

Invasive Free Zone Challenge

*Creating additional Invasive Free Zones in the Great Lakes basin:
Following the inter-agency model at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center*

The Challenge

Eastern Region National Forests will voluntarily identify at least one area such as an administrative site, protected area or other specific location of any size to become an invasive free zone (focus is on terrestrial and emergent invasive plants). The zones will be patterned after the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (NGLVC) model and case study.

The Goal

Create a network of invasive free sites that demonstrate this integrated, landscape approach to addressing invasive species and provide core areas from which expanded zones can be created in partnership with local landowners, communities, counties, states and federal agencies. Also, to provide a focus area for active weed groups to address invasive plants.

The Model

The first project combined two federal agencies' lands, private lands, and numerous partners to inventory, plan, control, demonstrate, and educate within a designated 720-acre invasive free zone. The project site includes the Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge, the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, and private lands within the Refuge boundary. The goal is to eliminate invasive plants on the entire area. An inventory is nearly complete, treatment and restoration have been initiated, and a management plan has been developed. The project has been multi-agency funded and is being led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Project personnel would be available to assist in the establishment of new zones.

Significant attributes:

- Targets multiple non-native invasive plants (20+ species) on a contiguous landscape scale
- Incorporates restoration of native plants and wildlife habitat
- Encompasses several habitat types on a diverse, contiguous land base
- Integrates leadership, coordination, information management, education, detection, control
- One of a kind project with wide applicability
- Incorporates GIS-based location mapping and analysis
- Partners: Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Lake Superior Binational Program, National Park Service, Northland College, Private Landowners (16)

Support of Ongoing Efforts

This idea compliments and helps fulfill invasive species actions identified in the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration strategic plan, the Midwest Natural Resource Managers Group (MNRG) "Action Plan for Addressing Terrestrial Invasive Species in the Great Lakes Basin", cooperative weed management area plans, the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan, agency invasive species plans, etc.

Funding

Agency funding plus grant dollars.

For more information, contact:

Darienne McNamara
Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge
29270 County Hwy G,
Ashland, WI 54806
715-685-2648
darienne_mcnamara@fws.gov

Invasive Free Zone Challenge

We understand that collaboration is necessary for effective management of invasive species, and provides more access to resources and expertise.

We agree to take the Invasive Free Zone Challenge
and commit to the following:

- apply an ecological approach to manage invasive species, working on a landscape-scale and across land ownership boundaries wherever possible
- coordinate with partners to achieve project goals
- ensure continuity in management activities by maintaining records such as:
 - species presence and abundance
 - mapping standards
 - treatment methods and efficacy
 - restoration activities
- utilize adaptive management, understanding that each site is unique and that lessons will be learned along the way
- become a supporter for the Invasive Free Zone concept
- advocate for more support of invasive species programs both within our agency/organization and beyond
- collaborate with project staff at other Invasive Free Zone sites

We will establish an Invasive Free Zone at _____
to include _____ acres.

Signature

Date

Contact Person

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____