

Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area

*Working together to protect the northwoods of Wisconsin
from the impacts of invasive species*

Issue No 4 - July 2010

Teaming Up On Invasives

The NCWMA is part of a collaborative effort to restore portions of Lake Superior's shoreline in the City of Ashland.

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Summer Fun... Or is it?

Stefania Strzalkowska, AIS Coordinator for Bayfield County, tells us about aquatic invasive species, and how they can interfere with summer fun.

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You're invited to an
**Invasive
Species
Open
House**

Would you like to see local invasive plants up close?

*Have you been wondering if a plant
in your yard or lake is invasive?*

*Wondering how Wisconsin's new
invasive species law may affect you?*

Here's your chance - join us!

We are hosting an invasive species open house, in conjunction with the City of Ashland, to share information about invasive plants, control options, and local cooperative efforts to manage them. We'll have living plants on display, experts on hand to answer questions, and lots of information available to take home. The open house will be informal, with plenty of time to browse the displays and ask questions.

5:00-7:00pm Wednesday, July 21

Short presentation at 5:30pm

Bretting Community Center

400 4th Avenue West, Ashland, WI

Teaming Up on Invasives

NCWMA part of a cooperative effort to restore sections of Ashland's lakefront

Michael Meyer, Research Scientist with the Wisconsin DNR, has been researching the impacts of shoreline buffers along inland lakes in northern Wisconsin. He is gathering evidence to prove what many of us have only assumed: that a buffer of diverse native plants is good for the lake and the surrounding wildlife.

After constructing a buffer of native plants, Meyer and his team monitor plants, amphibians, birds, and water quality to *quantify* the benefits derived from a healthy shoreline. He has done this on several inland lakes, and now he's trying it on a much bigger lake.

This year, Meyer will be working with the Northwoods CWMA and many other partners to implement the same study on Lake Superior in the City of

Ashland, using two distinct sections of shoreline for the project. One section will be a control site used to monitor baseline conditions. The other site will be restored through the removal of industrial debris, invasive plant management, and native plant restoration. Both sites will undergo monitoring, including plant, bird, amphibian, and water quality surveys.

A project on this scale could not be accomplished without the help of many partners. The City of Ashland Public Works Department will help by removing old industrial debris from the lakefront using their heavy equipment and trained operators. The NCWMA will organize volunteers to remove invasive plants, and students

from Northland College and the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute will plant native species. Monitoring will be conducted under the guidance of expert staff from Michigan Tech University and the Wisconsin DNR.

In addition, UW-Extension and the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute will collaborate to turn the project into a teaching tool for other municipalities along the Lake Superior shoreline.

Funding for this project came from the EPA through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The project will begin in the fall of 2010, and continue through 2011. For more information, contact Darienne McNamara, NCWMA Coordinator, at info@northwoodscwma.org.

SUMMER FUN... *Or is it?*

By Stefania Strzalkowska



With summer comes those memorable activities focused around water—fishing, waterskiing, swimming, jet skiing, tubing, canoeing, kayaking, or those leisurely evening pontoon trips pattering around the lake. In northern Wisconsin, we are lucky to have water resources so accessible. However, there is something that threatens the activities we love and appreciate—aquatic invasive species (AIS). The key word describing this group of species is “aquatic.” Because they live under water, their harmful effects may go unnoticed for awhile, unlike an invasive plant or insect on land that is readily visible. Aquatic invasive plants grow earlier in the spring than most native plants, and then grab all the sunlight and resources available resulting in an explosion of growth. A 15-foot musky bay can become weed-choked by midsummer once infested with Eurasian water-milfoil (EWM). If the water is clear, EWM can grow in 30 feet of water, all the way from the lake bed to the surface, impeding boating, fishing, or swimming in the infested water. Curly-leaf pondweed can do the same, as well as many other aquatic submersed and floating invasive species that have yet to be transported to our waters.

The old adage—an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure—is THE guiding principle to combat the AIS threat. The prevention steps are to inspect, clean, and dry equipment after taking it out of the water. Drain all water from equipment as it can harbor microscopic organisms. And never release plants, insects, or fish into a water body that did not come from that water body. The state helps many local programs to provide watercraft inspector/educators at boat launches to instruct and assist boaters with those simple prevention steps. Keeping these species out of our lakes and rivers is the ultimate goal. Established populations of AIS like zebra mussels, rusty crayfish, and spiny water fleas can change the lake ecosystem, affecting all the inhabitants of that lake. Game fish, as the top predators, can be impacted the most. It goes without saying how important these are to the local and regional economies, and to the enjoyment of so many in the state. Think about it: how many of your fond memories are attached to summer water activities? Make those simple AIS prevention steps a part of your summertime routine. Our grandkids will thank us for it!



Photos: (top left) EWM pulled up from the water on a rake; (above) watercraft inspector/educator assisting fisherman at a boat launch.