

# Trails at Risk from Invasive Species

**INVASIVE SPECIES** are taking over our parks and natural areas making it more difficult to ride and simply enjoy nature, as well as damaging valuable wildlife habitat.

**Fortunately, bikers can play a critical role in slowing the spread of invasives!**

## WHAT BIKERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT INVASIVES

- Invasive species are nonnative plants, animals, and pathogens that can cause harm to the economy, environment, and human health.
- Invasive plants tend to reproduce and grow quickly, making trails impassable. They can reduce native plants and the animals that depend on them for food and shelter. Invasive shrubs can increase erosion by shading out ground layer plants that hold the soil. Invasive insects and pathogens can kill trees. Invasive earthworms contribute to bare and eroding soils.

## WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH BIKERS?

- Invasive plant seeds, insects, earthworm eggs, and pathogens (such as bacteria and fungi) can be moved in mud on tire treads. Seeds with burs can be transported on clothes and shoes.
- Concerns about spreading invasive species may endanger bikers' access to lands and trails in the future.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

**There are many small, easy steps you can take to keep invasives in check.**

- Learn to recognize common invasive species in your area so you can avoid riding through them. Visit <http://invasivespecies.wi.gov/> and <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/> to learn more.
- Be aware of seeds that stick to your clothing and shoes.
- Clean off bike tires, clothing, shoes, and all other equipment before entering and upon leaving bike trails. Bag and dispose of soils, seeds, plants parts and invertebrates.
- Avoid excessive soil disturbance.
- Minimize water crossings.
- Stay on established and designated trails.
- When in doubt about the presence of invasive species, stay out!
- Join volunteer efforts aimed at controlling invasive species
- Spread the word – help educate others, about invasive species and their effects on our environment, economy, and recreational opportunities!
- Notify property manager or landowner if you notice newly invading species.