

**Staff Report | November 28th, 2018**

Andy Teal

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Coordinator

**Grant Updates**

* AIS Grant #5 has $11,501.61 remaining, which we anticipate will carry the program through the end of 2018. We are writing a new grant proposal for 2019-2021. Letters of support are appreciated and may be necessary to land a grant award. The DNR is exploring ways to turn AIS Coordinator grant funding into a more sustainable and flexible (probably contract based) system.
* Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) Iron River has $0.00 remaining. We need to discuss a new place to house the payroll of all the inspectors for this grant beginning in 2019, as well as match sources.
* Clean Boats Clean Waters-Lake Superior has $1,647.39 remaining. We will be able to use boat wash equipment use and staff time operating it as match.
* The Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area grant for the Boat Wash Unit has $16,615.02. These funds are mostly for the operation of the boat wash unit itself, though some can go to the Northwoods CWMA Coordinator for coordinating, and to maintenance.

**Activities Report**

* Helped with Lake Ecology Education Program (LEEP) indoor labs and field day in Drummond/Barnes
* Worked with Red Cliff staff to sample aquatic plants (presence/absence) along Red Cliff Lake Superior shoreline
* Attended theUpper Midwest Invasive Species Conference, Mayo Civic Center, Rochester MN**.** Worked at the Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference (UMISC) to cover registration costs, then attended the sessions at this multi-day, bi-annual conference. As the largest invasive species conference on the North American continent, it brings in professionals from dozens of states and several countries to network and to talk about different species, outreach and education methods, and novel management techniques. I took lots of notes regarding Asian carp deterrent research and management, knotweed management and gene typing, education involving middle schoolers, climate change impacts on non-native species, several aquatic invasive plant species (presented by other states; WI doesn’t have those species…yet), the use of biocontrols as the potential future of management, Eurasian watermilfoil herbicide treatments, and more. Favorite presentations include: a new knotweed management technique using a system to spear large clumps of roots and inject hot water into them. The temperature range is VERY specific-too cool, nothing happens, and boiling water may only kill that clump. The goal is to heat the water to the point that it causes a systemic chain reaction throughout the plants and kills most of the population. From what I could see, it is shockingly effective. Another presentation came from a group called the Prairie Ecology Bus Center. They literally bought a coach bus, arranged to pick up students at school, and took them out into the field for hands on activities. My favorite had to be Dr. James Leary from the University of Hawaii, though. He presented “Protecting Hawaii’s Watersheds, One Incipient Miconia Plant at a Time with Extreme Prejudice”. I hope they recorded it. He craftily worked military lingo into his presentation, while talking about his Miconia calvescens management strategy, which includes a combination of drones, a helicopter with a three-person crew, and herbicide ballistic technology (HBT). HBT=paintball gun loaded with herbicide-filled rounds. He was even able to break down the budget for using these things. It costs them a whopping $0.25/second to run a helicopter for surveillance and plant elimination runs!

One undercurrent theme was that so many presenters mentioned that all these people from all over the country (and to a certain extent, the continent) are doing all these cool things but no one shares them until mid-October on even numbered years (when UMISC happens). Basically, they said so many projects happen in a bubble and don’t get shared quickly with other partners to maximize potential.

* Attended the Lake Superior Collaborative Symposium at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center. The Lake Superior Collaborative was born of three other partnerships, which all merged to bring common interests together to reduce competition and pool resources. The Symposium focused on all kinds of projects, but common themes included bluff erosion, invasive species, climate change, culvert replacement and survival through increasingly frequent heavy precipitation events, and sediment loading into Chequamegon Bay and along other stretches of Wisconsin’s Lake Superior shoreline.
* Attended meetings for the Town of Barnes AIS Committee, Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area, Lake Owen Decontamination Station Group, statewide AIS Coordinators-brought up ideas and challenges regarding CBCW inspector recruitment and problems with boaters sexually harassing the inspectors.
* Attended the annual meeting for the Bayfield County Lakes Forum, updating them on my responding to a report (NOT confirmed) of zebra mussels at Lake Owen-I did not find any shells during my visit, and eDNA sampling may have occurred at Lake Owen and several other northwest WI lakes in October
* Was a guest presenter for knotweed ID at the Duluth CISMA Knotweed Workshop-this was great for sharing ideas about mapping and management of knotweed and building partnerships, basically all along the South Shore of Lake Superior.
* Set up booth at Bayfield Apple Festival-much credit and thanks to Ramona Shackleford, Melissa Kraft, and Mariana Brewster-Brown for splitting time at the booth and making contacts
* Collaborated with Susan Nelson at US Forest Service to plan and create Invasive Species ID Days and the Student Science Research Symposium; we landed the following speakers: In September, Gabrielle VanBergen will speak about native and invasive Phragmites ID and the Phragmites project happening at the Red Cliff, Bayfield, and Washburn waste water treatment plants. In October, we held our annual Student Science Research Symposium with Patrick Goggin conducting a hands-on cooking demo using native and invasive species. The students had a great time!
* Worked with Melissa and Ben on grant writing and what comes next for the AIS Project
* Update on the county-funded Surface Waters Conservation Specialist position: The Executive Committee and County Board voted to NOT create any type of position, be it full- or half-time; however, the money written into our budget which can support the position was left alone. So the AIS Coordinator will remain a contracted position, but there is now county funding to support half the position as “all things surface water” while the other half of the position will remain AIS-likely though grant funding.
* Sought input for the revised AIS No Transport Ordinance for Bayfield County from the decontamination group meeting

**Future Activities**

* Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention, Stevens Point, April 10-12, 2019
* Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference, Hayward, June 21, 2019
* AIS Snapshot Day, August 17, 2019, location(s) TBA