

Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Planning Meeting

January 18, 2006, Watersmeet Ranger District

NOTES

Attendees: Tom Church, Barb Gajewski, Wes Kiley, Bob Evans, Ian Shackleford, Sue Trull.

The group reviewed a draft agreement that was compiled from examples given to Sue and Ian at CWMA training, based on actual CWMA's set up in Idaho and Wyoming. We went through each section, editing as needed. Several questions were raised that will be forwarded to the CWMA trainer and Forest Service Agreements Specialist (Pam Wiese).

Some topics discussed included:

What should our focus be and what should we call ourselves?

The group decided to word the agreement to incorporate all non-native exotic species, not just invasive aquatic plants. However, the focus for the foreseeable future would likely remain on invasive aquatic species. The group decided to call ourselves the Western Upper Peninsula Cooperative Weed & Pest Management Association.

Would setting up a CWMA result in "dilution" of funds available for individual organization's weed management needs?

No, the agreement includes language that each cooperator can choose whether or not to use the CWMA to address its weed problems, and that the cooperator signs the annual operating plan before contributing funds. The CWMA is designed to leverage and increase funds for weed work, particularly through grant applications. In this first year, the CWMA is unlikely to have much in the way of its own funds; cooperators would have the funds they had already obtained and may choose to contribute some to the CWMA for combined work.

Would Lake Associations be asked to contribute money for milfoil treatments in lakes besides their own?

If a Lake Association had the means and was willing, contributing funds to the CWMA for treatment of neighboring infestations would help keep Eurasian water-milfoil from spreading. However, we understand that funding of member groups is limited. One main purpose of the CWMA would be to work together to apply for grant funding to help all members conduct invasive pest education, prevention, and control.

What geographic area should we include?

We proposed Gogebic and Iron Counties and the Ottawa NF. We understand there is some interest from Dickinson County, but there was concern this might be too far to stretch limited resources. (We discussed the potential for including part of Vilas County, Wisconsin, but decided crossing state lines would be difficult at this point.)

What is the State's interest?

Cary Gustafson of MI DEQ had told Bob Evans that he fields calls about invasive plants in the UP, but that dealing with invasives is not included in his program so he is limited in actions he can take. A person in Lansing is tasked with invasive plants issues. DNR and DEQ representatives were invited but did not attend.

How would this work financially?

This is a question to be resolved by the CWMA trainer (*see separate notes*). We think that each cooperator would contribute some funds (as they could and wanted to) and the steering committee would develop a list of projects in priority order for that year. We think a treasurer could be appointed by the steering committee rather than having an outside fiduciary (which is the western state's model, but generally for larger areas and funds). In future years, we anticipate the CWMA would receive some grant money to supplement funds contributed by cooperators.

The draft agreements language is in a separate file. Following our review, we agreed on these next steps.

*Finalize draft agreement (remove comments, clean up, get questions answered by trainer and Agreements Specialist). Sue

*Send to meeting attendees for review by their boards/commissions/members as needed. Sue

*Distribute to major cooperators who did not attend the meeting:

Watersmeet and Marenisco Township Supervisors	Tom
Iron County Conservation District	Sue
Gogebic Conservation District (attend board meeting 2/6)	Ian
LVD Tribe (George Beck)	Sue
Gogebic County Forestry Dept. (Dick Bolen)	Ian
GLIFWC (Miles Falck)	Sue

*Also send to lake associations as information. It was noted that most of these groups meet once in the summer, so the timing might be difficult to get an authorized signature to form the CWMA before that. We will send the draft agreement to them and let them know they can sign on later. Those with board members residing in the area who are authorized to take such action (such as Wes for Cisco Chain Riparians) could sign the original agreement.

Langford Lake Assoc. (Ruth Bozdech)	Sue
Dinner Lake Assoc. (Ken Wendt)	Bob
LVD Association (Ken Lacount)	Bob
Moon Lake Assoc. (Tom Wheeler)	Bob
Duck Lake Assoc. (Joe Lomastro)	Bob
Long Lake Assoc/MI Lakes and Streams (Arnie Domanus)	Sue or Bob

*Return comments/edits on the draft agreement to Sue. Meeting attendees and recipients

*Route to Agreements specialist for review and signatures. (Enter to I-WEB) Sue

*Contact Vilas County's Ted Ritter or Pat Goggin to let them know what we are doing and contemplate future cooperative work (Ritter at 715-479-3738) Ian or Sue

*Contact area licensed terrestrial herbicide applicators and invite them to consider becoming certified for aquatic work. Offer to help them with this process. Ian

*Start looking into grant options Tom, Sue, Ian, Bob

*Contact John Skogerboe about doing a presentation and his grant options Sue

We agreed that in this process of contacting possible cooperators we would defer potential members that would hold up the CWMA establishment process. We want to get this established soon (by April?) so we can apply for grants and transfer funds. We will ensure interested cooperators can join the CWMA later but need to get the process started. We may have only 4-6 cooperators on the original agreement.