



Public Service Announcement Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

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Who can you turn to for help with invasive species? The Invasive Species Cooperatives of Northern Wisconsin

Invasive species cooperatives are local organizations that integrate all invasive plant management resources across jurisdictional boundaries in order to benefit entire communities. Many are started by local citizens, city, county, state, tribal, and federal leaders to more effectively control invasive species across property ownership boundaries. As in any cooperative, the group gains by sharing the often limited resources available (funds, equipment, time, labor) to control weed populations across several ownerships. This concept started in the western states as “Cooperative Weed Management Areas” or CWMAs.



A Garlic Mustard “Pull” in Presque Isle

Why the big deal about invasive species? Besides threatening our natural ecosystems, these non-native invasive species cost us money in higher prices and can be generally problematic and even dangerous. Think about the farmer who has to spend time and money on weeds; you pay more for food. Think about your favorite hunting or hiking area overgrown with buckthorn; you can't walk through it. Think about your yard infested with wild parsnip; you can get blistering burns when you brush up against it.

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is now a major partner in four cooperatives, assisting with the effort to control invasive species throughout northern Wisconsin. The four cooperatives deal with weed issues in the following counties:

- **Northwoods CWMA** (Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron) Contact Matt Bushman, district botanist 715-373-2665
- **Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Cooperative** (Sawyer, Price, Rusk, Taylor) Contact Ann Hoefflerle, zone botanist 715-748-4875
- **Wild Rivers CWMA** (Florence Co, WI and Dickenson Co, MI) Contact Chantelle Delay, zone botanist 715-528-4464

- **Vilas/Oneida CWMA** (Vilas and Oneida) Contact Marjy Brzeskiewicz 715-762-2461 or Ted Ritter 715-479-3738

Things that have been accomplished this year:

The Northwoods CWMA won the 2008 Wisconsin Invader Crusader award and was recognized at the National CWMA conference. The NCWMA held five invasive species education and control events as part of the weed free watershed series and had a weekly booth at the Ashland Farmers Market.

Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Co-op held two public participation demonstrations on invasive shrub control. They are currently obtaining signatures on a Memorandum of Understanding to work together in the four counties.

Wild Rivers, the first ever cross-state weed cooperative effort, is flowing right along. They are rapidly organizing by holding bi-monthly meetings and manned an information booth at the Florence County fair.

Vilas/Oneida County CWMA is in the early formation stage and has held five county-wide public meetings to begin building awareness of terrestrial invasive plants. Progress has been made producing maps of known populations of the species of most concern to forest and wetland areas.

You can help. By joining your local CWMA you can provide assistance to your neighbors as well as get help in dealing with invasive species issues in your own backyard. By joining together, we can accomplish much more than any of us can individually. Let's all "pull together"!