



Roger Sabota, Chair
Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Habitat Committee
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Rhineland, WI 54501

Steven Holmes, Secretary
Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Habitat Committee
306 North Douglas Street
Dodgeville, WI 53533

August 29, 2008

Wisconsin County Highway Commissioners

Re: Control of Invasive Species Along County Rights-of-Way

Greetings County Highway Commissioners,

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) Habitat Study Committee has been a long time advocate for the control of invasive species. We have all seen how quickly non-native plants and organisms can spread and how well they out compete our native species. Four years ago our committee identified county highway crews as a possible ally in the fight against invasives. Your crews are out there, along our highways, day in and day out. We felt that if we could provide county highway workers with information on invasive species, they could assist in identifying and possibly help to control the advancement of invasive plants. However, we were uncertain of what information you may find useful, and we weren't certain how control activities would coincide with your regular work activities. Needless to say we were very encouraged to hear about an effort that has begun to address some of these issues, the Rights-of-Way Best Management Practices (BMPs) initiative.

Because of our concern for invasive species control, we would like to encourage your participation and involvement in developing BMPs for controlling and preventing the spread of invasive species on our highway system. We believe that your county highway crews are critical players in the control of invasive plants along Rights-of-Way.

As established by Wisconsin State Statutes, the WCC is officially recognized as the only natural resources advisory body in the state where citizens elect delegates to represent their interests on natural resources issues on a local and statewide level to the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Our mission is to represent the citizens of Wisconsin by working with the Natural Resources Board and the DNR to effectively manage Wisconsin's greatest asset, our abundant natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy.

We understand that in July, representatives from the DOT, DNR and the Counties began work with the Towns Association and key utility players on an advisory committee to lay out a framework for developing BMPs dealing with Planning, Design, Construction and Maintenance along Rights-of-Way. We are glad to hear that the Wisconsin County Highway Association has been very involved and hope that you will continue to provide your input into this process.

We hope that through the BMP process simple educational tools can be developed for road crews and in turn, through your input, information on location of invasives and control strategies can be implemented to keep invasive plants from spreading across the state. Again, we appreciate your interest and encourage your participation.

Sincerely,

Roger Sabota, Chair
WCC Habitat Committee

Cc. Members of the WCC Habitat Study Committee
Members of the WCC Executive Committee

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