
Vilas County AIS Education, Prevention, & Planning

FINAL REPORT

Project Number AEPP-261-11



**Prepared by
Carolyn Scholl, Vilas County Conservationist
October 2013**

Grantee

Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Committee

Project Title

Vilas County Aquatic Invasive Species Education, Prevention, and Planning

Project Number

AEPP-261-11

Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Committee

Ralph Sitzberger, Chair

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Introduction

Vilas County has one of the highest concentrations of inland freshwater lakes in the world, and more lakes than any other county in Wisconsin. These lakes are vital natural resources held in the public trust by the state. The waters provide the public with unique recreational opportunities and enjoyment of scenic beauty. The lakes are critical resources that sustain the major tourism economy of Vilas County. Recognizing these facts, Vilas County government staff and elected officials work hard at protecting these vital natural resources.

Over the past several years, Vilas County residents and visitors have had growing concerns about the ecological impacts that aquatic invasive species could potentially have on local lakes. As a result of these growing concerns and from the efforts of dedicated county staff, the public's awareness of aquatic invasive species and management of them is at an all time high. Through countless time and effort of county staff and volunteers, momentum created by the original Vilas County AIS Strategic Planning project (ALPT-001-05) has carried on into the present day. It is because of financial support from the state through grant funding, that the AIS Partnership in Vilas County is alive today and functioning very well.

The invasive species management and education program remains one of Vilas County's top priorities, and is recognized as such by the Vilas County Board of Supervisors. The Land and Water Conservation Committee in particular, have recognized the importance of retaining this program and the staff within this Department for this purpose. In 2010 a grant resolution which authorized the Land and Water Conservation Committee to apply for state grant funding and retain dedicated staff to handle invasive species management issues was approved by the full county board.

Wisconsin counties were and have been vulnerable to losing technical staff due to recent drastic funding cuts in state staffing funds. The retention of both staff positions within the Land and Water Conservation Department (Invasive Species Coordinator and Conservation Specialist) over the course of 2.4 years was made possible by this WDNR grant funding. Vilas County would like to thank the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for providing this funding and we appreciate the cooperative manner by which the DNR staff works with us to achieve our lake-related Land and Water Resource Management Plan goals.

The Vilas County AIS Education, Prevention, and Planning program has had a successful run in all of the goals and objectives that were originally outlined in the grant proposal. As noted and detailed in the report to follow, the activities outlined in the project scope were achieved at or above standard in what was originally expected.

Project Scope & Activities

The scope of this project included the following activities and accomplishments. Each are outlined further in the next section.

- (1) Vilas County government will house the Invasive Species Coordinator and the Conservation Specialist staff positions and allocate staff time for all aspects of the project. AIS funding will allow the county to focus on education, monitoring, inspections, fieldwork/sampling and data entry activity coordinated by the WDNR.
- (2) Outreach and Education: Vilas County will host a minimum of 5 AIS workshops per year, press releases, update the website, maintain public contact via an email listserv, assist in updating boat landing signage, and informational presentations
- (3) Vilas County will host AIS Partnership plan reviews (annual meetings) to discuss accomplishments and update the plan as needed
- (4) The Invasive Species Coordinator will expand the watercraft inspection internship program by working with UW-Oshkosh
- (5) The Invasive Species Coordinator will attend professional training venues to keep up with current issues of AIS management
- (6) The Invasive species Coordinator will attend the state and regional AIS Coordinator meetings, local lake organization meetings, town lake committee meetings
- (7) Educational materials will be prepared and distributed at various venues as necessary
- (8) Grant Administration: Periodic accomplishment reports will be created to inform the WDNR of project status; a more comprehensive final report will be created at project end.

Project Deliverables & Accomplishments

The AIS grant project for countywide education, prevention and planning efforts was highly effective in achieving the results identified in the project scope. Many of the accomplishments delivered were mutually beneficial in meeting the management goals of both the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department and the northern region Department of Natural Resources.

Specific accomplishments addressing each project objective are described here.

- (1) *Vilas County government will house the Invasive Species Coordinator and the Conservation Specialist staff positions and allocate staff time for all aspects of the project.*

Due to cuts in funding for county conservation staff throughout Wisconsin, the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department was vulnerable to losing their technical staff. The retention of both staff positions within the Land and Water Conservation Department over the course of 2.4 years was made possible in full by this WDNR grant funding. The full-time Invasive Species Coordinator, Ted Ritter, was

responsible for managing all aspects of the county's invasive species program. In addition, Conservation Specialist Mariquita Sheehan allocated a percentage of her professional time to assisting the regional WDNR staff in AIS related field activities that were completed within the boundary of Vilas County. Together, these county personnel were essential for the successful completion of the goals and objectives that were outlined for this project.

In 2011, the Invasive Species Coordinator focused on raising public awareness levels of terrestrial invasive species in the county and coordinating partnership building with the newly created Wisconsin Headwaters Invasive Partnership (WHIP), a multi-partner co-op serving Vilas and Oneida Counties.

The primary aquatic focus in 2012 was growth of the Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) watercraft inspection program and youth participation in the Purple Loosestrife beetle rearing program. A most notable event occurred during this time. The hard working Vilas County Invasive Species



Coordinator was the well-deserving recipient of the 2012 Invader Crusader Award in the category Government Professional Individual (Appendix A). This award is selected and presented annually by the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council. Vilas County appreciates Ted Ritter for his tremendous contributions to the county and state invasive species programs.

- (2) ***Outreach, Education, Management: Vilas County will host a minimum of 5 AIS workshops per year, press releases, update the website, maintain public contact via an email list serve, assist in updating boat landing signage, informational presentations, and be involved in management activities as requested***

Public Outreach

The Invasive Species Coordinator was diligent in reaching out to the public to inform them of aquatic or terrestrial invasive species topics and up-coming events. Public outreach was on-going throughout the project time frame and was accomplished in many ways:

Local Media - Local media sources were always willing to assist in making the public aware of the accomplishments of the Vilas County Invasive Species Programs. Each year during this grant funded project, they requested information from the Invasive Species Coordinator and annual summaries of events and accomplishments were published in the *Vilas County News Review*. Annual summary reports, in addition to several other articles, are included in this report in Appendix B.

Radio / Television Interviews – Local media personnel periodically contacted the county Invasive Species Coordinator to conduct live interviews via television or radio outlets. During the spring or fall seasons, especially when certain invasive species were prevalent or blooming, media would interview the coordinator and readily get the information out for the public to hear and learn. Ted Ritter’s voice was heard often on the waves of the WRJO local radio station or on channel 12 TV at various times throughout the grant timeline.

Email – The County IS Coordinator kept an email list serve of approximately 225 individuals who had expressed an interest in and had requested to be included on the list received emails. As information became available, emails were written and distributed. This activity was essential to keeping everyone informed on current issues in real time throughout the year. It didn’t matter if they were seasonal or permanent residents, the information was consistently delivered.

Website – The Vilas County website was in need of updating and revision prior to this project in 2010. All Department staff met to discuss updates, web page design and layout, and overall revision and content for the website. Today, the website looks fresh and updated. The Invasive Species Coordinator was in large part responsible for the entire revision process and maintenance of the website. Log in to the new Vilas County Land and Water conservation website at <www.vilasconservation.org>



Signage – Public outreach extends to the lakeshores at public boat landings. During the recent updates of state Boat Landing Signage, shown at right, Ted Ritter was busy distributing the new signage throughout the county in the spring of 2011.

Education

The Invasive Species Coordinator reached out to groups of all ages throughout the years for educational opportunities. Workshops and educational program were prepared and presented to lake groups, civic groups, local town governments, and for school groups. Public outreach was on-going throughout the project time frame and was accomplished in many ways as reported here:

Purple Loosestrife Beetle Rearing Project - The presence of purple loosestrife (PL), an invasive shoreline / wetland plant, had become a plant species of increasing concern in parts of the county. While an aggressive biological control program was launched a few years ago in western areas of the county, no such effort was underway in the Eagle River area where PL was found during the summer of 2011 in over 125 locations. Mapping of PL locations revealed some areas of very high density PL plants around three Eagle River area lakes and in several scattered off-lake locations. Plans were developed by the County Invasive Species Coordinator to rear and release approximately 50,000



Galerucella beetles during the summer of 2012. Below is a visual summary of the activities involved in the project.

5 Step process in the Purple Loosestrife Beetle Rearing Project



Step 1: Spring time dig up of small PL plants



Step 2: Set up of pools for growing PL plants



Step 3: Healthy grown up PL plants



Step 4: Summer time beetle collection



Step 5: Beetle damage after they were placed on plants at the field site

Public Presentations - Over the entire duration of the grant project (late 2010-2012), the Invasive Species Coordinator conducted well over the minimum 5 per year requirement of AIS and TIS related Powerpoint and oral presentations to audiences of all ages. Twelve workshops or specified trainings were given in 2011, and fourteen were prepared and presented in 2012. These presentations included various classroom activities,

training workshops and forums, separate from educational presentations given to lake associations or civic groups.



TIS Training Workshop for County Zoning Department staff



Shown here are just some examples of workshops and Powerpoints that were presented by the Invasive Species Coordinator over the duration of the grant project. Refer to Appendix C for complete presentation listings.



WHIP
Wisconsin Headwaters Invasive Partnership

WHIP is a multi-agency go-op serving Oneida and Vilas counties of North Central Wisconsin
www.whipnet.org

- > WHIP is a non-governmental organization supported by, but not overseen by, county government.
- > WHIP is presently sponsored by Lumberjack Resource & Development Council, Inc. (Lumberjack RC&D)
- > 13 Federal, County, State and local organizations have signed the WHIP memorandum of understanding (including Vilas & Oneida Counties)

MONITORING LAKES FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

VILAS COUNTY AIS
PARTNERSHIP TRAINING

Photos provided by:
Frank Koshera WDNRP

U. W. OSHKOSH
2011 SUMMER CBCW INTERNS



WELCOME TO VILAS COUNTY

Management Activities

Point-Intercept Surveys & Data Management - To satisfy a portion of the grant requirement, the County Conservation Specialist lent assistance to the local WDNR and UW-Trout Lake staff with various AIS-related field operations within the boundaries of Vilas County. This allowed the WDNR to schedule field surveys with fewer WDNR employees and accomplish the surveys in an efficient and timely manner. During the 2011 field season, the Conservation Specialist assisted in a Point-Intercept survey of the aquatic vegetation of Kentuck Lake (a very large 1000+ acre lake) with local WDNR staff, allowing them to schedule two work teams and have the survey completed in less than a week! The WDNR recognized the expertise provided by the Conservation Specialist, especially in aquatic macrophyte identification skills. Very few people have the thorough knowledge required for conducting these types of specialized surveys. For a County with a large lake fieldwork load and a tremendously short field season, professional manpower is essential and this was a huge time savings for our regional partners in the WDNR.

Another partnership item in regard to data collection took place at the computer over the cold season months. The Conservation Specialist spent numerous hours placing Point-Intercept data from both Kentuck and Island Lakes that had been collected over the summer into an excel spreadsheet to assist regional WDNR personnel.

AIS Snorkel Surveys - Additional partner assistance during 2011 was provided in snorkel surveys of 3 Vilas County lakes (Boot Lake, Little Crawling Stone, and Trout Lake) searching for Aquatic Invasive species. The summer of 2012, the county assisted in AIS monitoring and snorkeling of two more lakes – Lake Pleasant (Conover) and Shannon Lake (St. Germain). By county staff participation in these surveys, the WDNR gained flexibility in scheduling and much-needed manpower to accomplish data

collection goals in a timely manner. Collection of this type of lake data, allows the county and the state to gather the information necessary to make sound and informed decisions during lake management and AIS management planning activities.



Private Forest Lands TIS Surveys –

The Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator has provided leadership coordination efforts in recent years in the creation of a multi-agency, two county (Vilas and Oneida) invasive species cooperative known as the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (aka WHIP). With support from its 14 memorandum of understanding signatory partners, WHIP has begun to successfully sponsor terrestrial invasive species public awareness and management programs. Most notable during 2011 was a partnership project to survey over 3,500 acres of privately owned forest lands within Vilas County for the presence of high priority terrestrial invasive plants. Funding provided from various programs within the partnership enabled Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department to hire a graduate student to conduct the surveys. Maps of the survey results were produced and provided to all of the landowners along with species management information and potential sources of financial aid to assist with controlling any invasive species that were found. A final summary report of the project results can be found in Appendix D. In addition to the summary, reports were written and completed for each individual property owner whose land was surveyed as part of this project and are included in the CD of information provided.

Highway Rights of Way TIS Surveys - Partnership grant funding through WHIP was sought in 2012 to enable roadside surveys for invasive plants along nearly 400 miles of county roadways in Oneida and Vilas Counties. The results of those surveys will be

shared with the County Highway Commissioners when final management plans are completed. Plans are presently underway for WHIP partners to provide assistance during implementing Highway Department rights of way invasive species management plans.



Above: Ted Ritter searched far and wide to find and map terrestrial invasive species

Invasive Species Mapping – One of the first steps in invasive species management and control efforts was to determine locations and species densities at each site. While hired consultants typically complete this type of activity for aquatic invasive populations within lakes, county staff took on this task for existing terrestrial invasive populations. The Vilas County Mapping Department prepared the maps from database information compiled by the Invasive Species Coordinator. Lake and county map locations for Purple Loosestrife, Spotted Knapweed, Garlic Mustard, Common Buckthorn, and Rice Creek Curly Leaf Pondweed are provided in Appendix E 1-5.

(3) Vilas County will host AIS Partnership plan reviews (annual meetings) to discuss accomplishments and update the plan as needed

From the onset of the Vilas County Invasive Species strategic planning project back in 2006, an annual gathering of all members of the Partnership and interested public has occurred. The annual meeting provides all members a place to gather and discuss prior year accomplishments and current events related to aquatic invasive species management. It is also an excellent venue to meet with area natural resource managers to gain their positive (or negative) feedback about current happenings. During the annual meeting process the Invasive Species Coordinator gathers information and feedback on local happenings throughout the county. Following each annual meeting, adjustments to the AIS Partnership implementation plan are then made if necessary.

The 2011 Vilas County AIS Partnership annual meeting was held at the Boulder Junction town hall on the afternoon of October 13. The primary topic of discussion was the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program and whether it was still effective, nearing its end, in need of revamping, or perhaps should be phased out. After reviewing statistics delineating what areas of the state are active participants in the program and discussing if boater education at area landings was still worthwhile, the audience of approximately 50 people was requested to raise a hand if they anticipated their organization still having a watercraft inspection presence at their landings in 2021 (ten years later). Nearly every hand in the room went up. The clear consensus was that boater education and boat inspections will remain the best defense against AIS encroachment well into the future. However, volunteerism was no longer a viable means of sustaining the program. A new funding source and a source for hired help was needed to keep the program functioning. As a result of those responses, two significant developments to support the CBCW program were developed during the following year:

1. A new streamlined CBCW program was developed by WDNR Northern Region staff making easy access to non-competitive funds to support hiring CBCW personnel.



2. A program previously introduced on a small scale by the AIS Coordinator was greatly expanded enabling many CBCW program sponsors (grant recipients) to utilize college students for paid CBCW services via a program coordinated with UW Oshkosh.

These two enhancements were introduced during 2012 and resulted in nearly 6,500 hours of paid CBCW presence at Vilas County boat landings during the summer of 2013.

The 2012 Vilas County AIS Partnership annual meeting was held at the Boulder Junction town hall on the afternoon of October 18. The primary topic of discussion was the need for more waterfront property owners and lake users to be monitoring lakes for the early detection of invasive plant populations. None of the four new plant findings in Vilas lakes during the previous two years had been detected by volunteer monitors. All had been found by “professional” monitoring teams who had happened to be on those lakes as part of their random lake monitoring programs. Methods of engaging more volunteer monitoring were discussed and attendees were challenged by the AIS Coordinator to never again allow “professional” services randomly visiting lakes to be the first to detect new invasive plant populations. The challenge was accepted by the partners resulting in two new populations of invasive plants during 2013 being found by volunteer citizen monitors at a stage of development early enough to qualify as early detections eligible for rapid response grant funding.

(4) The Invasive Species Coordinator will expand the watercraft inspection internship program by working with UW-Oshkosh

What started out as a budding program, has now grown to become a great opportunity for many college students to gain real-world experience in the field of AIS management. The watercraft inspection internship program is a cooperative effort between the Biology Department of University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh and the Vilas County Land and & Water Conservation Department. It enables students to live and work in Vilas County from late May through approximately mid-August each summer. While performing watercraft inspections at public boat landings and educating boaters about aquatic invasive species, these students are gaining valuable working experience.

During mid to late 2010, invasive species “containment efforts” became an important concept around the state, thus, the need for continuing and expanding watercraft inspection programs became crucial. Surface waters with known populations of invasive species became primary targets for volunteer inspectors to insure that boaters leaving infected waters weren’t taking invasive plants or animals with them. Watercraft inspection programs became so important in fact, that ranking points for established population control grants were being awarded for projects that included a watercraft inspector program. The growing tendency in Vilas County at this time was to hire inspectors for these activities because the pool of available employees was limited and generally insufficient. Volunteerism had diminished and the need for finding qualified

people willing to work for low wages had become the most challenging aspect of keeping the watercraft inspection program functional.

As a solution to this problem, the Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator initiated a pilot program during the summer of 2010 to hire two students from the University of Oshkosh as full time watercraft inspectors. Lake organizations within Vilas County that were volunteer challenged then contracted directly with the university for a specified number of inspection hours. The role of the Invasive Species Coordinator in the partnership became that for training, scheduling and general oversight of the interns. Appendix F shows an example work schedule that the Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator created each summer for the in-coming student interns. This program was acknowledged as a win-win for everyone involved. The university awarded academic credit and an hourly wage to the interns and lake organizations were able to maintain watercraft inspection staff at their boat landings.

In both 2011 and 2012, the coordinator continued to expand these programs. In 2011, students provided over 1,600 hours of inspection time at area boat landings. Even more interns were hired by UW-Oshkosh to serve as watercraft inspectors in 2012, and the program was expanded to 7 full-time students providing 2,800 hours of inspection time on Vilas County boat landings.

(5) *The Invasive Species Coordinator will attend professional training venues to keep up with current issues of AIS / TIS management*



The world of natural resource conservation, management, and policy is a dynamic force and ever-changing. Employees of the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department believe that in order to serve our citizen lake groups and other members of the public to the best of our ability, we need to be kept abreast of the most current news and information in our field. If our staff has the opportunity to grow professionally, or to share their expertise with others through workshops or presentations, they take it (within budgetary reason). Over the course of the grant project, the Invasive Species Coordinator and the Conservation Specialist attended several professional conferences or webcasts aimed at sharing ideas and perspectives on invasive species management. The following short list are the larger conferences that the staff took part in: the Stewardship Network

Buckthorn Webcast; the MN / WI Invasive Species Conference; Train the trainer refresher workshops; the MIPN / IPAW Conferences in 2010 and 2012; live broadcasting of National Invasives Awareness Week; the WI Lakes Convention 2010, 2011, and 2012; and the Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference.

(6) *The Invasive Species Coordinator will attend the state & regional AIS Coordinator meetings, local lake organization meetings, town lake committee meetings*

The Invasive Species Coordinator was a frequent participant at state, regional, and local meetings. Below is a listing (separated by year) of meetings that he was able to attend and lend his assistance and expertise.

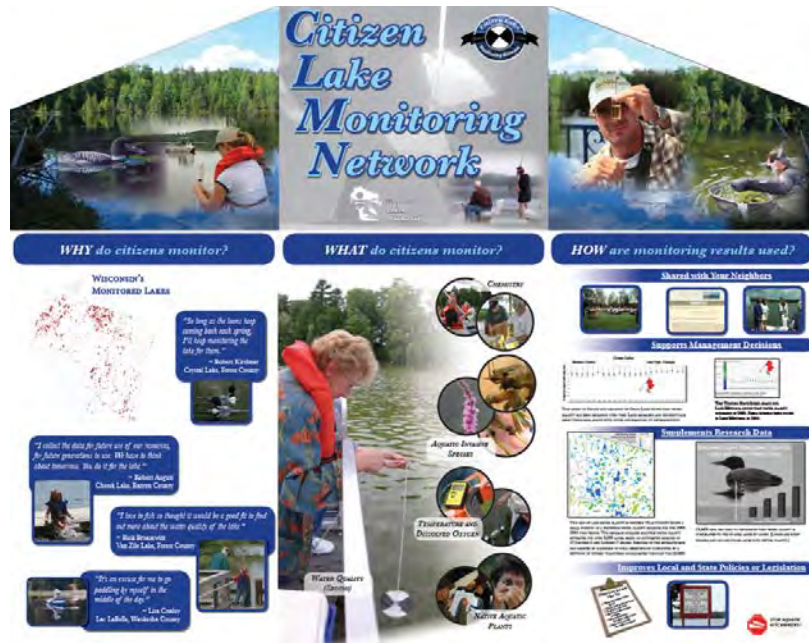
2010		
Meeting Attendance	Project Planning Assistance	Regional / State AIS Coordinators
N & S Twin Lakes board meeting Phelps TLC meeting	Support Letter - Spectacle L District	Regional Fall Wrap up Statewide AIS Coordinators Regional AIS strategic planning

<i>2011</i>			
<i>Meeting Attendance</i>	<i>Meeting Attendance (Continued)</i>	<i>Project Planning Assistance</i>	<i>Regional / State AIS Coordinators</i>
Lower ER Chain Commission Winchester Town Lakes Committee Spiny water flea multi-partner project meeting Lac Vieux Desert lake planning mtg Presque Isle Town Lakes Committee ERCLA BOD mtg - discuss PL control Trout Lake Station - SWF/ EWM bio-control Little St. Germain District mtg Spiny waterflea project planning mtg Winchester Town Lakes Committee Harris Lake Assoc CLP management mtg Phelps Town Lakes Committee mtg Kentucky Lake District Annual Meeting ERCLA - PL control project planning mtg Lac du Flambeau TLC mtg Plum Lake TLC mtg MW Chain Assoc CLP response mtg ER chain PL project kick-off mtg Winchester Town Lakes Committee mtg Big Lake Assoc BOD mtg Kentucky Lake P&R District EWM mtg Stormy Lake SWF mtg with Kevin G	MWLA CLP planning mtg Plum Lake TLC mtg Big Lake BOD mtg Big Lake AIS Committee mtg WHIP steering committee mtg VCLRA AIS lake monitoring meeting Kentucky Lake District Commissioners Mtg Big Lake Conference call mtg ER Chain Commission public mtg IS Council Strategic Planning Livemeeting Boot Lake bio-control vs chemical control mtg Kentucky Lake District BOC EWM planning mtg WDNR EWM bio-control project meeting WDNR AIS policy mtg	Support Letter - Boot Lake Association Mailing Labels - Upper Gresham L Support Letter - Gauthier Lk Stewardship Support Letter - Presque Isle Mailing Labels - Wild Rice L Mailing Labels - North Twin Lake Mailing Labels - Boot Lake Mailing List - ER Chain Commission Mailing Labels - Harris Lake Mailing Labels - ER Chain Commission Mailing List - Little St Germain District Mailing List - Little St Germain District Support Letter - Lk Steward Award nomin.	Regional AIS Coords strat planning Northern AIS Coordinators mtg GLRI - AIS Coordinators planning Northern AIS Coords fall wrap-up

<i>2012</i>			
<i>Meeting Attendance</i>	<i>Meeting Attendance (Continued)</i>	<i>Project Planning Assistance</i>	<i>Regional / State AIS Coordinators</i>
WI Invasive Species Council Online mtg ERCLA meeting WHIP steering committee mtg Kentuck Lake District Commissioners mtg CBCW Re-design Online mtg Winchester TLC mtg North Lakeland Elementary AIS projects Media blitz planning mtg Little St. Germain Lake District mtg Multi county Project RED planning mtg ERCLA mtg Kentuck Lake District Commissioners mtg Roadside survey planning mtg Kentuck Lake Dist. BOC mtg Three Lakes Natural/Cultural Resources Winchester TLC mtg Kentuck Lake District annual mtg Plum Lake TLC mtg WDNR 2012 AIS activities planning mtg Cloverland TLC public meeting Phelps TLC mtg ICE YOUR CATCH LiveMeeting LDF TLC mtg Anvil Lake EWM response mtg Arbor Vitae TLC mtg	Lac Vieux Desert EWM mngt planning St. Germain town lakes committee mtg Plum Lake TLC mtg Winchester TLC mtg Arbor Vitae TLC mtg Twin Lakes BOD mtg Plum Lake TLC mtg ER Chain CBCW intern program planning Arbor Vitae Town Lakes Committee Anvil Lake 2013 CBCW planning mtg St. Germain Town Lakes Committee Black Oak Lake CBCW planning mtg Big Arbor Vitae lake mngt plan mtg Little Saint Germain AIS planning mtg Kentuck Lake CBCW mtg Kentuck Lake District BOC mtg Presque Isle TLC mtg Big St. Germain District CBCW mtg Decontam policy committee LiveMeeting Three Lakes Nat'l Res Committee mtg Anvil Lake Association EWM mtg LdF TLC mtg WHIP steering committee mtg Kentuck Lake District Commissioners Plum Lake TLC mtg	Support Letter - Kentuck L Planning Mailing Labels - Upper Gresham Spiny waterflea project support letter Lake Steward nomination letter Mail Labels Rice Creek- CLP Trtmnt Mail Labels Eagle River Chain- EWM Trt Mail Labels N&S Twin- EWM Trt Mail Labels Upper Gresham- EWM Trt Mail Labels Harris - CLP Trtmnt Support Letter Long Lake District AIS Support Letter - Oneida Co. AIS grant	State-wide AIS Coordinators mtg GLRI - AIS Coordinators planning State-wide AIS Coordinators mtg

(7) **Educational materials will be prepared and distributed at various venues as necessary**

CLMN Tabletop Display - As part of a joint cooperative effort with members of the Wisconsin Lake Partnership, the county Conservation Specialist spent many hours assisting in the creation of a Citizen Lake Monitoring Network display that could be utilized at statewide events such as the annual Lakes Convention. The purpose behind the visual display was to raise awareness levels for recruiting new volunteers, and to celebrate all the hard work of existing volunteers in the network.



The display is available for statewide users and can be requested and checked out of the Rhinelander WDNR office for public use.

WHIP Priority Species Handout – The large number of invasive species handout materials available can be overwhelming and confusing. Since not all species are of concern everywhere, the WHIP steering committee felt it would be beneficial to produce an educational handout listing only species of priority concern in Vilas and Oneida counties. The priority species handout is available in Appendix G.

26th NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP MUSKY OPEN
 The **Musky Clubs Alliance of WI** and the **Eagle River Chamber of Commerce** reminds you of Wisconsin's

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES IT'S THE LAW
 PUNISHABLE BY FACTORY FINE

Before launching and before leaving YOU MUST:

- ✓ INSPECT boats, trailers, and equipment.
- ✓ REMOVE all attached aquatic plants and animals.
- ✓ DRAIN all water from boats, vehicles, and equipment.
- ✓ NEVER MOVE plants or live fish away from a waterbody.

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!
 Forward the spread of invasive species, it's the law.

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES LAW
 and invites you to a **FREE BOAT WASH**

NOW BEING ENFORCED

Thursday, 4:00—9:00 PM
 Sunday, 10:30 AM—4:00 PM
 Vilas County Fairgrounds
 (Compliments of the Ottawa Nat'l. Forest)

Boat Wash Fliers – The “Water Guard” from Watersmeet, MI offered to send a high pressure boat wash station and operators to the 2011 National Championship Musky Open tournament sponsored each August by the Musky Clubs Alliance of WI and the Eagle River Chamber

of Commerce. The tournament typically attracts 1,000 or more participants who fish a large number of area lakes. To help promote the boat washing option, the AIS Coordinator designed, printed and delivered 1,100 half page fliers to the tournament registration event.

- (8) ***Grant Administration: Periodic accomplishment reports will be created to inform the WDNR of project status; a more comprehensive final report will be created at project end.***

The Land and Water Conservation Committee members were updated each month about Department staff activities. At their regularly scheduled meetings committee supervisors received written summary reports from the IS Coordinator and all other staff. The Coordinator's committee reports are available on the CD of information submitted to the WDNR with this report.

The reimbursement process for this grant took place in three phases. An advance payment in the amount of \$25,346.25 was received by Vilas County at the start of the grant. Throughout the duration of the project, all conservation staff logged their activities, work time, and project related expenses on an Excel spreadsheet which was created specifically for this project.

An application request for partial reimbursement of \$43,218.02 was submitted during August of 2012, which covered the project time period from September 2010 through December of 2011. A hard copy written summary of the project status up to that point was supplied to the regional WDNR office at that time. Project details were also supplied in the form of a CD which included a detailed log of information about county staff in-kind, volunteer time donated to the project, mileage expenses, and activity notes.

This report is submitted as the second and final closeout reimbursement request. It includes a comprehensive written report of all activities accomplished during the course of the three year grant period – including new information compiled about the time period from January of 2012 through December 2012.

Overall Project Impacts

AIS management activities are an important priority outlined as a goal within the current Land and Water Resource Management plan. The Vilas County AIS Partnership, funded through this AIS Education, Prevention, and Planning project has been, and continues to be, one of the most important conservation programs in the county. The Vilas County Board of Supervisors recognize that the quality of the lakes in our region have significant importance because they are directly tied to the tourism economy. Additionally, waterfront property represents approximately 70% of the county-wide property tax base. Therefore, aquatic invasive species management activities and coordination efforts have become central to sustaining the tourism base economy of our area. The level of public awareness and public input generated through the AIS Partnership and town lakes committees continue to thrive today.

- * AIS Programming Momentum sustained
- * AIS / TIS awareness is high
- * Proactive lake management efforts resulted where none had existed before
- * Local resource available for citizens to stop by the office and ask a quick question
- * Mutual benefit in the ability to reach annual management goals in both County and State regional management efforts
- * Coordination of effort and partnerships with regional WDNR staff allowed efficient use of staff time and resources

All of the efforts put into this project will have lasting benefits for the lakes and other water resources in Vilas County for generations to come. We appreciate the cooperative efforts that the county and state can enjoy and the grant funding that allows us to accomplish our mutual objectives.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Invader Crusader Award Winner

Appendix B
Newspaper Clippings

Appendix C
Listing of Presentations

Appendix D

Forestry TIS Final Report Summary

Appendix E

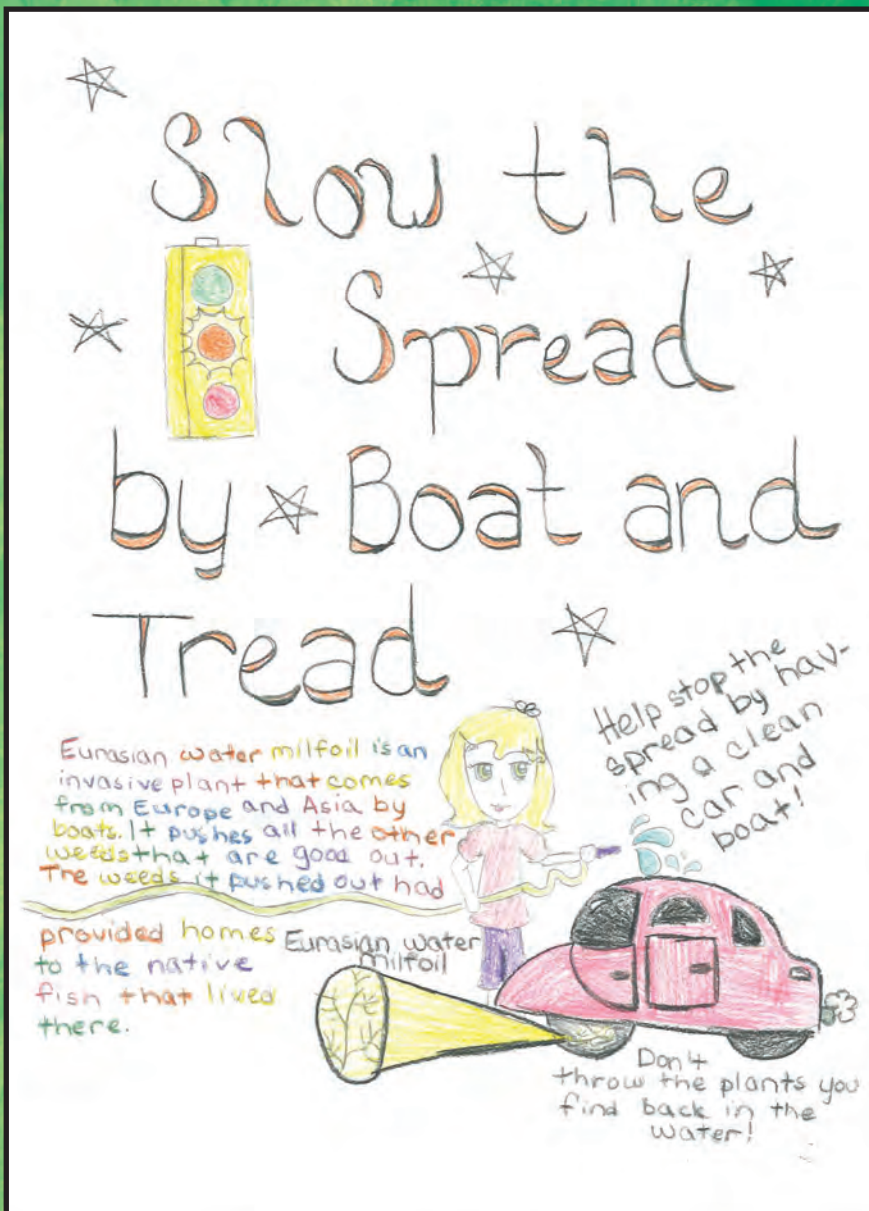
Invasive Species Infestation Maps

- 1) Purple Loosestrife
- 2) Spotted Knapweed
- 3) Garlic Mustard
- 4) Common Buckthorn
- 5) Rice Creek Curly Leaf Pondweed

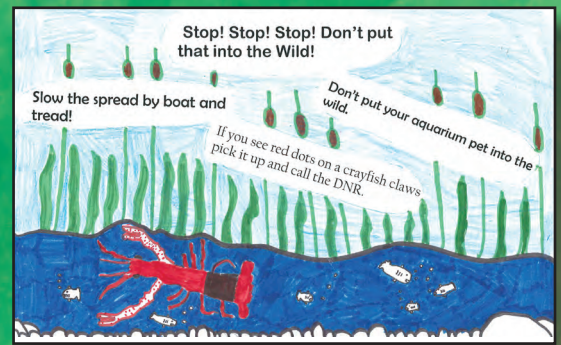
Appendix F

Example CB/CW Intern Work Schedule

Appendix G
WHIP Priority Species



Clara Montes, Grade 5, Kohler Elementary School, Kohler, WI
GRAND PRIZE WINNER



Ben Kangas, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot, WI
FIRST RUNNER UP, 5TH GRADE



Anna Carper, Argyle School District, Argyle, WI
FIRST RUNNER UP, 4TH GRADE



Ali DeLadi, Shell Lake School, Shell Lake, WI
SECOND RUNNER UP, 5TH GRADE

Wisconsin Invasive Species Council

2012 Invasive Species Awareness Month

Fourth and Fifth Grade Poster Contest Awards

and Invader Crusader Awards

June 6, 2012

Olbrich Botanical Gardens
Madison, Wisconsin

2012 Invasive Species Awareness Month
Awards Ceremony
for Poster Contest Winners and Invader Crusaders
Wednesday, June 6 ~ 1 pm

Welcome

Paul Schumacher, Chair of the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species introduces the Council and the significance of the Sixth Annual Invader Crusader Awards.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Jim Reinartz, Director, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Field Station

2012 Poster Contest Awards

Grand Prize:

Clara Montes, Grade 5, Kohler Elementary School, Kohler

First Runner Up, 5th Grade:

Ben Kangas, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot

First Runner Up, 4th Grade:

Anna Carper, Argyle School District, Argyle

Second Runner Up:

Ali DeLadi, Shell Lake School, Shell Lake

Special Mention:

Mr. Suhr's 5th grade classroom, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot

Honorable Mention:

Melissa Zeinert, Elcho School District, Bower

Jordan Herzog, Shell Lake School, Shell Lake

Olivia Cannestra, Woodside Elementary School, Sussex

Dawson Quint, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot

Grace Kostreva, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot

Ava Brown, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot

Willie Blue, Magee Elementary School, Genesee Depot

2012 Invader Crusader Awards

Volunteer Individual:

Eric Tarman-Ramcheck, East Troy

Volunteer Pair:

Martha and John Lunz, Glendale

Volunteer Group:

Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County (YEPS)

Sponsored by Sauk County Land Conservation Dept.
and Sauk County UW-Extension, Baraboo

Professional Individual – Academic / Research:

Phil Pellitteri

University of Wisconsin-Madison,
Department of Entomology, Madison

Professional Individual – Nonprofit:

Jerry Ziegler

The Nature Conservancy, East Troy

Professional Individual - Government:

Ted Ritter

Vilas County Land and Water Conservation
Department, Eagle River

2012 Invader Crusader Award Winners

VOLUNTEER INDIVIDUAL:

Eric Tarman-Ramcheck, East Troy, WI

Seven years ago Eric Tarman-Ramcheck began working as a volunteer at Camp Charles Allis removing invasive species, juggling a busy school and work schedule. His efforts at the Camp continue today, not only as a volunteer worker, but also as a member of the Camp Charles Allis Board of Directors and Chair of the Managed Forest Committee. In 2008, he joined the Board of the Kettle Moraine Land Trust (KMLT), and subsequently took the lead there in the organization's official adoption (via the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin) of the Beulah Bog State Natural Area. In addition, he was key in writing the Bog's Management Plan, and development of the Plant List. Eric has shown not only a willingness to work, but to lead, and to share his knowledge with others seeking to make a difference.

VOLUNTEER PAIR:

Martha and John Lunz, Glendale, WI

For more than a decade, Martha and John Lunz have worked as a team to fight against the spread of invasive species in southeastern Wisconsin. Martha and John are involved with many local environmental organizations, volunteering their time, energy, and expertise. John and Martha's activities are primarily focused throughout Milwaukee County, but their efforts have benefited the entire state. The Lunz's are active members of the Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium (SEWISC), working to reduce the spread of invasive species throughout an 8-county region. The Lunz's have logged thousands of hours leading invasive removal efforts and educating citizen volunteers about the threat of invasive species to our natural flora and fauna. Martha and John's labors to manage invasives and plant a small prairie in Kletzsch park has greatly improved habitat for Butlers garter snakes.

VOLUNTEER GROUP:

Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County (YEPS)

Sponsored by Sauk County Land Conservation Dept. and Sauk County UW-Extension, Baraboo, WI

The Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County (YEPS) is a 501(c)3 organization chartered in 2004, dedicated to introducing youth to natural resources issues, including the impact of invasive species, through service learning. The program solicits projects from groups, organizations, non-profits and other agencies that would meet their goals of exposing youth to the outdoors and introducing them to current environmental issues through hands-on projects. YEPS volunteers have played an important role in maintaining and improving many of Sauk County's natural resources at locations including city, county and state parks, and lands held by non-profit environmental organizations. The main benefit from YEPS projects is the improvement of ecosystems as the result of projects such as invasive species removal and tree plantings. At one event, over 2,500 pounds of garlic mustard was removed from a public park!

PROFESSIONAL INDIVIDUAL – ACADEMIC / RESEARCH:

Phil Pellitteri, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Entomology, Madison, WI

Phil Pellitteri is a renowned expert on insect identification in Wisconsin. He established the Insect Diagnostic Lab in 1978 to identify insects and insect damaged plant material from around the state and has been the Lab director since its inception. He is a regular guest on the Larry Meiller Show on public radio and annually is part of the Insect Doctors display and interactive booth at the summer Farm Technology Days. While his primary focus is on non-agricultural insects, he has done work to help farmers and others understand invasion biology of other insect pests. By raising the consciousness of people to the potential arrival of new invasive species and to contain and control those that are already here, he has certainly helped minimize the ecological impact of invasive species in Wisconsin.

PROFESSIONAL INDIVIDUAL – NONPROFIT:

Jerry Ziegler, The Nature Conservancy, East Troy, WI

Jerry Ziegler has been a volunteer and professional land steward for 30 years at The Nature Conservancy. Jerry leads the effort to control and manage invasive species on TNC's 1,500 acres of Mukwonago preserves as well as on TNC's Chiwaukee Prairie on Lake Michigan in Kenosha County. Jerry was instrumental in helping to organize and build capacity for the Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium (SEWISC) and currently serves as vice president. His work also extends into local schools. For the past 4 years he has managed the Mukwonago Area High School Intern Program. Through his expertise and his actions, he embodies the essence of a true Weed Warrior, ever patient but always persistent towards and end goal of making the natural communities healthy and viable for the future.

PROFESSIONAL INDIVIDUAL - GOVERNMENT:

Ted Ritter, Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department, Eagle River, WI

Ted Ritter has a passion for protecting natural resources in the Northwoods and has been relentless in seeking partners and pursuing funding sources. Ted's position as the Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator provided him with the opportunity to take the lead in creating a multi-agency, two county (Vilas and Oneida) cooperative invasive species management area (CISMA) known as the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (WHIP). Ted spearheaded the formation of this cooperative invasive species management area to bring about public awareness of terrestrial invasives and bring together federal, tribal, state, county, non-profit and private land managers, as well as natural resource education schools to work cooperatively on invasives issues across all jurisdictions. In 2011, Ted worked with WHIP partners to survey over 3,500 acres of privately owned forest lands within Vilas County for the presence of high priority terrestrial invasive plants. Federal, state, and private lands and waters in both counties are positively affected by his work.



**Congratulations to the 2012 Fourth and Fifth Grade
Poster Contest Winners and Invader Crusaders.
Your efforts will inspire many for years to come.**

The Legislature created the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council in 2001. The council is charged with providing recommendations to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on invasive species classification and allocation of funds of invasive species control, and conducting studies of issues related to controlling invasive species.

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VILAS COUNTY

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VOL. 127, NO. 8

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2012

Walleye bag limits adjusted on 27 lakes in four counties

By GARY RIDDERBUSCH
NEWS-REVIEW EDITOR

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has adjusted sport angler daily walleye bag limits on 250 lakes speared by Chippewa bands in the Ceded Territory, including the 27 lakes in Vilas, Oneida and Forest counties.

"This year's early spring gave us the opportunity to make final adjustments in bag limits for the first time ever before the opening of fishing season," said DNR

Secretary Cathy Stepp. "Fishing is the cornerstone of the North's tourism industry. People are eager to get this information as early as possible."

The DNR made the announcement for the revised bag limits last Wednesday, May 2, and the opening weekend of fishing season was May 5 and 6.

The early warm spring weather followed by a cool spell led to a long spearing season. Tribal spearmen harvested 32,308 walleye from 184 different lakes, through April 30. Tribal declarations

totalled 54,507 walleye.

Of the roughly 900 walleye lakes in the Ceded Territory, 165 now have a daily sport angler bag limit of three, 83 have a daily bag limit of two, one has a daily bag limit of one, and one lake is catch-and-release only. All other lakes have a daily bag limit of five unless otherwise listed in the 2012-'13 Guide to Wisconsin Hook and Line Fishing Regulations.

Ten lakes in Oneida County were revised from the two-fish walleye bag limit to a three-fish limit, including six lakes on the Three Lakes

Chain: Big Stone, Fourmile, Island, Laurel, Little Fork and Long. The other lakes are Julia, Moen, Rhineland Flowage and Sevenmile.

In Vilas County, six lakes went from a two-fish limit to a three-fish walleye bag limit, including Annabelle, Black Oak, Crab, Cranberry, High and North Turtle. Big St. Germain dropped from a three-fish to a two-fish limit.

In Forest County, six lakes went from a two-fish to a three-fish limit, including Crane, Howell, Mole, Picker-

To SPEARING, Pg. 6A



Runners headed for the finish line at Riverview Park in last year's Journeys Marathon. —STAFF PHOTO

Journeys set this Saturday

By ANTHONY DREW
NEWS-REVIEW ASST. EDITOR

Nearly 800 runners from across the Midwest have already registered for the 16th annual Journeys Marathon on a scenic racecourse through Vilas County this Saturday, May 12.

"We are at 790 runners right now, which is up probably by more than 50 from last year," said Kim Emerson, events coordinator for the sponsoring Eagle River Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center.

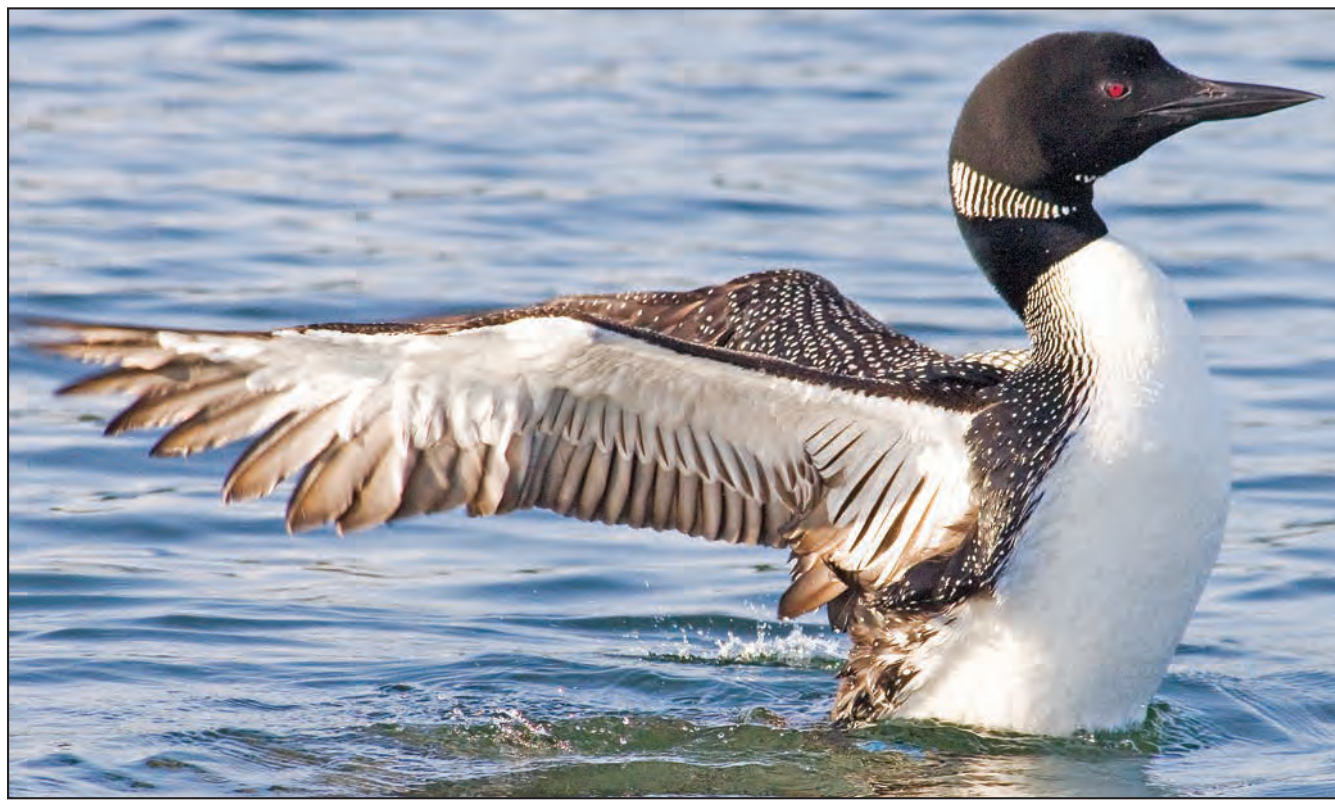
Last year's Journeys — including the marathon, half-marathon, power walk and 5-kilometer (5K) events — attracted 907 participants.

Emerson said event volun-

teers still are needed for set-up Friday and Saturday mornings; at the registration tent at Northland Pines High School Saturday morning; at the finish line Saturday afternoon from 12:30 to 4 p.m. to hand out medals and blankets to runners; and for cleanup from 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday.

"It's the volunteers that help make this a success," said Emerson. "This event takes over 250 volunteers to get it to go. Hopefully, there are still a few people out there who would give me a call at the chamber who are

To JOURNEYS, Pg. 2A



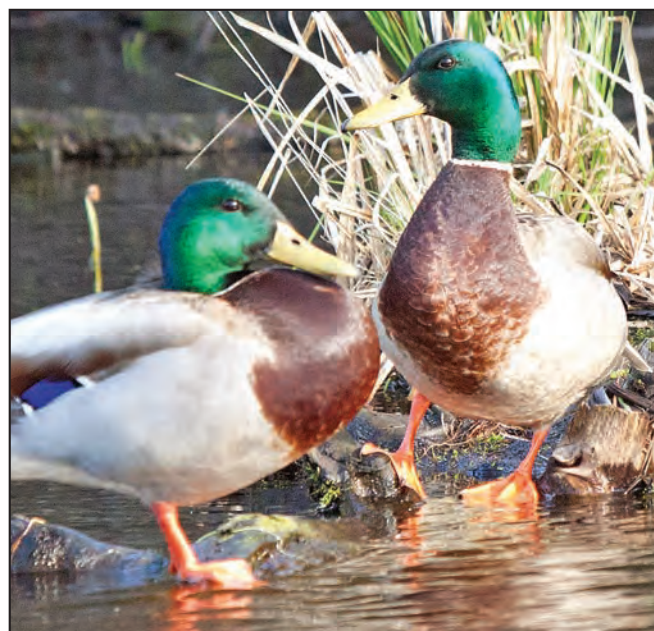
LAKES ALIVE — The lakes and rivers of the North Woods are teaming with wildlife as May brings warmer temperatures to spring, the season of new life.

Above: A common loon stretches its wings after repeated dives for perch in deep water.

Left: An American bald eagle branches from a white birch branch along the shores of the Three Lakes Chain.

Below: Two drake mallards hang out near nest sites.

—Staff Photos By KURT KRUEGER



Dr. Moe reinstated following suspension

By GARY RIDDERBUSCH
NEWS-REVIEW EDITOR

An Eagle River doctor who was suspended by the state's Medical Examining Board April 18 has been reinstated, though he is restricted on medications he can prescribe.

Dr. Terrence Moe, who saw his license suspended by the board less than a month ago for keeping insufficient physical examination documents and continuing to prescribe opiate pain medications to a patient despite indications the symptoms of drug addiction, was reinstated May 1.

A Medical Examining Board (MEB) investigation into Moe's private practice began after the death of the



DR. TERRENCE MOE

what was later determined to be a drug overdose.

The suspension also came

To MOE, Pg. 2A

Eagle poisoning case at landfill is resolved

An agreement has been reached between the Department of Justice and Jennifer M. Primich, 37, of Phelps, in connection with the accidental poisoning of bald eagles April 9, 2011, at a landfill near Eagle River.

U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin John W. Vaudreuil made the announcement Wednesday a little more than a year after the incident at the Highway

G Landfill.

Seven bald eagles were found comatose and near death near the landfill April 9, 2011. An investigation conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) established that the eagles were poisoned accidentally after feeding on the remains of

To EAGLES, Pg. 2A

Purple loosestrife control project to employ beetles to eat invasive

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-REVIEW

A multi-partner community effort has been launched to begin controlling purple loosestrife plants in the Eagle River area.

The project will employ Galerucella beetles as biological control agents to reduce the growth and reproduction of plants established in the area.

An invasive wetland and shoreline plant with tall attractive flowers, purple loosestrife is a persistent perennial that crowds out native vegetation and creates monocultures in areas where it becomes established, according to Ted Ritter, Vilas County invasive species coordinator.

Ritter said a single

To LOOSESTRIFE, Pg. 3A



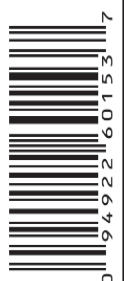
Vilas County invasive species coordinator Ted Ritter (right) and a Northland Pines student John Timmons pull purple loosestrife roots from an area property. —Contributed Photo

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Lady Jays still on top of NLC

■ The Three Lakes girls softball team improved to 8-0 in conference play.

Pg. 11A



NEWS

It's almost time to play ball at Oldenburg

By KEN ANDERSON
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Softball will be played at Oldenburg Sports Park on Highway G this summer after lease agreements between the softball association and the county Forestry & Land Committee were approved last week.

Softball spokesperson Pat Weber said there were only a few questions that needed to be discussed, including alcohol consumption by adult softball players.

"Players bring coolers of beer and I see it as being no different than a picnic at Eagle Lake Park," Weber told the committee. "We're not selling it, but if we had a tournament and wanted to sell beer, we would have to get the proper license."

Mike Keiffer, representing the youth soccer association, was concerned about alcohol consumption at the park.

"Drinking was my concern," he told the committee. "We have 180 soccer kids running around out there."

But Weber said he felt there wouldn't be a big problem since most softball games don't start until the evening, usually around 7 p.m.

County Corporation Counsel Martha Milanowski said she felt both groups could work it out.

"I don't want to see the county enforce alcohol time limits, but if it becomes an issue, I'm sure we'll hear about it," she told the committee. "On the issue of concealed carry, we'll need to post the building, but we can't prohibit concealed carry on the grounds."

Weber suggested the county keep the Little League baseball field at the fairgrounds for a while since there are a number of young teams with limited fields.

Leases will be presented to the county board for approval in June and, with the lights for the ball field set to be placed, it will be "Play ball" at Oldenburg Sports Park yet this summer.

ATV meeting
The committee set a tentative date of Friday, May 18, for a joint meeting of the county Highway and Forestry committees, along with representatives of the Phelps Town Board, to act on a request to establish an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) route on Highway A to the Forest County line. The meeting will be at the courthouse at 9 a.m.
Supervisor Ron DeBruyne

distributed the results of a yearlong study of ATV use and spending done by UW-Extension in Green Lake County using a former railroad grade in Green, Lafayette and Iowa counties.

"A railroad in Monroe wanted to again use part of the grade to operate trains, putting tracks back on the grade of this 60-mile-long trail," DeBruyne said. "They did 730 face-to-face interviews with actual trail users. Average age of users was mid-40s, so we're not talking about kids."

The study found individual nonlocal trail users spent between \$175 and \$220 per trip, with spending exceeding \$13 million into the local economy over 12 months, supporting almost 190 local jobs and contributing almost \$3 million in employee compensation for local residents.

"Phelps and every community need help in these economic times," said DeBruyne.

Timber sales
Timber sale bids were opened for 16 tracts of county forestland, with the committee accepting the high bids for each tract.

The sale with the highest bid was a large aspen sale in the Pickerel Creek area. Futurewood, a Hayward firm, submitted a bid of \$60,258.

The total value of the sales was \$332,776. Successful bidders have two years to complete the cutting after a sale contract is approved by the Forestry Department staff.

April revenue from harvesting was \$24,120, bringing the total revenue for the year to \$73,528.

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Northland Pines students planted purple loosestrife roots in pots, wrapped them with mesh nets and placed them in shallow pools where they will grow to large plants. It is hoped that the bio-control project will raise approximately 50,000 Galerucella beetles that can be used to feed on other invasive purple loosestrife plants in the area. —Contributed Photos

Loosestrife: beetles will be used in project

FROM PAGE 1A

mature plant can produce millions of seeds annually which may lay dormant for several years, then germinate rather suddenly resulting in large populations.

"Not only are native plants lost, so are the birds, insects, reptiles, fur-bearing animals and whatever other life depends on native wetland plants for food and shelter," said Ritter.

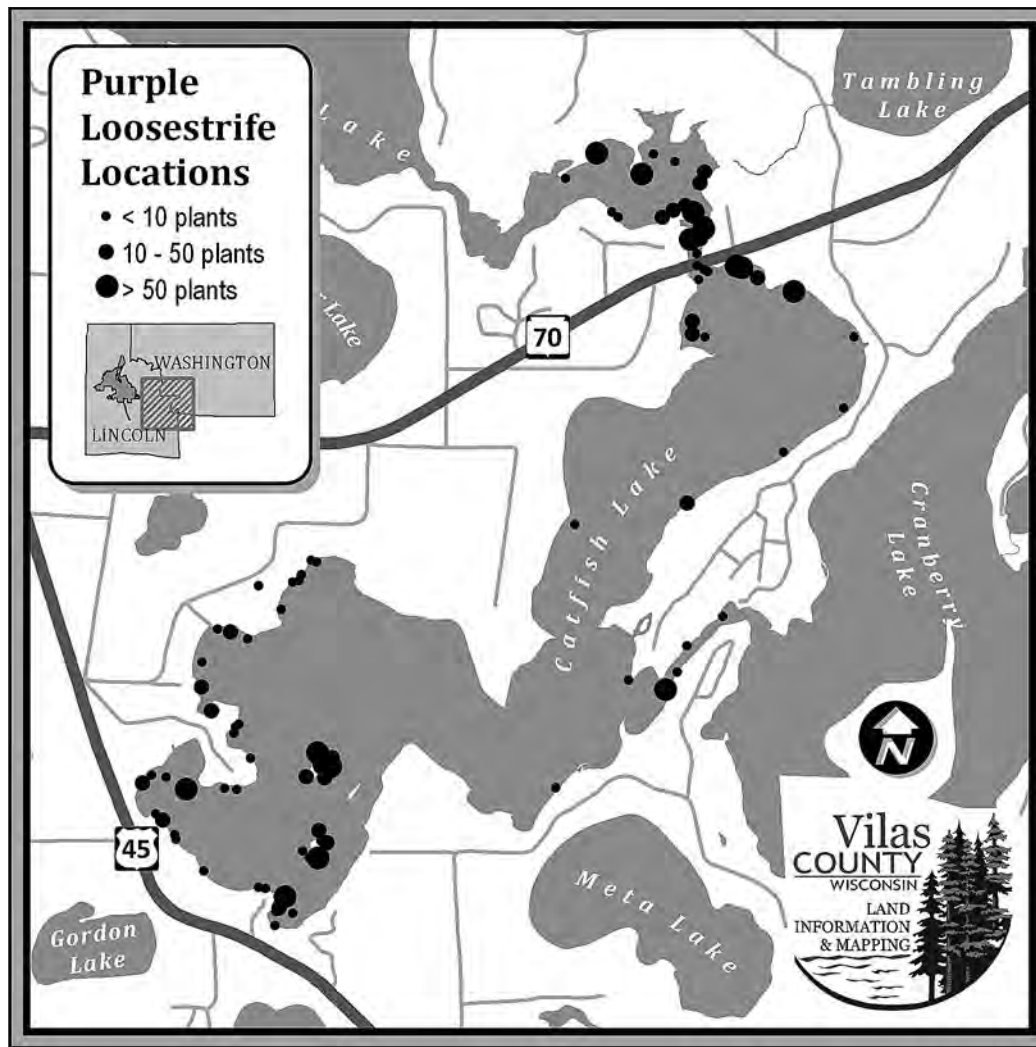
The community project involves the partnership of the Eagle River Chain of Lakes Association (ERCLA), students from Northland Pines High School (NPHS), and the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation, Mapping, Forestry and Highway departments.

During late summer of 2011, Ritter solicited the help of the ERCLA to search the 70 shoreline miles of the Chain of Lakes for plants while they were in bloom.

The Vilas County Mapping Department used the data to create a map identifying areas with high concentration of plants on portions of Voyageur and Catfish lakes, the thoroughfare between them and two islands in Catfish Lake. Other scattered sites in roadside ditches and lowlands throughout the Eagle River area are also known to contain purple loosestrife.

Sixteen NPHS students dug purple loosestrife roots last Wednesday as part of the school's Earth Day recognition. The roots were then taken to the Vilas County Forestry and Highway departments grounds on Highway 45 North where the students planted them in 50 pots. They also were fertilized, wrapped with fine mesh nets and placed in shallow pools of water where they will grow to large plants.

Volunteers will collect 500



Galerucella beetles in early June from plants where a biocontrol project has been under way the past several years. Ten beetles will be released in each netted pot and are expected to reproduce to approximately 50,000 beetles in six weeks.

"The beetle depends entirely on purple loosestrife plants for survival and reproduction," explained Ritter. "Having the ability to fly only short distances to other nearby host plants, the insects have proven not to be pests to other plants, animals or humans."

The beetles will have eaten most of the potted loose-

strife plants by mid-July, according to Ritter. Volunteers will then transport the netted pots and beetles to sites where the beetles will be released to control populations of purple loosestrife.

The beetles are expected to burrow into the root crowns of the plants during fall, according to Ritter, then awaken next spring to continue reproducing and eating the leaves of their host plants.

"The damage caused to the plants by both larval stage and adult beetles prevent flowering and seed production," said Ritter. "It also reduces the ability of the

plants to photosynthesize, further weakening the plants. Without purple loosestrife plants to live on, the insects die."

This method of loosestrife biocontrol has been employed in Wisconsin for more than 10 years without adverse affects, according to Ritter.

Others contributing to the project include Boat Sport Marina, Nelson's Ace Hardware, Horant's Gardener's Gate, Hanson's Garden Village and Lorin Johnson.

For more information on purple loosestrife or the project, contact Ritter at the Vilas County Courthouse at (715) 479-3738.



Participating in the bio-control project were, front row from left, Stephanie Krus, Elizabeth Krueger, Adrian Adams, Cassie Dehn, Kali Ebert, Brittany Schelk, Samantha Caramanidis, Jordan Wel-

netz, Amy Price and Deb Obrodovich; back row, Ted Ritter, Alex Ruetz, Trey Warwick, Taylor Pepper, Devin Dotson, Cooper Anderson, Joseph Goodrum, Shawn Simonis and John Timmons.

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AIS

FROM PAGE 25

(CBCW) watercraft inspection program is regarded as the most effective means of educating transient boaters as they arrive at boat landings either to launch or remove boats. CBCW inspectors logged 4,896 hours at Vilas County landings in 2011, up 5% from 4,663 hours in 2010.

Although support for the program remains strong, a tendency to rely less on volunteers and more on paid inspectors continues to evolve. Volunteers accounted for 44% of the hours in 2011, down from 61% in 2010. This trend is likely to continue as available volunteers continue to diminish after many years of dedicated service.

Loosestrife

While EWM control is making good advances, a shoreline/wetland invasive plant has been spreading in areas of Vilas County.

Purple loosestrife is a seemingly harmless and attractive plant in its early stages of development, but it has the ability to become very aggressive and environmentally damaging if allowed to grow and reproduce unchecked.

This plant has been problematic in areas of Lac du Flambeau and Manitowish Waters where management efforts have been under way the past few years.

A survey in the Eagle River area this past summer revealed 125 purple loosestrife locations ranging from less than 10 plants per site to more than 50. Most of the findings were on shorelines around the lower 10 lakes of the Eagle River Chain.

Plans are under way to launch a 2012 citizen-based Eagle River area purple loosestrife awareness and control program. The primary control method will be biological using a non-native insect that has proven very effective and non-problematic for more than 15 years in many areas of Wisconsin. More information about the program and how to participate in it will be announced later this winter.

Terrestrial invasives

Wisconsin law defines invasives as "non-indigenous species whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause economic harm, environmental harm or harm to human health."

Area landowners are gradually learning why terrestrial (non-aquatic) plants such as garlic mustard, Asian honeysuckles, Japanese knotweed,

European swamp thistle, common buckthorn and others qualify for that definition and how they are spreading across the northern Wisconsin landscape.

Professional foresters have known for years how earth worms are slowly spreading through northern hardwood stands and destroying the thick layers of leaf litter. This is resulting in loss of the once lush understory that now consists of few native plants and even fewer tree seedlings.

Stopping the introduction of earthworms by anglers and gardeners in northern Wisconsin would help this important understory.

To aid in the battle against terrestrial invasives, the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (WHIP) has been formed.

This cooperative approach to invasive species awareness and management in Vilas and Oneida counties consists of 13 federal, state, county and local partners which have formed a

memorandum of understanding (essentially a formal handshake and agreement to share resources).

The co-op is currently seeking funding to conduct roadside invasive plant surveys along nearly 400 miles of Vilas and Oneida county highways during 2012.

Survey results will be portrayed on maps produced by the mapping departments of both counties. The maps will be shared with county highway commissioners during discussions of the development of invasive species management plans for county highway rights of way.

WHIP also sponsored a project during this past summer which resulted in surveying more than 3,000 acres of privately owned woodlands in Vilas County for the presence of invasive plants. Participating property owners received maps of the survey results and information about funding programs available for helping private landowners manage harmful invasive plants.

The WHIP partners are available to speak to groups, large or small, in either county about understanding, identifying and managing invasive species. Requests for a speaker should be made to the following Land & Water Conservation Department contacts: Vilas County, Ted Ritter, (715) 479-3738, teritt@co.vilas.wi.us; or Oneida County, Jean Hansen, (715) 369-7837, jhansen@co.oneida.wi.us



A terrestrial invasive, the garlic mustard plant, has been found in Vilas County.

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Boat inspections remain top choice to slow AIS spread

Inspectors log 5,000 hours in Vilas, Oneida counties

BY GARY RIDDERBUSCH
NEWS-REVIEW EDITOR

It was another record-breaking season for watercraft inspections in 2010, as volunteers and others inspected boats and educated boaters and anglers on the importance of taking action to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS).

The movement of recreational boats from one lake to another is still regarded as the primary source of spread of AIS through Wisconsin's inland water bodies, according to Ted Ritter, Vilas County invasive species coordinator.

"While boater hygiene is improving, there is still need to prompt changes in transient boater behavior," said Ritter.

During 2010 inspections, volunteers and paid inspectors, known as "water guards,"

found that 18% of boats had been in another water body in the previous five days.

Ritter said the "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" watercraft inspection program is the most effective means for accomplishing that behavior.

Statewide, 65,831 boats were inspected by volunteers and paid inspectors, 142,104 people were contacted about the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program and more than 38,800 hours were spent conducting watercraft inspections.

Vilas County has been a substantial contributor to the success of the program since its beginning, according to Ritter.

"That is as it should be,
To INSPECTORS, Pg. 2

Inspectors: FROM PAGE 1

considering there are nearly 200 boating access points to Vilas County's 1,320-plus lakes," he said. "Those landings are used by locals and visitors alike."

During the summer of 2010, the busiest of those Vilas County landings were manned by volunteers who donated 2,941 hours of their time to talk to boaters after being trained in the principles of watercraft inspecting. Another 1,613 hours were provided by paid inspectors. In total, contact was made with 15,126 boaters.

In Oneida County, 10,594 boats were inspected and people made contact with 23,530 boaters. Oneida County volunteers and paid inspectors logged 5,747 hours educating boaters at landings, including 1,206 hours at landings on the Three Lakes Chain of Lakes.

While volunteers are key to the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program, Ritter said the volunteerism is difficult to sustain.

"Even the most ardent supporters of the local AIS initiative eventually burn out faster than new recruits can be found," he said. "New ways of manning boat landings must be found if the program is to hang around long enough to outlive its need."

Ritter said "creative partnering" has become the new

catch phrase for finding solutions to this challenge. At least two local organizations are coming up with new ideas to man the boat landings.

For example, the Big St. Germain Lake District enticed the local Lions Club to perform several hundred hours of watercraft inspections during 2010.

Meanwhile, the County Land & Water Conservation Department worked with the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh to develop a program whereby student interns were provided summer housing in Vilas County, mileage reimbursement, a modest hourly wage and academic credit for 400 hours each of watercraft inspection services. Ritter said that program will expand significantly in 2011.

"Other means of 'paying' people through sharing of resources to accomplish multiple goals are sure to be found to keep the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program going strong for at least a few years longer," said Ritter.

The goal of the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program is to share information about Wisconsin's AIS regulations, encourage people to drain all their water and clean plants off their boat and equipment to prevent the transport of AIS to other inland lakes.

Editor's Opinion

Volunteer boat inspectors are true conservationists

As aquatic invasive species (AIS) become an increasing threat to water quality, fisheries, recreation and property values across the lake country of Vilas and Oneida counties, we are fortunate that hundreds of true conservationists have stepped forward to protect our lakes.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reports that 11,640 were logged by volunteer boat inspectors during 2010 — 30% of the total hours statewide. Another 27,160 hours of inspections were conducted by paid personnel, which includes the 10 DNR Water Guards who enforce laws at boat landings across the state.

The really impressive part, from a conservation perspective, is that 75% of the volunteer hours were logged in these two counties. That's right, volunteers put in 8,688 hours watching boat landings in Vilas and Oneida, including 1,206 hours on the Three Lakes Chain.

Volunteers are certified through the Clean Boats Clean Waters program to inspect boats, collect data and share vital awareness information with boat owners. In the battle against AIS, they are warriors who've chosen to put themselves on the front lines.

Because of their dedication and hard work, we know vital information — like that 18% of the boats had been in another water body in the previous five days, and that 88% said they drained all water from their fish and livewell. Those statistics really illustrate the importance of having trained inspectors who can effectively approach people who are recreating.

The program meant the inspection of a record 65,831 boats across the state, 50% more than just two years ago. Some of those boats and trailers contained Eurasian water milfoil and other invasives, threatening new waters that are currently free of infestations. A total of 142,104 people were contacted about the Clean Boats Clean Water message.

The best news of all is that 95% of the boat owners surveyed said they inspected and removed plants from their boats, trailers and other equipment after their last trip to the lake. That means that years of inspection work continues to pay off in terms of public awareness.

Anglers, boaters and the public in general should be extremely supportive of the inspection program and especially the volunteers — common citizens who care about the state's resources. They are true conservationists, paying more than lip service to a noble cause.

Even that part of the inspection program that requires wages is more effective and less costly than after-the-fact management of an infestation — which drains financial resources year after year with no hope for eradication.

So the smart money is on prevention through inspections and public awareness. And Wisconsin could improve that a step further with a more aggressive containment program. That would mean more inspection efforts in waters known to contain invasives so that they don't leave on boats and trailers — equipment possibly destined for one of the 95% of waterways that are still free of invasives.

Behind the editorial 'we'

Members of the Vilas County News-Review editorial board include Publisher Kurt Krueger, Editor Gary Ridderbusch and Assistant Editor Anthony Drew.

NEWS

Fall is time to identify, control invasive species on forestlands

BY NEWS-REVIEW STAFF

Fall is a prime time for landowners and recreationists to identify and control invasive plant species, according to a U.S. Forest Service ecologist.

Many hunters, hikers and sightseers are enjoying the outdoors in the autumn, so there are opportunities for those recreationists to find and report invasives on public lands and also control invasives on their private property.

Fall is also a time when most plants are dispersing their seeds, according to Melissa Simpson, ecologist with the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. She said some plants have developed mechanisms to hitch a ride with animals and are easily spread by hunters, hikers and others using the outdoors.

"People should inspect clothing, boots and pets when in the woods or field and avoid moving seeds from a weedy area to one that is still relatively infested," said Simpson.

Some invasive species are most easily identified and controlled in the fall and winter, according to Simpson.

"The leaves of some aggressive shrubs, like buckthorn and honeysuckle, remain green and stay on the shrubs into late fall, after most native shrubs have lost their leaves," she said. "Most of the invasive shrubs produce distinctive fruits that stand out this time of year."

Identifying invasives

Simpson said there are several things people can do to help control invasive plant species.

- Learn to identify invasives in your area and on your property.

- Control invasive plants on your property and report plants found on public lands.

- Clean clothing, footwear and pets before and after each hunt and/or hike.

"A few moments is all it takes to check for seeds hitching a ride. Use a stick or brush to get the mud out of your boots," said Simpson. "The best place to clean off is



This garlic mustard patch was located in the summer at the base of a treestand on property bordering the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. --Photo By Chantelle Delay

before you leave infested areas. The next best option is to clean off at the parking area, where any seeds that germinate can be seen and treated right away."

Simpson said people also can easily identify several invasive plants in the fall and winter, and offered the following tips on identifying four common species:

Garlic mustard (Alliaria petiolata) — In fall, the first-year plants are green and remain so even under the snow, making fall a good time to spot and pull or spray the overwintering plants. The leaves grow in clumps, are bright green and heart-shaped, and have obvious net-like veins that give them a crinkled appearance.

Bush honeysuckles (Lonicera) — Exotic bush honeysuckle holds its leaves into the fall, have opposite leaves, red fruits in clusters, and hollow, brown stems. The bark looks thin and stringy and has many stems coming from the ground.

Common buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica) — Buckthorn holds its leaves into the fall and produces many deep purple berries

that will remain on the twigs throughout the winter. The inner bark is orange, so you can scrape away the outer bark to determine if the tree or shrub is buckthorn.

Japanese knotweed (Polygonum cuspidatum) — Japanese knotweed forms dense thickets, often along streambanks or abandoned fields, and can grow to 9 feet tall. It produces a delicate spray of white flowers in early fall and, after frost, the thick, hollow, bamboo-like stems turn a deep reddish brown.

Controlling invasives

All of the woody species — trees, shrubs and vines — are best controlled in the fall. Cutting them down alone is generally not sufficient for these persistent plants, according to Simpson.

"To prevent resprouting, a small amount of herbicide labeled for killing brush must be applied to the cut stump soon after cutting," she said.

A similar technique of basal bark application involves spraying or painting an herbicide in an oil carrier in a band around the

base of the tree. Also done in fall or winter, this method allows the tree to be killed without first cutting it.

"Anyone using herbicides should be cautious and follow the label recommendation for the formulation and habitat where applied," said Simpson.

For garlic mustard and other invasive herbaceous plants that retain their leaves well into fall, this is a window of opportunity for targeting control work to those plants, according to Simpson.

"Herbicide will be most effective if applied to leaves when temperatures are above 40 degrees and will stay above freezing the first night after applying," she said. "Handpulling is also an effective control method as long as all the roots are removed."

For more information or to report infestations, contact the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership. In Vilas County, contact Ted Ritter at (715) 479-3747; in Oneida County, contact Jean Hanson at (715) 369-7837; or for the U.S. Forest Service, contact Simpson at (715) 528-4464.

Composting leaves helps lawn, garden

As leaves start to fall across Wisconsin, state environmental officials remind people that autumn is an excellent time to start composting or to improve a home compost pile.

Composting can help residents save money on fertilizer, save municipalities money on yard waste collection and protect the state's air quality.

Composting is better for the environment than burning leaves, branches, weeds and other yard materials, according to Brad Wolbert, recycling and solid waste section chief for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) waste and materials management program.

"Burning yard waste can cause health problems for your family and neighbors, pollute soil and water, and start wildfires," said Wolbert.

State air quality and fire rules regulate the burning of yard materials in Wisconsin, and a growing number of communities have local rules in place that restrict or completely prohibit burning yard materials.

Composting leaves, grass clippings and branches doesn't mean they go to waste. Composting, said Wolbert, "not only helps keep our air clean and prevents wildfires, but the compost itself is a valuable product."

Composted yard materials keep soil healthy and provide nutrients for lawns and gardens, reducing the need for fertilizers and pesticides. State law bans yard materials from landfills, but there are a number of ways residents can manage leaves and other compostable materials in their backyard or garden. Urban residents who don't compost on their own property often have access to a community compost site.

Here are a few tips from

the DNR for composting or reusing yard materials:

- Keep it simple. Leaves make great mulch to be used now or in the spring. Mow leaves and grass together and leave the finely chopped material on the lawn. Ground leaves can also be folded into garden beds to add organic material and soil structure. If people would rather compost their leaves, there are many easy structures you can build to start the composting process. Search "compost bin" online for suggestions.
- Mix it up. The key to good compost is having a mix of "browns" (fallen leaves, dead plants, coffee grounds and small branches) and "greens" (grass clippings, green plants and vegetable food scraps).

- Supply the basics. Compost needs fresh air and water to help microbes break the material down and prevent odors. Rainfall and snow may provide enough moisture for an uncovered compost pile, but if the bin has a cover, add some water occasionally. Turn the compost to make sure air gets mixed in.
- Expand previous horizons. Once started with yard materials, add raw fruit and vegetable scraps and coffee grounds and filters to the compost bin. Avoid attracting animals by using a covered bin and covering fresh food scraps with a thin layer of leaves or soil. Using earthworms to compost food scraps indoors, a method called "vermicomposting," is an option for urban residents.

"Feeding food scraps to worms has been a popular project in Wisconsin schools for years, and produces an excellent garden soil additive," said Wolbert.

More information on home composting and vermicomposting is available on the DNR's website at dnr.wi.gov.

September saw fewest traffic deaths since World War II, says state DOT

With a total of 46 traffic fatalities, last month was the safest September in terms of deaths on Wisconsin roads since World War II, according to preliminary statistics from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT).

The previous safest month of September occurred in 2008 with 50 traffic deaths. The deadliest September was in 1973 with 116 fatalities.

Traffic fatalities last month were 12 fewer than September 2010 and 17 fewer than the five-year average for the month of September.

As of the end of September, 409 people have died in 380 Wisconsin traffic crashes, including 70 motorcycle drivers, seven motorcycle passengers, 36 pedestrians and 10 bicyclists. Traffic deaths through the month were 17 fewer than during the same

period in 2010 and 67 fewer than the five-year average.

"Although fewer people lost their lives on our roads than any other month of September in more than half a century, there were still 46 people who didn't return home because of a crash," said Maj. Sandra Huxtable, director of the DOT Bureau of Transportation Safety.

"Any preventable traffic death is one too many," she said. "Motorists can help reach our goal of zero preventable traffic deaths in Wisconsin by slowing down, making sure everyone in their vehicle is buckled up, always driving sober, and eliminating distractions behind the wheel."

Those who wish to sing, always find a song.

Swedish Proverb

Area towns, counties receive road aids

Gov. Scott Walker has announced that checks totaling \$111.5 million for general transportation aids, connecting highway aids and expressway policing aids have been conveyed to Wisconsin units of local government.

Among North Woods county governments receiving grant funds were Vilas, Oneida and Forest counties.

Vilas County was awarded \$247,001 and the following Vilas cities and towns also received funds: Eagle River, \$79,546; St. Germain, \$45,213; Plum Lake, \$48,399; Phelps, \$54,089; Land O' Lakes, \$44,584; Conover, \$47,542; town of Washington, \$38,481; town of Lincoln, \$34,189; and town of Cloverland, \$20,100.

Oneida County received \$249,023. Oneida cities and towns awarded funds include Three Lakes, \$67,654; Sugar Camp, \$38,534; Rhinelander, \$132,823; Minocqua, \$101,970; Woodruff, \$39,120; and Lake Tomahawk, \$31,813.

Forest County received a total of \$75,753.

The October payments from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) include \$108.23 million in general transportation aids to 1,921 local units of government, \$3.01 million to 122 municipalities for connecting highway aids and \$255,975 to

Milwaukee County for expressway policing aids.

This calendar year, local governments will share an estimated \$446 million from the state transportation fund to build and maintain local roads and bridges, and in expressway policing aids that support the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office's patrol of Milwaukee expressways.

Quarterly payments for towns, cities and villages are sent the first Monday in January, April, July and October. County payments are made in three installments, with 25% of the total annual payment on the first Monday in January, 50% on the first Monday in July and 25% on the first Monday in October.

General transportation

aids help defray the costs of constructing, maintaining and operating roads and streets under local jurisdiction. Connecting highway aids reimburse municipalities for maintenance and traffic control of certain state highways within municipalities.

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Evenson files appeal, wants Vilas job back

By KEN ANDERSON
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Former Vilas County Jail administrator Tim Evenson has filed an appeal to his recent termination and is requesting reinstatement of his employment, charging the real reason for his firing was retaliation.

In a document obtained through an open-records request, Evenson, who was fired by Sheriff Frank Tomlanovich April 24, 2012, alleges the county grievance procedure is "overly burdensome, oppressive, fundamentally unfair and unreasonable, and vague."

Tomlanovich alleged Evenson violated seven areas of work rules including: untruthfulness in a verbal communication; providing untruthful and misleading communication; failure to seek an affirmative way to cooper-

ate with the sheriff; insubordination; failure to obey verbal directives of the sheriff; disabling equipment; and unacceptable use of a county-owned computer.

Evenson responds that he believes his termination was unjust, without cause and retaliatory in nature.

"I did not violate the rules alleged by Sheriff Tomlanovich and certainly should not be terminated for any of my actions," Evenson writes in his appeal. "I was not untruthful to the sheriff, Chief Deputy (Joe) Fath, Ms. Milanowski (Corporation counsel Martha Milanowski) or Mr. Egan (reference to Bob Egan, who at the time was chairman of the county Law Enforcement Committee.)"

Evenson was referring to a letter he wrote Feb. 10, 2012, to Fath, Milanowski and Egan to clarify allegations made Jan. 13 by Tomlanovich on violating department policy.

As way of background, Evenson writes he was "told that employee George Crabtree (a corrections officer) was upset about a background investigation I assigned him to complete on a prospective employee, Chad Rosinski."

Rosinski is the stepson of Tomlanovich.

Evenson continues, indicating he "was asked (by the sheriff) if I had a problem with Chad Rosinski and the sheriff had information indicating that I did not want Rosinski hired, but instead wanted another person hired instead of Rosinski."

Evenson's Feb. 10 letter also makes the claim by the sheriff that Evenson was speeding in excess of 90 mph Dec. 5, 2011, and was told he did not complete daily workload entries, all of which he denies.

Evenson said that the letter to EVENSON, Pg. 2A



RIVER RIDE — Nearly 400 bicyclists took to the back roads of Vilas and Oneida counties Sunday for the start of the GGreat Annual Bicy-

cle Adventure Along the Wisconsin River. The 427-mile ride will end in Prairie du Chein June 23. —Staff Photo By GARY RIDDERBUSCH



FUTURE PILOTS — The 22nd annual Eagle River Union Airport Fly-in and Air Show last Saturday attracted hundreds of aviation

buffs for a day featuring aircraft exhibits, fly-bys and airplane rides for all ages. —Staff Photo By GARY RIDDERBUSCH

Invasives work earns Ted Ritter Crusader award

By GARY RIDDERBUSCH
NEWS-REVIEW EDITOR

The Vilas County invasive species coordinator was among those honored this spring as Invader Crusaders for their work to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive non-native plants and animals in Wisconsin.

Ted Ritter, invasive species coordinator for the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department, won in the professional individual-government category for his work to seek partners and funding sources to build a multi-agency effort to address invasive species.

The Invader Crusaders received their awards last week from the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species in a ceremony at Madison's Olberich Botanical Gardens.

"Ted Ritter has a passion for protecting natural



TED RITTER

resources in the North Woods and has been relentless in seeking partners and pursuing funding sources," said the

To RITTER, Pg. 2A

Woman, 20, charged in St. Germain burglaries

A 20-year-old St. Germain woman has been charged with two counts of felony burglary for her alleged involvement in a string of burglaries in Vilas and Oneida counties.



ADAMS

Vilas County Sheriff Frank Tomlanovich said an investigation connected suspect Lindsey Alexis Adams and a juvenile, also from St. Germain, to 45 separate incidents in Vilas County alone, according to a press release.

On May 11, in connection with an ongoing investigation of multiple burglaries, thefts and criminal damage

complaints, the Vilas County Sheriff's Department executed a search warrant at a residence in the town of St. Germain.

Evidence collected during the execution of the search warrant led to the arrest of the two suspects May 11.

Tomlanovich said the incidents being investigated occurred between August 2011 and April 2012 in Vilas County and northern Oneida County. He said the investigation was conducted with the assistance of the Woodruff Police Department.

Adams is charged in Vilas County with two felony counts of burglary and nine misdemeanor counts of theft, criminal damage to property and possession of drug para-

To ADAMS, Pg. 2A

Shoot-Out, Fly-In set June 22-23

By NEWS-REVIEW STAFF

Two days of action-packed events are on tap for the whole family as the fifth annual Three Lakes Shoot-Out Radar Run and Fly-In will take place Friday and Saturday, June 22-23.

The shoot-out, which began in 2008 as a fundraiser aimed specifically at construction of a second fire station to serve the east side of town, takes on even more significance this year as ground breaking and construction of Fire Station No. 2 has just begun on the site at Highway 32 and Colonel Himes Road.

Shoot-out organizers have promised another round of free activities for spectators, while as many as 70 high-powered hydroplanes, jet and tunnel boats will reach top speeds of more than 100 mph.

Top-gun honors are at stake for the fastest time on the 1,000-foot course, located on the south shore of Big Stone Lake near Sunset Grill on Highway 32, east of Three Lakes. Saturday's events will run from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The water-cross snowmobilers will be back this year, and some will attempt to pull barefoot skiers.



Thousands of spectators are expected to attend the fifth annual Three Lakes Shootout Radar Run and Fly-In on Big Stone Lake this

Friday and Saturday. High-powered boats will be put to the test on a 1,000-foot course. —STAFF PHOTO

Spectators can anchor boats adjacent to the race course or visit the new 40- by 60-foot beer garden tent with seating for 200 located near the Harbor Campground beach.

Bleacher seating also will be available. Free shuttles will run all day Saturday between boats and nearby parking lots to the shoot-out grounds.

A full array of vintage air-

planes, biplanes, ultralights and war birds will be on display at Three Lakes Airport. Sightseeing airplane rides will be offered, for a cost, over the Three Lakes Chain of Lakes.

A wide variety of food items and refreshments will be available on the grounds, along with hourly 50-50 raffles and shoot-out clothing for purchase. A motorcycle corral will be provided cour-

tesy of nearby Briggs Bar.

Friday's events will begin at Kirby's Pine Isle Grill on Highway X at 2 p.m., as racers will gather to tour the Three Lakes Chain of Lakes.

Race fans can visit Bonnie's Lakeside restaurant, located on Highway 32, from 5 to 8 p.m. that evening to view a static display of all

To SHOOT-OUT, Pg. 2A

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PMTT slated on Eagle Chain

Professional muskie anglers will fish the Eagle River Chain this weekend.

Pg. 9A



WEATHER CORNER



Note: Precipitation amounts are recorded at 8 a.m. for the previous 24 hours.

LAST SEVEN DAYS			ONE YEAR AGO				
	Hi	Lo	Prec.		Hi	Lo	Prec.
Wed., June 13	74	39	None	Mon., June 13	77	43	None
Thurs., June 14	62	50	None	Tues., June 14	76	52	None
Fri., June 15	79	58	.72R	Wed., June 15	72	51	None
Sat., June 16	83	60	None	Thurs., June 16	68	52	.16R
Sun., June 17	75	52	.56R	Fri., June 17	76	52	.21R
Mon., June 18	80	56	.63R	Sat., June 18	71	54	None
Tues., June 19	86	62	.23R	Sun., June 19	60	54	.47R

LAST YEAR The average daily high at this time last year for the next seven days was 70, while the average overnight low was 52. There was rain on three days totaling 2.13 inches.

COMPARISON Days precipitation recorded since April 1, 2012, 36 days; 2011, 40 days.

Average high of past 30 days, 2012, 74; 2011, 73. Average low of past 30 days, 2012, 50; 2011, 48.

FOREST CONDITIONS White-tailed deer are wearing their red summer coats and bucks are developing velvet-covered antlers. Wild turkey and ruffed grouse broods are being seen in the North.

STREAMS AND LAKES Snapping turtles are being seen all over right now, depositing their eggs in the gravel and sand, most often near a roadway that is adjacent to water.

OUTLOOK Wednesday there will be scattered afternoon storms, some strong, with a high of 82 and a low of 70. Thursday will be sunnier, much less humid, with a high of 72 and a low of 54. Friday expect morning storms, then sunshine, with a high of 75 and a low of 55. Saturday look for on-and-off thunderstorms, with a high of 72 and a low of 53. Sunday should be sunny, with a high of 75 and a low of 52.

(PORTIONS OF THE WEATHER CORNER ARE THROUGH THE COURTESY OF KEVIN BREWSTER, EAGLE RIVER and NEWSWATCH 12 METEOROLOGIST.)

Exhibit to feature Penokee Range

The public is welcome to explore a new exhibit titled "Penokee: Explore the Iron Hills" from June 23 to Feb. 1, 2013, at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, located 2 miles west of Ashland on U.S. Highway 2.

A recent proposal to mine iron ore in the Penokee Range of northern Wisconsin brought statewide attention to this area.

Twenty visual artists, musicians and writers from northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan explored their relationship with the Penokee Range and inspired the works each artist

created. The exhibit highlights the area's metallic mining history, natural history, geology, and cultural and Native American perspectives.

The public is invited to an opening reception this Saturday, June 23, from 1 to 3 p.m. After the opening program, the public will be invited to explore the exhibit, visit with the artists and share light refreshments.

For more information, phone the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (715) 685-9983 or visit northern-greatlakescenter.org or the exhibit website: penokee-arts.wordpress.com.

Evenson: FROM PAGE 1A

ter of Feb. 10 was neither insubordination nor being uncooperative. He also clarified issues of disabling equipment and inappropriate use of county-owned computer.

"I was unclear on where things were relative to the sheriff's investigation," wrote Evenson. "I did not drive 90 mph in my squad and do not remember speeding. I deactivated my cell phone because it was linked to my personal gmail account and contained personal information relating to my finances. The sheriff has access to my county e-mails."

Evenson indicated he downloaded Google Chrome due to problems with Internet Explorer and there was no breach of security in doing so.

Evenson, who has never been disciplined, charges his termination by Tomlanovich was really related to the hiring of the sheriff's stepson.

"Sheriff Tomlanovich's decision to terminate me is nothing more than retaliation related to his stepson Chad Rosinski," wrote Evenson.

Rosinski was hired as a county jailer and completed the required training upon graduation from Nicolet Area Technical College Jail Academy last February. He was one of 11 in the class with Evenson as an instructor. Online court records indicate Rosinski has had a number of criminal convictions.

Evenson concluded his appeal with an objection to who has the burden of proof.

"As a matter of law, I object that I have the burden to prove by clear, convincing and satisfactory evidence that Sheriff Tomlanovich abused his discretion in terminating my employment with Vilas County," wrote Evenson. "The burden of proof is on Vilas County."

Finally, Evenson is requesting he be "made whole" with "reinstatement and removal of any reference of termination" in his personnel file.

Evenson also is requesting back pay, plus 12% interest, restoration of all benefits, reimbursement of benefits including health insurance, attorney fees, costs and punitive damages.

Grievance policy

Under the new county grievance policy, the first step is to have the appeal heard by the county's Personnel Committee to determine if the appeal response is sufficient, according to Vilas County Human Resources Director Janna Kahl.

If not resolved, the case would be assigned to an Impartial Hearing Officer (IHO), who would conduct a prehearing conference and attempt to mediate the dispute. Should that fail, a date will be selected for a hearing.

Evenson will bear the burden of proof to persuade the IHO by "clear and convincing" evidence the county abused its discretion in terminating him. The policy states the hearing "shall be closed to the public." It will be within the authority of the IHO to order reinstatement, a lesser adverse employment action other than termination, such as a reduction in base pay, an oral or written reprimand, or that no adverse action be taken.

Evenson also has the right to appeal any decision by the IHO to the full county board.

Evenson has retained the services of attorney Christopher MacGillis of Milwaukee.

Shoot-out FROM PAGE 1A

the race boats.

The fire department also will have some of its equipment on display, including its new water rescue boat. Refreshments, raffles and race clothing sales also will be available at Bonnie's.

After a day of racing action and the presentation of trophies, racers and fans can visit the nearby Mai Tiki Bar at Harbor Campground from 6 to 10 p.m. to hear a disc jockey and music under the beer tent.

Registration forms, maps and clips from past races are available at the shoot-out website at threelakesshootout.com. For more information, email info@threelakesshootout.com.

NEWS

Lakes group helps fund Chain buoys

The Eagle River Chain of Lakes Association (ERCLA) has offered to help fund maintenance of the Eagle River Chain buoys by contributing \$1,000 for the purchase of new buoys and lights to replace those in disrepair.

There are 89 marked buoys on the Eagle River Chain of Lakes. The towns of Washington and Lincoln and the city of Eagle River each contribute \$1,400 annually toward this program, which is managed and implemented by the town of Washington.

Most damage to the buoys occurs when they are struck by boats, according to Carole Linn of the ERCLA.

While the buoys cost \$140 each, solar lights are present on the slow, no-wake buoys and are purchased at an additional cost.

Intentional damage to these buoys is a violation of the U.S. Coast Guard and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulations and can result in sizeable fines. People can report violations to DNR wardens or the Vilas County Sheriff's Department.

"Most of the expense of maintaining the buoy system is borne by town of Washington, town of Lincoln and city of Eagle River taxpayers, but the revenue allocated through municipal budgets is not adequate to fund replacement and repair of buoys," said Linn.



Taking part in the check presentation for the Eagle River Chain buoy project were, from left, Paul Hennes, vice president of the Eagle River Chain of Lakes Association; Jim Spring, town of Washington chairman; and Jim Moon, treasurer of the association. —Contributed Photo

The donation from the ERCLA will allow buoys to be maintained and replaced on a regular basis, according to Jim Spring, chairman of the town of Washington.

In addition to the ERCLA donation, there has been an additional \$1,950 in private donations to the buoy program. Fifteen new buoys have already been purchased as a result of these donations and will be placed on the Chain this summer.

Ritter: spearheaded WHIP partnership

FROM PAGE 1A

person who nominated Ritter.

Ritter, as a private landowner, first worked with a local lake association in 2006 to get funding from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to control a major infestation of curly-leaf pondweed on Little St. Germain Lake.

"Because of Ted's involvement with his lake association and his passion for resource protection, he applied for a newly created position with Vilas County in 2008, the invasive species coordinator," wrote the nominating person.

Ritter's position as the Vilas County invasive species coordinator provided him with the opportunity to take the lead in creating a multi-

agency, two-county (Vilas and Oneida) cooperative invasive species management area (CISMA) known as the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (WHIP).

Ritter spearheaded the formation of this cooperative invasive species management area to bring about public awareness of terrestrial invasives and bring together federal, tribal, state, county, non-profit and private land managers, as well as natural resources education schools to work cooperatively on invasive issues across all jurisdictions.

In 2010, Ritter mailed more than 2,000 informational garlic mustard flyers to private landowners in the town of Presque Isle and asked them to report any infestations of garlic mustard on their property.

In 2011, Ritter worked with WHIP partners to survey more than 3,500 acres of privately owned forestlands within Vilas County for the presence of high-priority terrestrial invasive plants. Federal, state and private lands and waters in both counties are positively affected by his work.

Also in the summer of 2011, nearly 3,000 hours of volunteer inspection time were logged at area boat landings to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. Paid inspectors provided more than 1,600 additional hours.

Ritter was responsible for coordinating these efforts with the paid staff, lake associations and other volunteers. It was Ritter's tireless effort that got him the award.

"It's important that we recognize and encourage all of the different individuals and organizations that are working tirelessly to keep Wisconsin's special places free of invasive species that choke out native plants and animals — both on land and water," said Paul Schumacher, chairman of the council and a member of the Wisconsin Lakes board of directors.

"The fight to reduce invasive species' impact and keep them out of Wisconsin will be a long and hard battle for many years to come," he said. "We would not be able to do it without these and many other Invader Crusaders, and the poster contest winners who represent our next generation of crusaders."

Invasive species are non-native plants, animals and pathogens that can damage habitats and outcompete native species in Wisconsin's forests, lakes, rivers, wetlands and grasslands. Garlic mustard, honeysuckle, zebra mussels, Eurasian water milfoil and rusty crayfish are all examples of invasive species in Wisconsin.

Since 2005, June has been designated in Wisconsin as Invasive Species Awareness Month and the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species has honored people and organizations for their work to address invasive species. It has promoted events in which hundreds of people help remove invasive species and participate in educational events at botanical gardens, natural areas, lakes, rivers, agricultural fields, parks, schools and more.

Invader Crusader awards have honored Wisconsin citizens and organizations — both volunteer and professional — for their significant contributions to the prevention, management, education or research of invasive species that harm Wisconsin's land and waters.

Adams FROM PAGE 1A

phernalia.

Adams made her initial appearance, and a preliminary hearing was waived. She will have an arraignment hearing July 6 at 11:30 a.m. She also has requested a substitute judge. Oneida County Judge John O'Melia will now hear the case, replacing Vilas County Circuit Judge Neal A. Nielsen III.

The male juvenile has been referred to juvenile authorities.

Correction

The preliminary investigation of the accident that took the life of Robert Rutkowski, 23, of Eagle River June 6 in Sauk County, revealed that a vehicle driven by Kelly Shaw of Reedsburg was stopped in the eastbound lane of Highway 33 to turn left (north) onto Coonbluff Road when she was rear-ended by another eastbound vehicle driven by Jason Gerike of Reedsburg. This collision caused the vehicle to cross over the centerline into the westbound lane of traffic and strike a westbound vehicle head-on driven by Rutkowski, who was pronounced dead at the scene. A story in the June 13 issue of this newspaper indicated Rutkowski was stopped in the eastbound lane and pushed into the westbound lane. We apologize for the error. See Rutkowski's complete obituary on Page 4A.

WEEKEND WALK-IN

For Potawatomi Community, Area Community Residents & Visitors

WHY WONDER & WAIT?!

In collaboration with Aspirus Clinics, the Forest County Potawatomi Health & Wellness (FCP H&W) Center has opened a weekend walk-in clinic for non-emergency medical care. It is the only weekend walk-in clinic offered in the Crandon area. The clinic is open to the public on Saturdays from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. and plans to expand its hours to include Sundays this summer.

The FCP H&W Center is located three miles east of Crandon at 8201 Mishko Drive.

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NEWS

Looking for invasives

Student searches 3,725 acres in Vilas for harmful plants

BY NEWS-REVIEW STAFF

A terrestrial invasive species survey and mapping project benefiting owners of private forestlands in Vilas County will soon be completed thanks to the work of a summer employee and the contributions of many project partners.

Callie Bertsch, a recent graduate of the Michigan Technological University graduate school, was hired by the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department in May to conduct invasive species surveys on selected Vilas County lands owned by 18 members of Partners in Forestry.

Bertsch spent most of the summer searching 3,725 acres of land for non-native plants designated as invasive and regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), according to Vilas County invasive species coordinator Ted Ritter.

"Wisconsin statutes define invasive species as 'nonindigenous species whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health,'" said Ritter. "The nearly \$10,000 project was conceived out of need by Vilas County to utilize a \$3,500 cash grant award from the Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP)."

Additional funding was provided by Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development Inc. and the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (WHIP). Ritter also is the WHIP coordinator.

18 properties studied

Invasive species of major concern, including Eurasian honeysuckle, Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard and common buckthorn, were found on nine of the 18 properties in the Partners in Forestry — a



College graduate Callie Bertsch searched Vilas County forestlands this summer looking for invasive species.

--Contributed Photo

cooperative dedicated to providing information, educational opportunities and sustainable forest management advice for its members.

Eurasian honeysuckle was the most frequently found species, totaling approximately 600 acres of moderate- to high-density populations, according to Ritter.

"Although Japanese barberry is not yet a regulated plant in Wisconsin, it is regarded by many as a major threat to woodlands when it escapes from cultivation," he said. "It is commonly used as an ornamental bush in landscape designs."

Ritter said invasive species are capable of disrupting natural ecosystems to the detriment of not only native plants, but also wildlife, ranging from birds

and butterflies to animals and insects of all sorts that depend on native vegetation for food and shelter.

"Unregulated species of lesser concern, including bird's-foot trefoil, forget-me-nots, speedwell and other garden escapees, were found in varying concentrations on all properties surveyed," said Ritter.

The final days of Bertsch's employment will be consumed by preparation of individualized maps and reports for all lands surveyed. Reports will include recommendations for controlling invasive plants and for preventing the arrival of others.

Ritter said a Trimble field computer with ArcPad 10 software was purchased for the project and will become the property of

WHIP, a multi-partner invasive species cooperative serving Oneida and Vilas counties, upon conclusion of the project.

"It will be used for future mapping of invasive species in Oneida and Vilas counties," said Ritter.

Project contributors

Other contributors to the project included Conserve School, which provided housing for Bertsch, and the Vilas County Sheriff's Department, which kept track of Bertsch's daily comings and goings to assure she was accounted for each evening.

The Vilas County Mapping Department provided assistance with map creation and preparing the handheld field computer used by Bertsch.

"It enabled her to know where she was at all times in relation to property lines," said Ritter.

The Vilas County Information Technologies Department provided additional support in preparing the field computer.

Formal partners in WHIP include Vilas and Oneida county governments, Partners in Forestry, Conserve School, Trees For Tomorrow, Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development Inc., the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission, the U.S. Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the DNR, the Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands and the Wisconsin Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

More information about invasive species initiatives in Vilas or Oneida counties can be obtained from county land and water conservation departments. Contact either Ritter of Vilas County at (715) 479-3738 or Jean Hansen of Oneida County at (715) 369-7835.

Vilas panel calls for closed sessions

BY KEN ANDERSON
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Vilas County board will be asked to approve a nine-page employee grievance policy that calls for closed sessions, except for those grievances concerning workplace safety.

The decision of the county's Transition Committee last week came against the advice of its labor attorney, Andy Phillips.

Phillips told the panel there should be a paper trail from the human resource director (HRD) rather than the county remaining silent on an employee grievance and letting the grievance be denied after five working days.

The committee, however, proposed the county would pay for any costs for a mediator and impartial hearing officer (IHO) if needed in the grievance proceedings.

"From a fairness standpoint, you want to have an answer from the HRD to know the issues," Phillips told the Transition Committee which has worked on the required policy for the last three months, since collective bargaining was taken away from most public workers through Gov. Scott Walker's budget repair bill.

"If the HRD has no answer, then the IHO has no idea what the issues are," said Phillips. "The HRD should answer, but when he doesn't, it goes to the IHO who will have no source of both sides of the issue."

Committee Chairman Jim Behling said the county needed a process to move any grievance forward and stated, "I think the way it's written is fine," but Supervisor Sig Hjermvick disagreed.

"For me, this is like putting your head on the block, saying I (the HRD) don't have to deal with it," said Hjermvick.

Behling said the county could have the right to move an issue forward to an IHO, but attorney Phillips disagreed.

"The county can't appeal to an IHO if the decision of the HRD is to settle," Phillips pointed out.

There also is no requirement of the IHO to render a written decision and, after 20 days without a written decision to the employee filing the grievance, it "shall be considered sustained."

Phillips indicated the IHO can have the procedure in closed session with no choice to the employee.

"The county has to vote with a 'super majority' to hear an appeal in closed session," Phillips told the committee. "This isn't a hearing of the county and is not a county board or county committee meeting. The IHO is not a governmental body and Chapter 19.85 does not apply (to the IHO)."

Whether or not the employee could choose to have the appeal to the full county board in open or closed session wasn't brought up.

On a grievance involving workplace safety, the IHO "shall file the written report with the county clerk within 20 days of the close of the hearing," thereby creating a paper trail on this subject only.

Who pays?

After considerable discussion, the committee voted 7-0 that costs of any arbitrator to try mediation of a grievance or the cost of the IHO to conduct a hearing shall be the responsibility of the county.

The committee was told that some counties split the cost of a mediator while other counties take on the entire burden. Current union contracts call for splitting the cost, which could be \$800 or more.

Supervisor Edward Bluthardt Jr. moved to have the county pay for the entire costs.

"The county should bear the expense of hearings and proceedings and not have it be a burden on the employee," said Bluthardt.

Behling also agreed, but for a different reason.

"If we impose fees, we are inviting them to remain in the union," said Behling. "This doesn't have to be an incentive for employees to remain in a union. If we share IHO resources, do we need to worry about our policy being different than another county IHO from where they do charge?"

Supervisor Hjermvick said this would not be an issue "if we choose to pay the whole thing."

Bluthardt added that "we've got deeper pockets than an employee and we're playing with all the marbles on our side."

The county employee grievance policy must be in place by Oct. 1, 2011, and is expected to be presented to the full Vilas County Board for adoption at its Tuesday, Sept. 20, meeting.

ACT: 69% of students took exam

FROM PAGE 1A

work.

Pines down slightly

Mike Richie, district administrator for the Northland Pines School District, said Pines dropped slightly this year after seeing its scores climb the previous two years from a seven-year low of 21.7 in 2007-'08.

"Obviously we want to see those scores continue to climb, but we are still at about the state average," said Richie. "Our goal is always to be above the state average, which we were two out of the last three years."

Richie said Northland Pines encourages a high percentage of its students to take the college entrance exam. Of the 127 students in the 2011 senior class, 68, or 53.5%, took the test.

"We are happy with our reading and science scores, of course, but would like to see continued improvement in English and math," said Richie.

Pines students scored 22.4 on the reading portion and 22.4 in science, but just 21.5 in English and 21.8 in math.

"We've worked hard to improve our math scores, including a change in our curriculum two years ago," said Richie.

The Northland Pines math score was as low as 20.7 back in 2004-'05 and has steadily climbed, including a 22.1 for 2010 graduates.

Richie said he expects Pines will continue to see improvements in the ACT score. He said each class is dif-

ferent when it comes to achievement as a group.

"We're expecting some really good scores out of the students that are juniors this year," said Richie. "As sophomores, they had the No. 1 score on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE) in the entire CESA district, and that includes Wausau and D.C. Everest schools. They also had the top score in every category among schools in the Great Northern Conference, and that includes reading, language arts, math, science and social studies."

Three Lakes tops 23

The average composite score of 23.1 at Three Lakes was one full point above the state average, and two full points above the national average. A very high number of graduates, almost 60%, took the ACT at Three Lakes, according to guidance counselor Gene Welhoefer.

"The lowest score was a 15, and following along we had two students score a 31. One student actually scored 32, but the individual took it a second time and lost one point," he said.

By subject, Three Lakes students had a 24.7 in reading, 23.1 in English and a 23.1 in science. The low score was a 21.3 in math, equal to the state average in that subject area.

Three Lakes saw 43 of 73

Class of 2011 graduates take the college-entrance test.

"My encouragement to students is, if you think you are going to a four-year school, make sure you take the ACT test," said Welhoefer. "You don't need it to get into every school, but if you're not sure, take the test."

Three Lakes has increased its ACT score from a 21.6 in 2006-'07.

"We've done a nice job over the past four years of increasing," said Welhoefer. "Overall, we're holding pretty steady and we're doing a nice job. It shows the hard work that people have put into preparing the students. You can't just prepare for the ACT test in one year. This is a summation of all the education they've had until this point. It's an indication of how well everyone in the district has done."

Phelps stays steady

The Phelps School District has topped the state average each of the past three years, including a 23.6 in 2010 and the 23.5 this year, according to District Administrator Delnice Hill.

"In 2010, we achieved our highest composite score in five years," said Hill. "Now in 2011, our ACT composite score still rivals the record earned last year. We were within a tenth of our record high with a 23.5."

Hill said the English and math scores continue to be the area of strength, although scores in all subject areas are well above the state mark.

State education officials note that smaller school dis-

tricts such as Phelps have fewer students taking the test, so it's difficult to compare test results with other schools. Phelps had 10 students in the 2011 graduating class with just four taking the ACT test. But that didn't diminish the 23.5 score, according to Hill.

"At Phelps, we are very proud of this accomplishment," she said. "We realize it takes a concerted effort on the part of our staff, students and parents to continue to be so successful."

Statewide marks

Overall, 47,693 graduates from the Class of 2011 took the ACT college admissions test while in high school — that represents 71% of public and private high school graduates, the highest participation rate in Wisconsin in the history of the ACT.

In 2010, 69% of graduates took the assessment of college readiness. Wisconsin's ACT composite score was up one-tenth of a point from last year to 22.2, putting the state in a solid third place among ACT-taking states. Minnesota's composite score was 22.9, and Iowa had a composite score of 22.3. Nationally, the composite score was 21.1, also up one-tenth of a point from last year.

"Bravo to our 2011 graduates," said State Superintendent Tony Evers. "The message of using high school as preparation for college and careers is taking hold with our students. We want all students to graduate ready for the workforce or further education."

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Early detection, proper management and public awareness key to AIS toil

BY TED RITTER

INVASIVE SPECIES COORDINATOR
VILAS COUNTY

Through early detection, proper management and public awareness, Vilas County has taken some big steps in its battle against invasive species — both aquatic and terrestrial.

While aquatic invasive species (AIS) have been on the forefront of this battle, terrestrial invasives are also causing environmental harm to the landscape.

Early detection is a key to managing AIS. Two additional Vilas County water bodies were found to contain populations of invasive plants during the summer of 2011.

Approximately 25 acres of high-density curly leaf pondweed was mapped in Rice Creek just above Island Lake in Boulder Junction. Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) was confirmed in Kentuck Lake, but the extent of that infestation will not be known until mapping efforts are completed in 2012.

These invasive plants had become well established in both water bodies before being detected. This was disappointing, considering the emphasis that has been placed on monitoring lakes for early detection of new invasive arrivals.

As a result of these late-stage findings, plans are under way for a spring 2012 media campaign to remind wa-



Herbicide applications have been used on the Eagle River Chain of Lakes to combat Eurasian water milfoil (EWM). A research project is planned on Boot Lake using laboratory-grown weevils to combat EWM beds. —NEWS-REVIEW PHOTOS

terfront property owners and lake users of the importance of routine lake monitoring.

Most EWM lakes in Vilas County

have now been aggressively managed for the past several years. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have worked closely with area lake organizations to provide management funding and research to understand why herbicide applications sometimes work very well, but at other times produce disappointing results. This collaboration is resulting in much improved control efforts.

Several of the affected lakes have experienced reductions in EWM plant dispersion from hundreds of acres of high-density populations to small low-density patches, some of which are now too insignificant to manage with herbicides. While EWM eradication is still an elusive goal, the total cost of managing EWM in Vilas County is diminishing.

Boot Lake research

Boot Lake in the town of Cloverland remains the only area lake in which EWM is not being managed. However, that is about to change. The Boot Lake Association was recently awarded a DNR grant to launch an herbicide control program.

At about the same time, another opportunity developed which might enable Boot Lake to participate in a state-sponsored research project to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of

EWM biological control using a native weevil. This EWM-destroying bug already exists in many Wisconsin lakes, but typically cannot reproduce fast enough on its own to control EWM populations.

The research project would involve introducing high volumes of laboratory-grown weevils to EWM beds in Boot Lake and other non-Vilas County lakes in the northern region of Wisconsin. It's not yet known which control method will be employed in Boot Lake, but one way or another, EWM management efforts will likely be initiated during 2012.

Education a key

Public awareness of proper boating hygiene continues to be a priority in Vilas County. While much progress has been made in this regard, evidence of some boaters not yet getting the message continues to surface. For example, a pickup truck and boat trailer with weeds hanging from the trailer was spotted on Highway 45 in Eagle River this past summer.

In spite of Wisconsin laws prohibiting the transport of aquatic vegetation, boats and trailers are still occasionally showing up at boat landings with vegetation attached.

The Clean Boats, Clean Waters

To AIS, Pg. 32



Volunteers with the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program help educate boaters about aquatic invasive species on North Woods lakes.

Vilas continues invasives battle

Boater education is primary defense against AIS

BY TED RITTER

VILAS COUNTY INVASIVE SPECIES COORDINATOR

Propelled by early detection, proper management and public awareness, Vilas County continues to battle invasive species — both aquatic and terrestrial.

While aquatic invasive species (AIS) have been on the forefront of this war, terrestrial invasives also are causing environmental harm to the landscape.

The crusade against invasives takes teamwork involving county and town leaders, water-management professionals, volunteers, lake groups, and state and federal agencies.

Early detection vital

New findings of Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) in three Vilas County lakes during 2012 confirm that AIS are continuing to spread.

Although a small population of EWM was discovered in Lac Vieux Desert several years ago, more expansive growth was found this past summer. EWM populations also were discovered for the first time in Anvil and Big (Cisco Chain) lakes.

The need for increased citizen monitoring for early detection of invasive plants was highlighted by these new populations all being discovered by professional survey teams who happened to be on these lakes specifically looking for invasive species.

This raises questions such as how much longer these populations would have gone undetected by lakefront property owners or lake users if these teams hadn't come along and how many more lakes have as yet undetected invasive plant populations?

Lake organizations are being encouraged to activate volunteer citizen monitoring programs next summer to improve chances for early detection.

Milfoil management

An exceptionally early spring followed by warm, dry summer weather resulted in low water levels and explosive plant growth in many area lakes this past summer.

While growing conditions were unusually favorable to native aquatic vegetation, nonnative lake plants such as EWM and curly-leaf pondweed also flourished to the dismay of lake organizations working hard to control populations of these invaders.

There are now more than 25 Vilas County lakes in which management of one or both of these plants is occurring annually, often at considerable expense. Excessive plant growth brought on by unusual weather can be problematic to

the people coordinating those management efforts.

Inspections, educations

Interaction between transient boaters and trained personnel at boat landings is still regarded as a primary defense against the spread of AIS.

The Clean Boats-Clean Waters (CBCW) program in Vilas County has historically relied on volunteers to perform this work. Although Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grant funding has been available to lake sponsors for hiring CBCW employees, the grants have been perceived by some lake organizations as excessively cumbersome, needlessly competitive and in too many instances, not worth the effort.

A new streamlined CBCW grant program was introduced by the DNR late in 2012. It features an efficient application process which can be executed online and submitted in a matter of minutes. Competitive ranking has been eliminated. Properly completed applications are funded immediately with confirmation to the applicants within 14 days.

The new grant program, coupled with the CBCW student intern program coordinated by the Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department and UW-Oshkosh, will result in the employment of 12 student interns providing approximately 5,000 hours of CBCW services at more than 20 Vilas County boat landings next summer.

That, in combination with ongoing volunteer efforts elsewhere in the county, will result in thousands of boaters being educated about preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species.

More than 15,300 hours of combined volunteer and paid CBCW efforts in Vilas County during 2010-'12 accounted for 10.6% of the total statewide effort over the same period.

It is anticipated that approximately 8,000 hours will be logged during the summer of 2013. The expanding dedication of area lake organizations to utilize the CBCW program to prevent the spread of aquatic invasives is commendable.

Purple loosestrife control

The first-ever community effort to control purple loosestrife populations in the greater Eagle River area started in 2012.

Purple loosestrife is an attractive, but environmentally harmful, shoreline and wetland plant that has been spreading throughout much of eastern Vilas County over the past few years.



A key component in the battle against aquatic invasive species is the Clean Boats-Clean Waters program. —Contributed Photo

The Eagle River Chain of Lakes Association assisted the Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department and Northland Pines High School students with a biological control program involving rearing and releasing beetles to combat purple loosestrife.

The beetles are native to the same areas of Europe and Asia where loosestrife plants came from. Having evolved with the plants, the beetles rely entirely on purple loosestrife plants for habitat and food. The entire life cycle of the beetle occurs on loosestrife plants, resulting in population control of the otherwise out of control purple loosestrife populations.

Plans are under way to repeat the project in 2013. Other areas of Vilas County, such as Lac du Flambeau and Manitowish Waters, also have citizen volunteers participating in purple loosestrife biological control programs.

Terrestrial invasives work

The Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (WHIP) provides invasive species services throughout Vilas and Oneida counties. The co-op is supported by 14 formal partners representing federal, state and county agencies, plus several local organizations and environmental specialty schools.

WHIP's fiscal sponsor and primary source of funding to date is Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development, a rural development program focusing on conservation, development and utilization of area natural resources to improve social, economic and environmental conditions in Florence, Forest,

Langlade, Lincoln, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano and Vilas counties.

Lumberjack grant funding is enabling WHIP projects including surveying of all county highway rights of way for the presence of priority invasive species, development of rights of way invasive species management plans to be adopted by highway departments in Vilas and Oneida counties, technical support to the town of Three Lakes in conducting invasive species surveys along all town roads, and developing town-level invasive species management plans.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT), having the reputation of not being supportive of roadside invasive species prevention and management efforts, chose recently to work with WHIP in the development of DOT-supported rights of way invasive species management plans in Vilas and Oneida counties. It is anticipated that the progress made with DOT here will serve as a template elsewhere across the state.

The 2013 annual meeting of WHIP's formal and informal partners will be Tuesday, Feb. 26, from 9 a.m. to noon. The meeting will be at Trees For Tomorrow, located on Sheridan Street in Eagle River. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

More information can be obtained from the following Land & Water Conservation Department contacts: Vilas County, Ted Ritter, (715) 479-3738, teritt@co.vilas.wi.us; or Oneida County, Jean Hansen, (715) 369-7837, jhansen@co.oneida.wi.us.



Submitted photo

Biological control of purple loosestrife looks promising

Submitted by Ted Ritter,
Vilas County invasive
species coordinator

The annual bloom of tall, purple, spiked flowers on purple loosestrife plants has begun along Northwoods shorelines, wetlands and low-lying roadside ditches. This attractive plant is also non-native and environmentally harmful. It crowds out native vegetation and drives away many of the insects, amphibious animals, birds and other life forms that depend on native near-water vegetation for

food and shelter.

Purple loosestrife (PL) is one of many unwanted weeds now regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. As of 2009, it can no longer be sold, transported or intentionally cultivated in Wisconsin. But the law falls short of mandating that PL be removed from where it has already become established. Consequently, it is spreading throughout

much of the state, including areas of Vilas and Oneida counties.

A program utilizing a biological control agent to slow the spread of PL in the Eagle River area was introduced by the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department in 2012. Now in its second year, progress is beginning to be evident.

The control agent is a tiny beetle native to Europe and Asia, where

PL originated before being transplanted to North America decades ago. As is true with many of the invasive plants now on our landscape, European settlers brought PL with them to the new world, but forgot to bring with them the environmental agents that naturally keep the plants in check at home. While it's not always wise to move insects around the world, many years of research has confirmed that the PL beetle spends its entire life on PL plants. Capable of flying only short distances, it will leave PL plants only in search of more of the same. Furthermore, it overwinters in the root crowns of mature PL plants. The larval stage of the beetle hatches from eggs laid on the PL leaves and the larvae become adult beetles without ever leaving the host plants. Unlike the problematic Asian lady beetle, the PL beetle is very well-behaved and environmentally friendly, except to PL plants.

Volunteers from the Eagle River Chain of Lakes Association mapped late summer PL sightings in 2011 and 2012. Collected data were processed by the Vilas County Mapping Department and converted to maps depicting high concentrations of PL populations around the chain of lakes. Some of those sights became target areas for eventual release of high concentrations of the leaf-eating beetles.

The spring of 2012 and 2013 found Northland Pines High School students from Mrs. Indermuehle's and Mrs. Justice's biology classes learning about invasive species bio-control from Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator Ted

Ritter. The students were then recruited to participate in the fun of digging and potting wet, muddy PL roots as one of the school's Earth Day celebration activities in early May. Fifty pots of roots were planted and well fertilized each year as part of the beetle rearing process. After a few weeks of vigorous growth, each of the potted plants, wrapped in fine mesh netting, became home to about 10 PL beetles. Mating and egg production occurred under the nets and by mid-July, each plant was hosting as many as 1,000 larval and adult stage insects. The netting served to protect the beetles from potential predation by birds and other insects.

On July 16 of this year, Ritter and Dale Mayo of the Vilas County Forestry Department utilized the forestry department boat to transport most of the potted plants with their cargo of hungry insects to selected island areas on the Eagle River chain where PL plant concentrations are high. The empty pots and plant nets were removed from the release sites, leaving only hungry insects to

migrate from the severely stressed potted plants to the lush foliage of PL plants not previously exposed to the beetles. The insects will hopefully overwinter at the release sites and continue reproducing in years to come.

The first sign of successful bio-control is heavily chewed plant leaves and the lack of flower production, thanks to the growing population of hungry beetles. Ritter was pleased to discover evidence of both upon a recent visit to a 2012 insect release site. Stress to the plants was so significant that flowering and seed production will likely not occur this year on most of the plants at the release site. The same signs will hopefully be found next year and beyond at all release sites.

Similar PL bio-control projects have been underway for several years in the Lac du Flambeau and Manitowish Waters areas of Vilas County and in parts of Oneida County.

For more information about purple loosestrife or other invasive species, contact your county invasive species coordinator at the Vilas or Oneida County Land and Water Conservation offices.





Vilas County Land & Water Conservation

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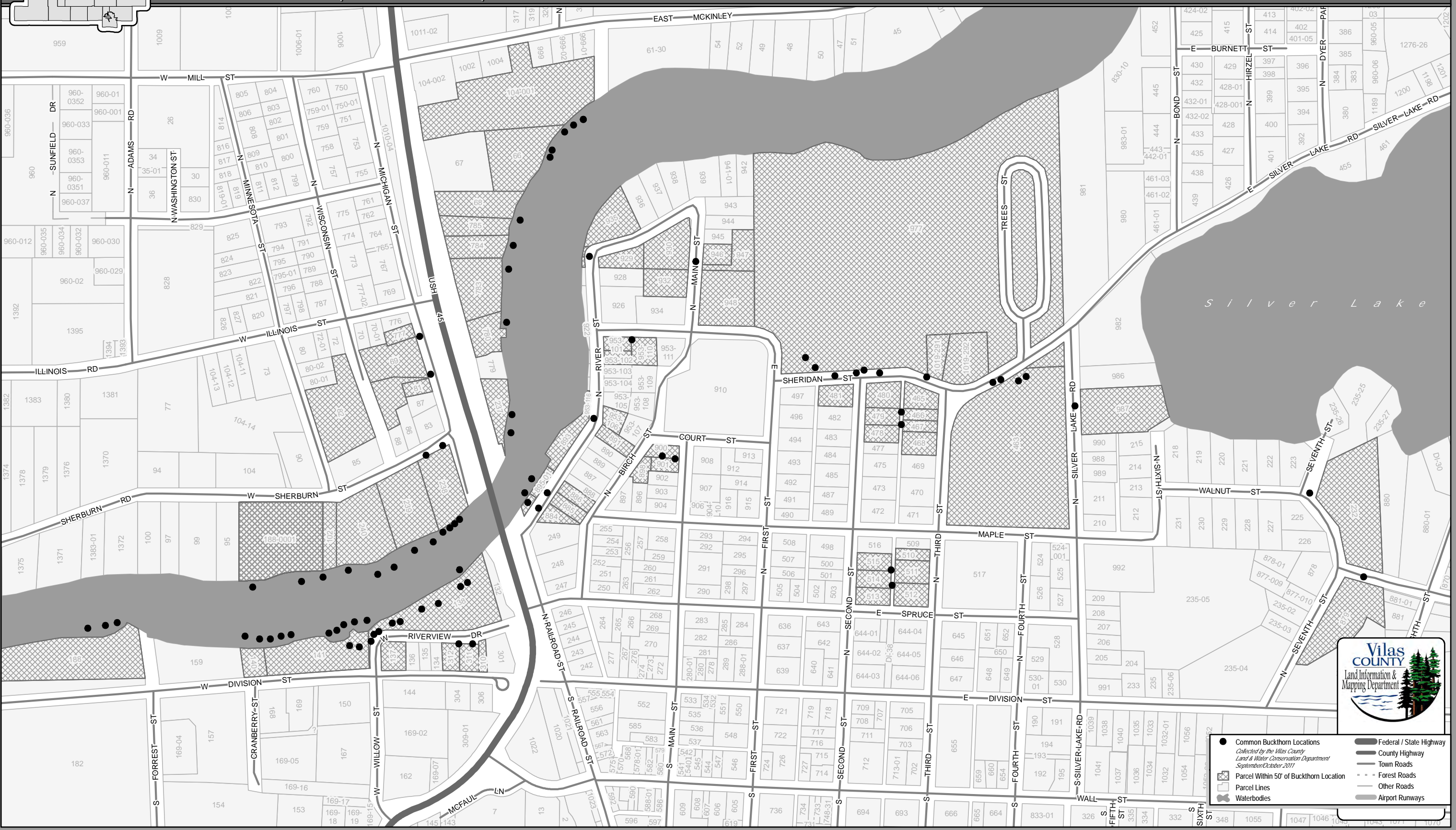
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Final Update on Invasives Inventory Project Compiled for the WHIP Steering Committee by Callie Bertsch 8.19.11

- 18 landowners participated in the project for a total of 3, 725 acres of land.
- Invasive species of major concern (honeysuckle, barberry, knotweed, garlic mustard, and buckthorn) were found on 9 of the properties. This included Eurasian bush honeysuckle, Japanese barberry, and one finding of garlic mustard.
 - I would consider 2 of these properties to be majorly infested accounting for a total of approximately 600 acres. (Honeysuckle mostly, some barberry)
 - All other properties had individual species of honeysuckle, typically found on logging roads, or honeysuckle and barberry used in landscaping near cabins.
- All properties contained what I call minor species of concern. This includes species like thistles, bird's foot trefoil, forget-me-nots, speedwell, and other garden escapees.
- Individual maps for each landowner where invasives were found, as well as a large county-wide map indicating the presence of invasives, are in the process of being printed.
- Individual reports for each property owner will be completed and mailed out as well as bound copies of all the reports compiled for each of the organizations participating in the project.
 - These reports include the map as well as written recommendations and management options for their property.
- ❖ On Wednesday, September 7th at 9:30 am I will present findings for the Land and Water County Committee in the form of a powerpoint presentation. All WHIP and PIF members are invited to attend. The county committee for the forestry department has also been invited. Meeting will be held in the ground level meeting rooms in the courthouse.

COMMON BUCKTHORN

EAGLE RIVER AREA, VILAS COUNTY, WISCONSIN

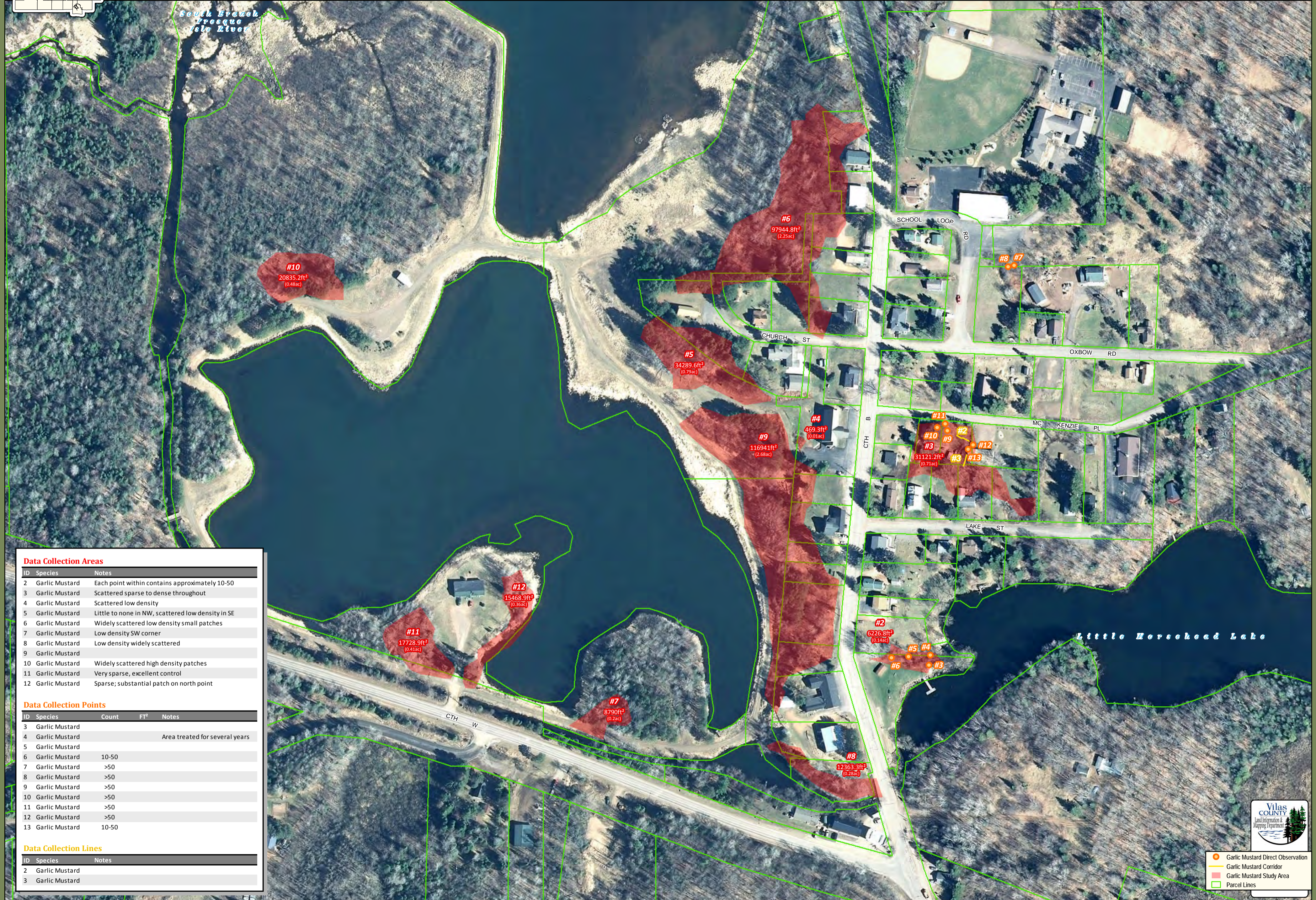
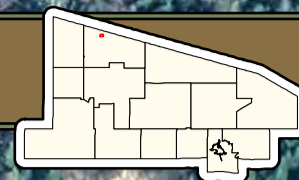


- Common Buckthorn Locations
- ▨ Parcel Within 50' of Buckthorn Location
- ▭ Parcel Lines
- ▭ Waterbodies
- Federal / State Highway
- County Highway
- Town Roads
- Forest Roads
- Other Roads
- Airport Runways

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GARLIC MUSTARD MONITORING IN PRESQUE ISLE, WI

FIELD DATA COLLECTION CONDUCTED JUNE 26, 2012



Data Collection Areas

ID	Species	Notes
2	Garlic Mustard	Each point within contains approximately 10-50
3	Garlic Mustard	Scattered sparse to dense throughout
4	Garlic Mustard	Scattered low density
5	Garlic Mustard	Little to none in NW, scattered low density in SE
6	Garlic Mustard	Widely scattered low density small patches
7	Garlic Mustard	Low density SW corner
8	Garlic Mustard	Low density widely scattered
9	Garlic Mustard	
10	Garlic Mustard	Widely scattered high density patches
11	Garlic Mustard	Very sparse, excellent control
12	Garlic Mustard	Sparse; substantial patch on north point

Data Collection Points

ID	Species	Count	FT ²	Notes
3	Garlic Mustard			
4	Garlic Mustard			Area treated for several years
5	Garlic Mustard			
6	Garlic Mustard	10-50		
7	Garlic Mustard	>50		
8	Garlic Mustard	>50		
9	Garlic Mustard	>50		
10	Garlic Mustard	>50		
11	Garlic Mustard	>50		
12	Garlic Mustard	>50		
13	Garlic Mustard	10-50		

Data Collection Lines

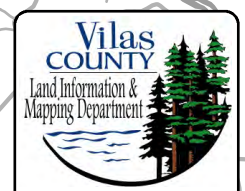
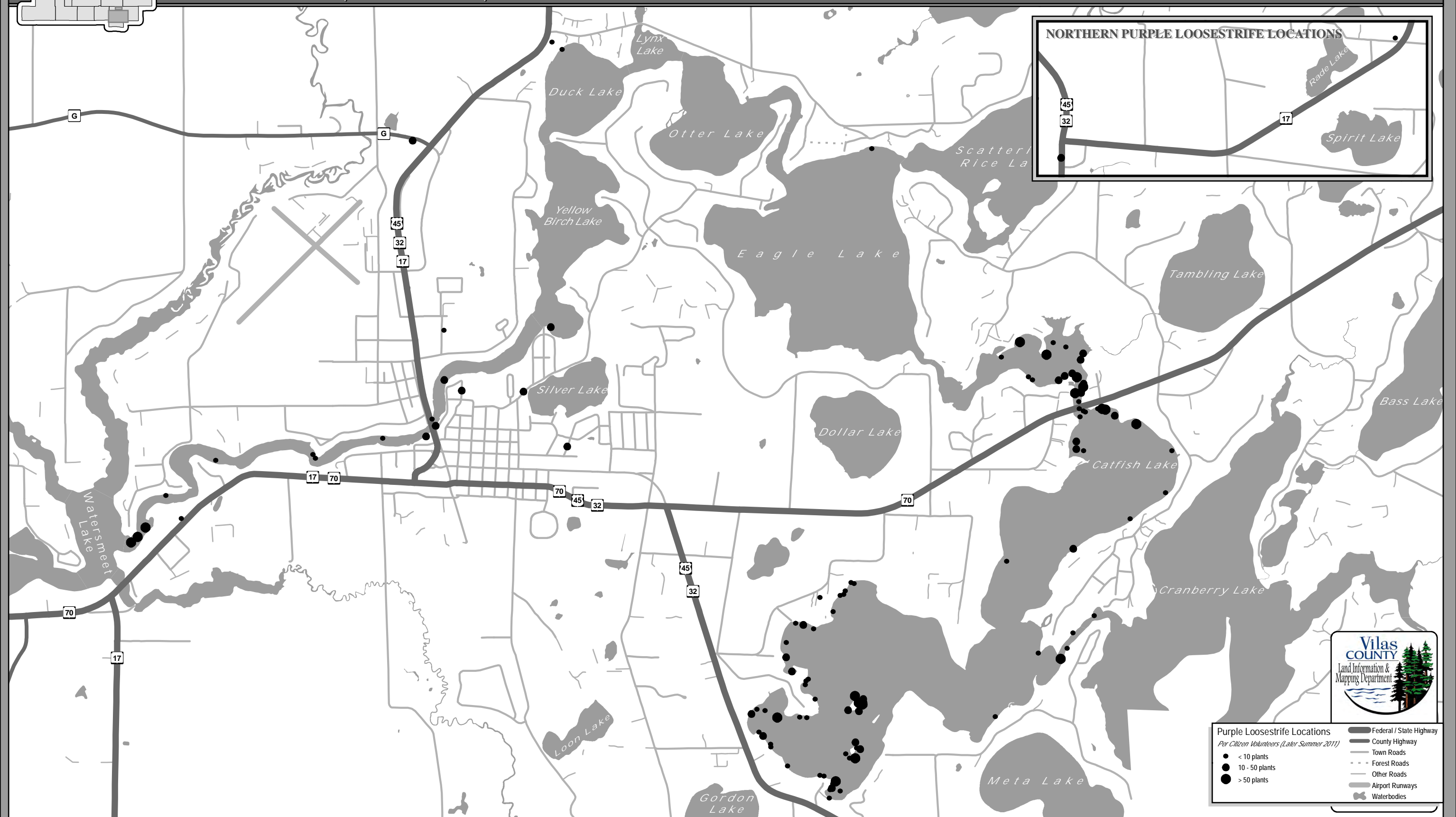
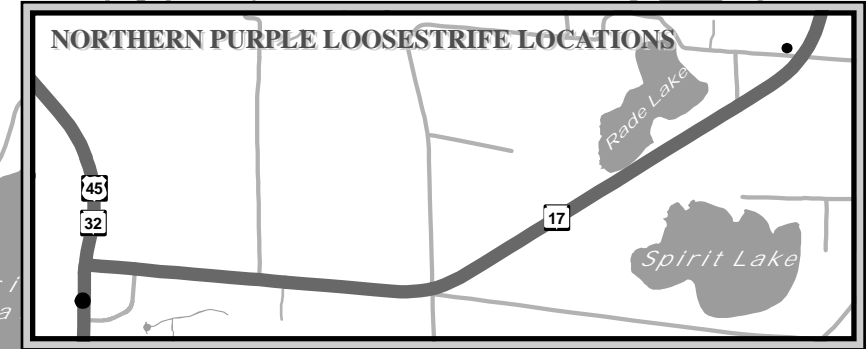
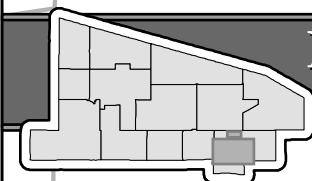
ID	Species	Notes
2	Garlic Mustard	
3	Garlic Mustard	

- Garlic Mustard Direct Observation
- Garlic Mustard Corridor
- Garlic Mustard Study Area
- Parcel Lines

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PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE LOCATIONS

EAGLE RIVER AREA, VILAS COUNTY, WISCONSIN



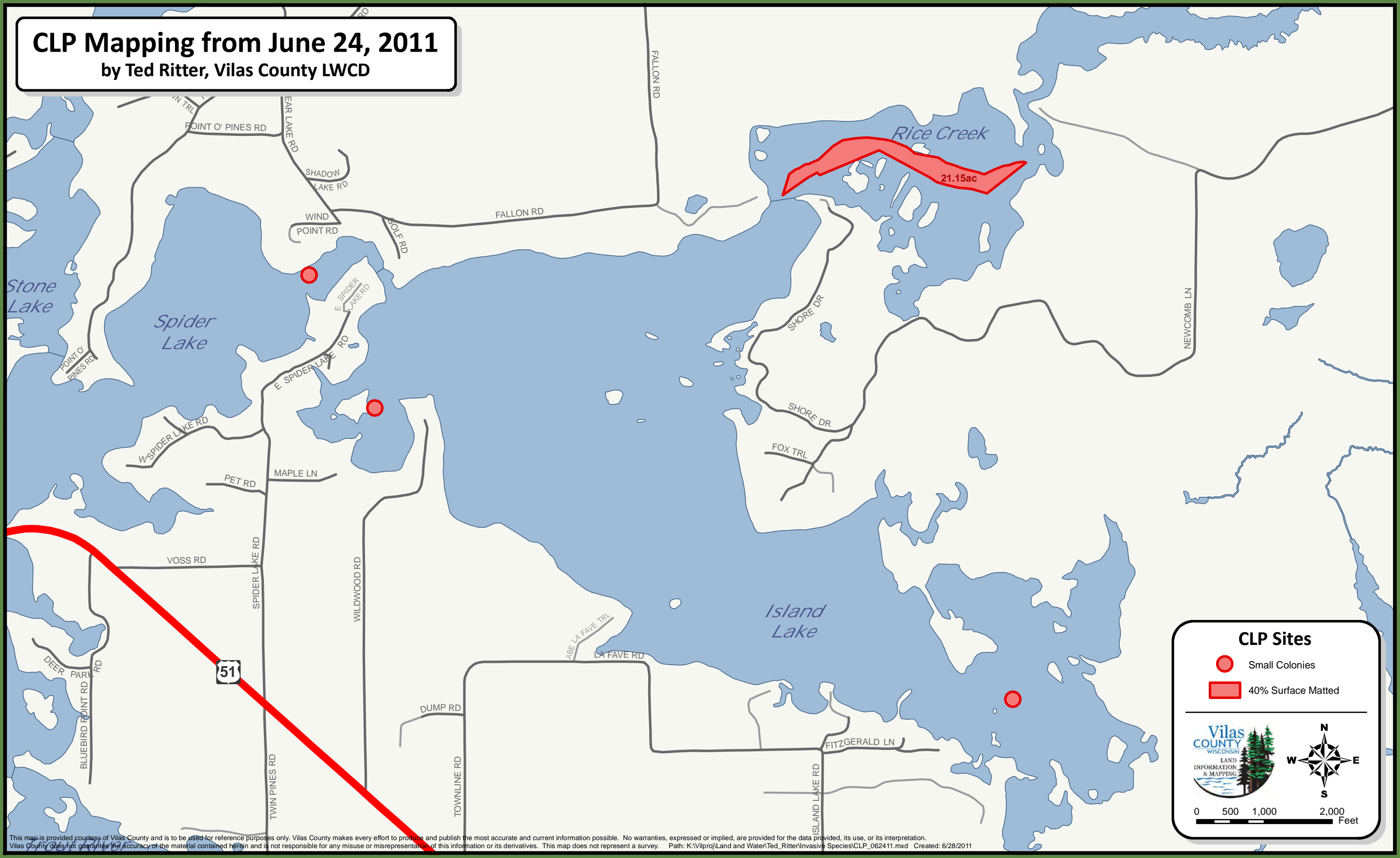
Purple Loosestrife Locations
Per Citizen Volunteers (Late Summer 2011)

- < 10 plants
- 10 - 50 plants
- > 50 plants

- Federal / State Highway
- County Highway
- Town Roads
- Forest Roads
- Other Roads
- Airport Runways
- Waterbodies

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CLP Mapping from June 24, 2011
 by Ted Ritter, Vilas County LWCD



CLP Sites

- Small Colonies
- 40% Surface Matted

Vilas COUNTY WISCONSIN
 LAND INFORMATION & MAPPING

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet







This map is provided courtesy of Vilas County and is to be used for reference purposes only. Vilas County makes every effort to produce and publish the most accurate and current information possible. No warranties, expressed or implied, are provided for the data provided, its use, or its interpretation. Vilas County does not guarantee the accuracy of the material contained herein and is not responsible for any misuse or misrepresentation of this information or its derivatives. This map does not represent a survey. Path: K:\proj\Land and Water\Ted_Ritter\Invasive Species\CLP_062411.mxd Created: 6/28/2011

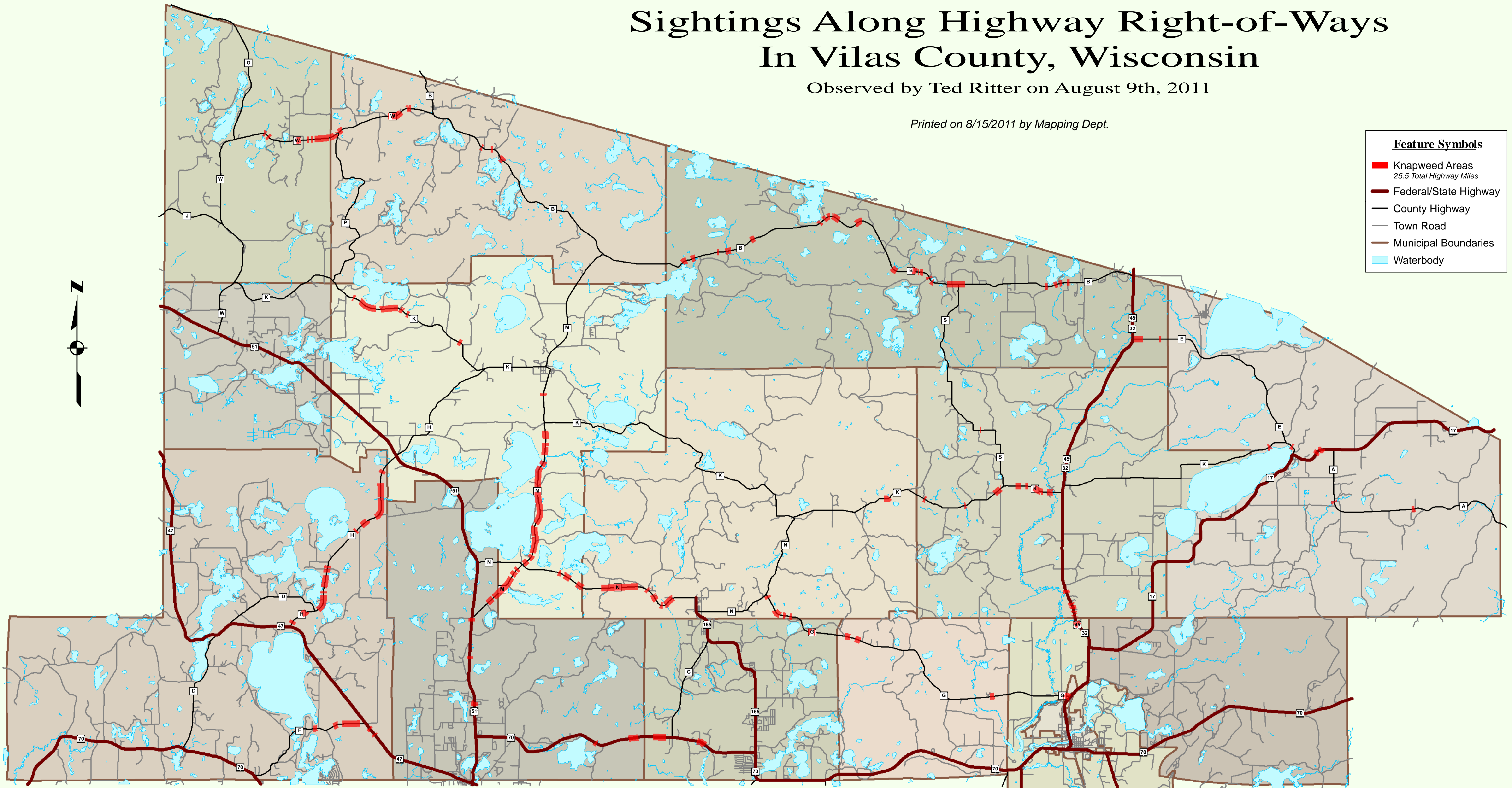
SPOTTED KNAP WEED

Sightings Along Highway Right-of-Ways In Vilas County, Wisconsin

Observed by Ted Ritter on August 9th, 2011

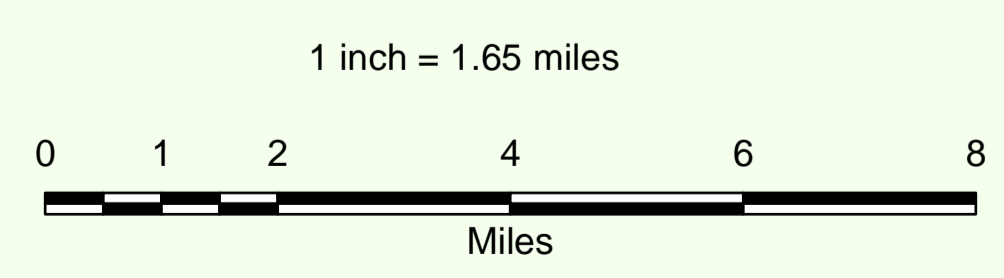
Printed on 8/15/2011 by Mapping Dept.

Feature Symbols	
	Knapweed Areas 25.5 Total Highway Miles
	Federal/State Highway
	County Highway
	Town Road
	Municipal Boundaries
	Waterbody



Vilas COUNTY
Land Information & Mapping Department

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Location: K:\Vilaproj\Land and Water\Ted_Ritter\Invasive Species\VC Spotted Knapweed ROW.mxd

Example Work Schedule – 2012 CBCW UW-Oshkosh Students

Created by Ted Ritter, Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator

Intern 1: Jennifer Rothe
Intern 2: Adrienne Duwe
Intern 3: Brian Sluka
Intern 4: Griffin O'Brien
Plum Lake full time: Brooke Charlotte Porter
Three Lakes full time: Cody Jones
Three Lakes full time: Jay Olson

A 07:00am - 10:00am
B 10:00am - 01:00pm
C 01:00pm - 04:00pm
D 04:00pm - 07:00pm

MAY

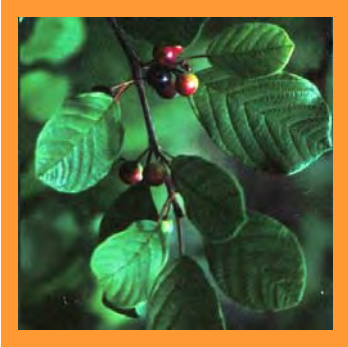
		ST. GERMAIN		PLUM LAKE		PHELPS		CLOVER LAND	LOWER EAGLE RIVER CHAIN				
		LITTLE ST. GERMAIN	FOUND	BALLARD / IRVING	RAZOR-BACK	LONG	BIG SAND	MUSKEL-LUNGE	EAGLE	YELLOW BIRCH	CATFISH	BOAT SPORT	
5/26	Sat	1B	1A	3A		2A	2B	3B	4A	4B			
5/27	Sun			4A	4B	3A	3B		1A	1B	2A	2B	
5/28	Mon		2A	1A	1B	4A	4B		2B	3A	3B		
5/29	Tue												
5/30	Wed												
5/31	Thu	4A	4C	4B	2A	2C	2B	1A	1B	1C	3A	3B	3C
		9	9	15	9	12	12	6	9	12	9	6	

Priority Invasive Terrestrial Plants of Oneida and Vilas Counties, WI

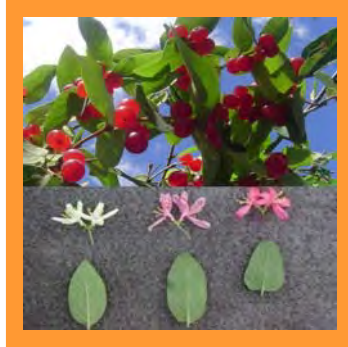
For more information about invasive plants, contact Oneida or Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Departments:
 Oneida Co: Jean Hansen, 715-369-7837, jhansen@co.oneida.wi.us
 Vilas Co: Ted Ritter, 715-479-3738, teritt@co.vilas.wi.us



Common buckthorn (tree)
Restricted



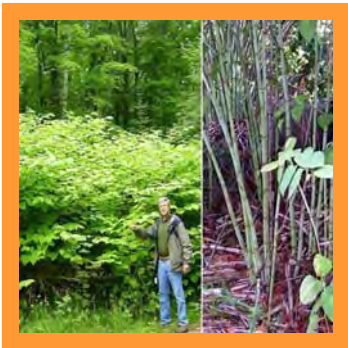
Glossy buckthorn (shrub)
Restricted



Non-native bush honey-suckles (shrub) Restricted



Garlic mustard (forb)
Restricted



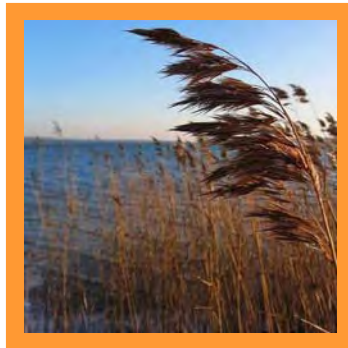
Japanese knotweed (forb)
Restricted



Spurge: Leafy & Cypress (forb)
Restricted



Purple loosestrife (forb)
Restricted



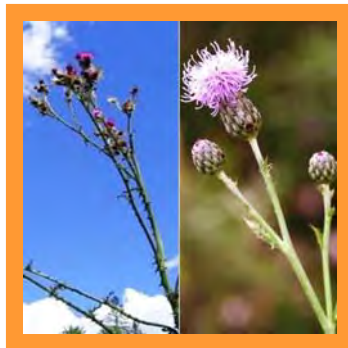
Phragmites (grass)
Restricted



Wild parsnip (forb)
Restricted



Oriental bittersweet (vine)
Restricted



Non-native thistles (forb)
Restricted



Spotted knapweed (not thistle)
Restricted



Wild chervil (forb)
Prohibited



Japanese stilt grass (grass)
Prohibited



Giant hogweed (forb)
Prohibited



Japanese Barberry
Cautionary (not yet regulated)

See reverse for explanation of “Restricted” and “Prohibited”

This informational hand-out is prepared and printed by the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership (WHIP), a multi agency partnership dedicated to invasive species public awareness, prevention and management in Oneida and Vilas Counties of north central Wisconsin.
 Prepared by WHIP, January, 2011

WISCONSIN'S REGULATED INVASIVE PLANTS

Wisconsin statutes define invasive species as “...**non-indigenous species whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.**”

There are far more plants in Wisconsin that satisfy the above definition than are shown on this handout. Not all invasive plants are of the same concern everywhere. Some are more troublesome in agriculture areas than in the Northwoods and vice versa. This handout identifies priority plants; those representing serious environmental harm in Oneida and Vilas Counties. Some are already well established in the two county area while others are less common. Furthermore, this handout does not include some of the invasive plants already common in north central Wisconsin because, while they meet the definition of invasive, they are more of a nuisance than a serious threat in this part of the State.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Administrative Rule NR 40, adopted in September, 2009, provides regulations for invasive species. Invasive plants are classified in the rule as either “**Restricted**” or “**Prohibited**”. Generally speaking, “Restricted” plants are already common and the likelihood of eradicating them from the Wisconsin landscape is poor. “Prohibited” plants are generally not yet present or are at an early enough stage of becoming established that eradication is still possible. Some plants are split listed, meaning they are restricted in some areas of Wisconsin and prohibited in others.

The rules for “Restricted” and “Prohibited” species are mostly the same with an important distinction for the “Prohibited” category. Neither can be imported, transported or transferred (sold) in Wisconsin (unless an exemption or permit is issued by the WDNR). The rule does not mandate that “Restricted” plants be removed or managed in any way, although management is encouraged. However, “Prohibited” plants must be removed or managed by the land owner/manager. The WDNR has authority to issue orders mandating compliance with all aspects of the rule.

NR 40 is explained further on the WDNR website at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/classification/>

NR 40 can be viewed in its entirety at:

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/rsb/code/nr/nr040.pdf>

A Field Guide to Terrestrial Invasive Plants in Wisconsin summarizes and depicts the non-aquatic plants classified as invasive in NR 40. The guide is available at a nominal fee from several sources including the Land & Water Conservation Departments at the Oneida and Vilas County Courthouses.

This handout has been created by:

