

Project Title:

“County Lakes Association & Manitowoc County - Invasives Species Education, Prevention, and Control Planning Coordination Grant”

Project Period:

A. Project Scope and Description:

Manitowoc County’s lakes and rivers have been impacted by the introduction of invasive species due in part to our proximity to Lake Michigan and south east Wisconsin metropolitan corridor of Chicago and Indiana where many of our invasives historically entered Wisconsin.

Historically most of our County lakes that are connected by watercourses to Lake Michigan are or were infested by the Asian Carp introduced in the last century. The Silver Lake fish eradication project netted alewives, carp and gizzard shad as an example of this migration from Lake Michigan. The Rusty Crayfish has created vegetation desserts in our County’s river systems.

Zebra mussels are already present in Cedar, Wilke and Pigeon lakes. Eurasian Milfoil has been identified in Harps, Horseshoe, Long, Pigeon, Rockville flowage, Carstens, Tuma and Wilke lakes. The newest invasive Curly Pond Weed is in Carstens, English, and Bullhead.

Purple Loosestrife and Phragmites are fast displacing native cattail wetland habitats and flood plains of our County watersheds threatening native wildlife species and obstructing agricultural drainage systems. These infestations are currently small enough in size to warrant eradication.

Pigeon Lake recently chemically treated Eurasian Milfoil and desires to protect their investment from reintroduction of this invasive. Nearly a million dollars has been invested in the rehabilitation of Silver Lake. Currently native aquatic plants have not become established since the carp eradication, creating a lake environment vulnerable to invasive species infestation.

New invasives are lining up to invade already infested lakes as well as water bodies that have escaped the current invasion. These invasives are the Round Goby, Spiny & Fish hook waterfleas, the VHS virus, Quagga Mussels, Eurasian Ruffe; aquatic plants: European Marsh Thistle, European Frog-bit, Hydrilla, and Water Chestnut.

Project Description:

This project proposal (February 08) will team the strengths of the Manitowoc County Lakes Associations (MCLA) and its networking capability with various county organizations to mass a volunteer network of enthusiasm and energy. The MCLA will contract to conduct assessment with stake holders of current invasive species problems, implement a clean boats program, develop invasive species monitors on all public access lakes and facilitate discussions with Town and County government officials responsible for road right-of-ways, regarding eradication of known infestations.

A second AIS application is planned for the August 08 grant round by Manitowoc County Planning & Parks Department, who will hire a coordinator to develop a county wide program to address priorities identified by the Citizen Stakeholders; map and monitor county invasive species sites; conduct, plan and organize educational programming to increase public and elected officials awareness of invasive species; conduct demonstrations on invasive species control methods; and provide training for volunteers on invasive species management. A second project application will provide for an evaluation of the volunteer efforts and formation of inputs to a County wide approach. The August deadline would allow for the County to better plan and prepare an invasive species project budget for inclusion in the County Budget which is prepared in August also.

B. Description of Project Area:

Insert list of Boat landings with Public access and Lakes list.

C. PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Manitowoc County Land & Water Resource Management Plan of 1999 with Citizen input, identified Exotic Plant control as a priority Goal, however County policy makers failed to fund or staff the plans identified objectives.
- The Manitowoc County Land Conservation Committee's 2007 citizen's survey identified a priority for invasive species management.
- A stake holders meeting of County groups concerned with local natural resources was conducted on April 19, 2007 that identified needs regarding invasive species.
- The Manitowoc County Land & Water Resource Management Plan developed in 2007 for the years 2008 – 2012, identified the need for invasive species control **but did not approve invasive species management as a priority for staffing or funding.**
- On June 18, 2007 a meeting between local County Government Departments, agencies and other conservation organizations stake holders **failed to arrive at a consensus to develop a County Invasive species Program.**

Therefore on July 26th 2007 the Manitowoc County Lakes Association was approached to initiate the leadership to develop and apply for a County Aquatic Invasive Species Grant that will set in motion a Citizen based comprehensive approach, partnered with Manitowoc County to address aquatic invasive species threatening our aquatic ecosystem and quality of life.

D. Discussion of project goals and objectives:

- 1. GOAL: Develop a Citizen based program to prioritize invasive species threats; provide early detection and identification of invasive species and provide man power or resources to control the spread of invasive species.**

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Engage the many sportsman clubs, lake associations, municipalities and civic organizations to better understand invasive species threats and provide a source of leadership and volunteerism for a county program.
- b. Obtain a better understanding of the degree of infestation of aquatic invasive species in the County.

- c. Create a Corp of trained monitors to identify early infestations of aquatic invasives through out the county.
- d. Develop a model of volunteerism to provide: citizen expertise and energy, political will and knowledge to address invasive species control, time and labor to effectively control invasive species out breaks.

2. GOAL: Conduct a Clean Boats Program on priority lakes to reduce the spread of invasives species; educate and train boaters on steps to take to prevent the spread of invasives and conduct water craft inspections.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Increase the skill level of lake and river users to conduct water craft inspection and implement steps to prevent the spread of invasives.
- b. Prevent the spread of invasives to non-infested lakes and rivers or water bodies that have applied abatement control measures.

3. GOAL: Reach the Public, Private Landowners, County and Town officials thru education to create an understanding that everyone needs to act and give priority to prevent the spread of invasive species.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Identify responsibilities and actions that private landowners, general Public and Town & County Officials can do to prevent the spread of invasive species.
- b. Incorporate the identified responsibilities in presentations, training and educational materials.

4. GOAL: Develop a County wide program to identify and map known out breaks of invasives; coordinate a County wide control plan for the Citizen Stakeholder group's identified priorities; conduct plan and organize educational programming to increase the public and elected officials awareness of invasive species;

conduct demonstrations on invasive species control methods; and provide training for volunteers on invasive species management.
(Proposed for a 2nd round application in August 08).

OBJECTIVES:

- a. To begin to better understand and reduce the abundance of aquatic invasives in local ecosystems, develop and coordinate a County wide control plan for Citizen Stakeholder group identified priorities.
- b. To be able to access the spread of invasives in the County and target species control or eradication efforts provide a centralized mapping data base system to monitor invasive species control and target eradication efforts.
- c. To better implement measures to prevent spread of invasives on public properties or right-of- ways and conduct eradication measures at larger scales than smaller citizen groups can accomplish, coordinate the resources and authorities of municipalities
- d. To improve the effectiveness of volunteers, landowners and citizens provide training and resources to conduct an effective invasive species program.

E. Description of methods and activities:

Project Oversight:

MCLA Board of Directors will provide oversight of the project management. MCLA was formed as a County Lake Association to provide umbrella coverage for county lakes that were not organized as an official Lake Organization or had insufficient number of riparian landowners to function as a Lake Association. MCLA has had experience managing numerous Lake Planning Grants such as Silver Lake, Carstens/Weyers Lake and 6 shore land buffer demonstrations. The Association also partnered with Manitowoc County to conduct a Lake Classification Program.

Financial Management:

Terry Lyons, MCLA Board member and Deb Meyer, MCLA Treasurer will serve as project contacts or representatives. Terry is currently project manager for the County Beatle Project to control purple loosestrife and is experienced with preparing project claims and grant documentation. Terry is also a qualified accountant.

Contracted Services:

MCLA will contract with Woodland Dunes of Two Rivers to conduct the volunteer training and public education activities. Woodland Dunes has previous experience with

invasive species programming by serving as a Cella beetle rearing site and conducting Phragmites eradication measures on the West Twin River.

Project management, coordinator of the volunteer activities to include clean boat inspections, Lake Monitor invasive teams and programming with Town and County highway functions will be contracted with a private consultant or employment agency.

Activities:

1. Conduct a Problem Assessment: convene representatives of all public access lakes and project stakeholders, to identify known invasive sites and species and target audiences to develop an educational program.
2. Volunteer network:
 - Develop techniques to reach and identify potential volunteers with partnering organizations.
 - Design a volunteer exchange for time for money proposal for the over 800 county inland lake residents, which will raise funds to employ full time Clean Boat inspectors/leaders.
 - Initiate a newsletter and other methods of communication to reach volunteers and target audiences.
 - Schedule and plan volunteers to include a phone tree and dispatch system to schedule and plan the volunteer manned clean boat projects.
3. Develop Partnerships with other county and regional organizations to provide volunteers and financial support as well as facilitate educational activities.
4. Develop Monitoring Teams for Individual Lakes & Public areas/for early detection of invasive infestations.
5. Conduct Clean Boats Program on two priority Lakes in 2008 and 10 lakes in 2009.
 - Schedule, coordinate, track, recruit, organize and manage the Clean Boats Program on area Lakes.
6. Develop network with Town Governments to address Public right of way infestations.
7. Contract with Woodland Dunes for the following:
 - Manage invasive species website, advertising, newsletters, communications.
 - Educational training activities.

8. Conduct two bus tours/field trips for Stakeholders, public officials, Lake Membership and the public to tour various sites, projects and witness testimony on the impacts and successes of invasive species management.

F. Description of project products or deliverables

G. Description of existing and proposed partnership

H. Discussion of role of project planning and/or lake management

I. Timetable for implementation of key activities

J. Plan for sharing project results

K. Other information in support of project