

Huron-Manistee National Forests

Success Story

Title



Purple Loosestrife



periwinkle



Autum Olive

From Left to Right are three examples of NNIS in the Loda Lake area- Purple Loosestrife, Periwinkle and Autum Olive.

Rising to meet the challenge set forth by the Eastern Region to create weed free zones across the area, the Huron-Manistee National Forests have proposed to create a 72 acre weed free zone in and around the Loda Lake National Wildflower Sanctuary. By posting Loda Lake as an Invasive Free Zone and using it as an area for volunteer invasive removal days, the HMNF plans on using the weed free zones as a tool to increase invasive plant awareness in the private sector.

Loda Lake National Wildflower Sanctuary is a special place in many ways, not the least of which is that it is the only designated wildflower sanctuary in the National Forest system, and is home to over 200 species of plants and wildflowers native to Michigan. But a number of those plants are not native to the area. Species such as autumn olive and purple loosestrife have found their way into the Sanctuary, and as they are prone to doing, are trying to take over the area.

Initially, the Forests plans on working to remove the invasive species within the Wildflower Sanctuary and then expand outreach focus to include neighboring private properties that are adjacent to the Sanctuary. Currently many species are pulled by hand, bagged and removed from the property. Some species are removed using a hand spray application of glyphosate or a cut stem application to kill the species. The Garden Clubs of Michigan have been the primary

partner to-date in this new effort, however, the Forest has begun an outreach program to find additional members of the local community who would like to assist in this effort.

The Forest has planted over 90 species at Loda since 2005 restoration efforts began. Much of that planting selection is to enhance diversity; however, the greatest volume of seed that has been sown is for creation of a native savanna habitat that would eventually be vigorous enough to withstand or prevent very much non-native invasive species perturbation.

Loda Lake has an interesting and varied history, including a partnership between the Forest Service and the Garden Clubs of Michigan that dates back to the 1930's. In 1937, the Federated Garden Clubs of Michigan and the local Newaygo Chapter suggested the need for a wildflower refuge. It was designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as a Wildflower Sanctuary on December 15, 1949. The Garden Clubs of Michigan continue their support to this day and assist in planning and management of Loda Lake. In 2006 the Huron-Manistee National Forests and the Freemont Area Community Foundation signed an agreement that has enhanced the restoration of and interpretation materials for the Wildflower Sanctuary.