to 1 year. The advisory committee only advises the Commissioner. The commissioner can say yes or no and has the final say. In the end, there will be significant fines for violations; it is a law. The law defines how management has to be done.

- Miscanthus has not been petitioned yet.

Petitioning format has not been created yet. Petitions submitted by a group like the RCCWMA would carry more weight than one submitted by a resident angry about dandelions. Submit to the county board for listing prohibited weeds at the county level.

-In response to Carole's question about listing Japanese/Bohemian/giant knotweeds as a group or individually, Tony responded that knotweeds are listed by species, not as a group. The first step would be to place them on the restricted list and get them out of nurseries. It is best to have the most supportive evidence. Present a case profile including:

- What is the issue with each species?

- Biological information (allelopathy, etc)

-Why is it a problem here?

-If a problem elsewhere, why is it potentially a problem here?

The public will want to know why something is on the list.

The next phase is to create rule-making categories. This will be addressed at the next meeting in January or February. High priority species will be addressed with the risk assessment model.

-Which should be added to or subtracted from the list?

-Feedback about enforcement

-Feedback from the invasives community

The advisory committee ends in 2013, by law. It may be reinstated by the legislature. If you have any questions, please email Tony.

IV. Carole will send out a Doodle invitation to vote on the next meeting; the second or third week of January.

V. Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm

Respectfully submitted by Carole Gernes, 11/29/10

Maplewood Invasive Plant Program 2011

Maplewood would like to develop a volunteer corps and train staff to assist in early detection of invasive plants. Ideally, this would dovetail with the goals and activities of Ramsey County Cooperative Weed Management Area (RCCWMA). We have a small amount of funding for launching a volunteer monitoring program in Maplewood. We anticipate having Carole Gernes work on this, with support from Ginny Gaynor and Maplewood Nature Center staff.

1. Could this serve as a pilot project for the cooperative?
2. Do RCCWMA members want to participate in developing this?
3. Do members have funding or staff services so we could launch it for their constituents as well?
4. If RCCWMA participates, can we some hours from the current grant to begin planning so we can launch in Spring 2011 (Maplewood does not have funding until January 1, 2011).

Goals for Maplewood:

1. Develop an early detection volunteer corps.
2. Develop monitoring and reporting program for Parks and Public Works staff.
3. Monitor and map 3-5 invasive species (from RCCWMA target species list, especially tansy, parsnip, knotweed) at Maplewood sites.
4. Treat invasions at those sites as budget permits.
5. Increase public awareness about this program and the species being focused on in 2011.

Early Detection Volunteer Corp

1. Recruit master naturalists, master gardeners, nature lovers, sports groups, hiking clubs, biking clubs, residents near parks & preserves.
2. Develop protocol.
 - a. Determine whether CitSci (www.citsci.org) database and program will fulfill out needs. The nice thing about this is its interactive website and volunteers enter data directly, so no middleman to enter data.
 - b. If CitSci not appropriate, develop simple protocols and reporting system.
 - c. Determine how this relates to RCCWMA's official database and map of invasion, currently maintained by RWMWD (Maplewood cannot have GIS resources for this project).
3. Seek funding and purchase GPS units.
4. Identify priority sites for monitoring.
5. Train volunteer corps (training only provided to those willing to commit volunteer hours to the program in 2011)
 - a. Classroom Training Session: Mar 22 (why early detection, plant ID, GPS, monitoring protocol)
 - b. Field Training Session
6. Email notices to staff and volunteers as each species comes into bloom or is easily recognizable.
7. Provide live samples at selected sites (Maplewood Nature Center, RWMWD, etc.), or email site location where volunteers can see the plant in the field.

Parks & PW reporting

1. Do one training session for Parks and Public Works crew.
2. Develop easy reporting system (simple email?, map on lunchroom wall?) Consider appoint a couple crew members to do the dataentry or formal reporting for anything found by the crew.
3. Put flier and live samples in crew lunchrooms as each species comes into bloom or becomes very obvious.

In Addition

Maplewood will also focus on two well-established invasives. These activities would be outside the scope of RCCWMA's mission.

1. Garlic Mustard
 - a. Have volunteer monitors look for new garlic mustard invasions in our neighborhood preserves and other selected sites.
 - b. Schedule groups and/or community event for pulling garlic mustard at priority city sites.
2. Buckthorn
 - a. Continue curbside pickup program
 - b. Remove buckthorn at Beaver Creek preserve
 - c. Prioritize buckthorn removal
 - d. Figure out follow-up removal plan for Vista Hills