



# **Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team (SMIST)**

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2021  
-2025**

UPDATED NOVEMBER 24, 2020

**COVERING ST. JOSEPH, BRANCH, AND  
HILLSDALE COUNTY**

The CISMA is funded by the Michigan Invasive  
Species Grant Program ([Michigan.gov/Invasives](https://www.michigan.gov/Invasives))

# 1. Scope

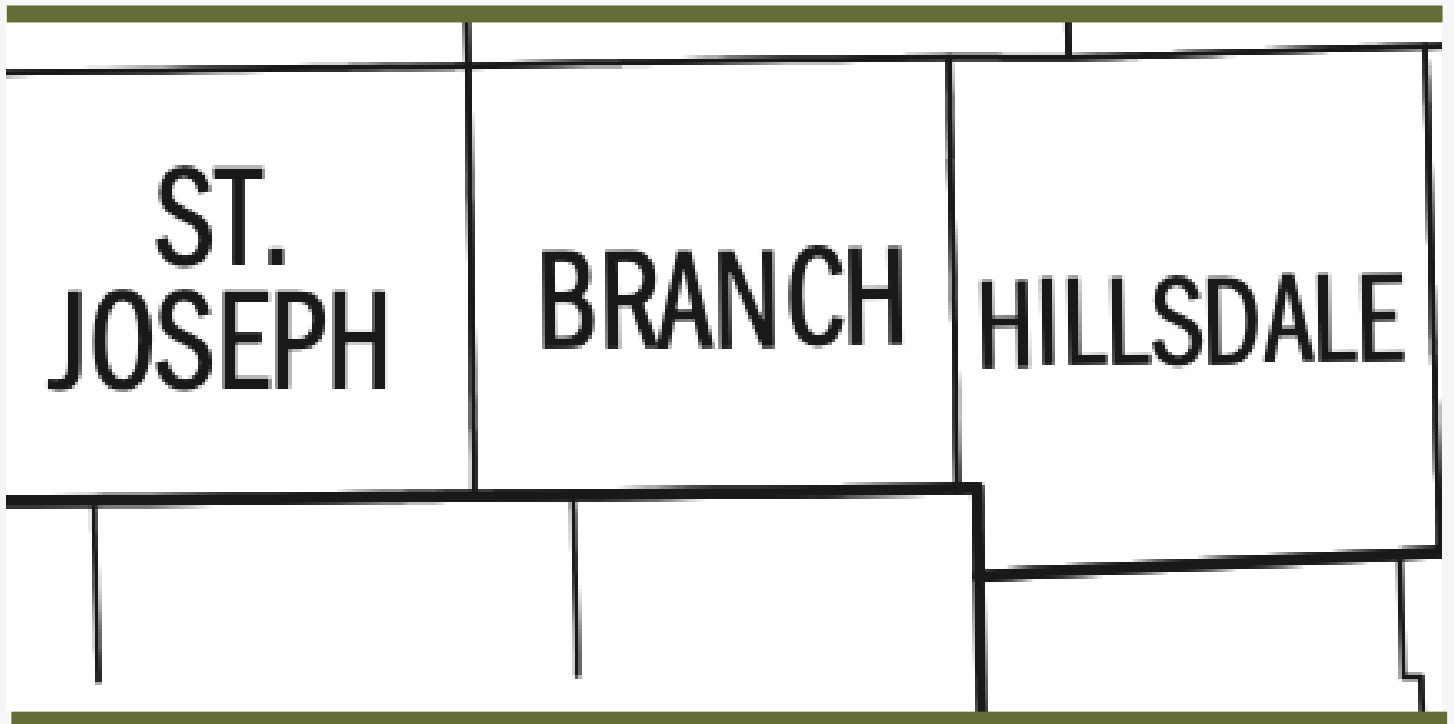
## Strategic Scope

The Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team (SMIST) CISMA was established in April 2018 with funding from the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program (MISGP) through the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The establishment of SMIST worked to complete CISMA coverage across Michigan's southern border. SMIST began with 38 partners across its service area and plans to expand its number of partnerships to deal with invasive species and their impacts on the landscape, economy, and human health.

To manage these impacts SMIST developed a priority list of 11 invasive species of concern for St. Joseph, Branch, and Hillsdale County. These species included (P)Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), (P) Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), (P) Red Swamp Crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*), Phragmites (*Phragmites australis*), Black Swallow wort (*Cynanchum louiseae* { *Vincetoxicum nigrum*}), Pale Swallow wort (*Cynanchum rossicum* { *Vincetoxicum rossicum*}), Chinese Yam (*Dioscorea oppositifolia*), Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus Orbiculatus*), Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus Umbellata*), Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), and Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*). With this priority list, SMIST has provided educational opportunities, identification, and treatment to our partners and the public.

In the next four years, SMIST plans to work more closely with partners on projects across all three counties to manage priority species of SMIST and the State of Michigan. We will increase invasive species surveying in terrestrial and aquatic habitats, and provide additional invasive species education for local governments and the public.

# SMIST Coverage Area



The Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team (SMIST) CISMA includes St. Joseph, Branch and Hillsdale at the southern border of Michigan's lower peninsula. These three counties are geographically significant due to their boundaries with Indiana and Ohio. (Photo taken from Census bureau)

# 2. Goals

The Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team (SMIST CISMA) is a grant-funded program from the State of Michigan dedicated to establishing partnerships in St. Joseph, Branch, and Hillsdale county to manage and eradicate invasive species. The CISMA will work to assess invasive species problems in 3 main ways: education/outreach, surveying/identification, and treatment. SMIST will provide the latest information and training on invasive species identification and treatment to partners and the public while developing early detection and rapid response protocol for high-priority species. The CISMA will also provide technical assistance to partners and the community when the need arises. To meet these goals the SMIST objectives include:



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**Objective 1:** Maintain and strengthen SMIST CISMA functioning capability.

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**Objective 2:** Develop partnerships with organizations within St. Joseph, Branch, and Hillsdale county and outside counties in Michigan and across state lines.

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**Objective 3:** Develop early detection and mapping protocols of priority invasive species.

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**Objective 4:** Provide education programs and outreach to regional partners and the public.

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**Objective 5:** Treat and manage invasive species populations in the region.

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**Objective 6:** Monitor invasive species pathways in St. Joseph, Branch, and Hillsdale.

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**Objective 7:** Monitor and plan for invasive species predicted to enter St. Joseph, Branch, and Hillsdale shortly.

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# CISMA Priorities for education/outreach, surveying, and treatment



## Education & Outreach

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SMIST will provide educational and training opportunities to local governments, partners, local entities, and the public on invasive species identification, surveying and reporting, and safe treatment practices. The organization will maintain a web and social media presence in connection with other options to continue the CISMA's availability to the public.



# Surveying & Treatment

SMIST CISMA works to meet the treatment goals set forth by the State of Michigan in, Michigan's Terrestrial Invasive Species State Management Plan ([https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/Terrestrial\\_invasivesp\\_plan\\_618659\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/Terrestrial_invasivesp_plan_618659_7.pdf)) and Michigan's Aquatic Invasive Species State management Plant 2013 update (<https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/0,5664,7-324-103724-276823--,00.html>). Working towards the State goals of prevention, early detection and response, control and restoration, and collaboration, SMIST works to form a response and risk management protocol to assess the extent of damage or potential damage an invasive species causes.



Part of SMIST invasive species response is surveying and treating high priority invasive species not yet established in the region with the goal of eradication. The CISMA is working to prioritize public lands and includes transportation routes, trail systems, parks, and the St. Joseph River watershed to address invasive species movements. SMIST plans to work with partners on projects that address invasive species with the goal of ecological restoration in St. Joseph, Branch, and Hillsdale county. SMIST will also provide some privately owned land treatment depending upon the species found. A focus is placed on species recently established and of a high priority for the State of Michigan.



# 3. Outcomes and Indicators

## 1. Formation and Establishment of Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team (SMIST)

Intermediate Outcomes	Frequency	Responsible party	Completion By
Steering Committee establishes and meets in-person, virtually, or by phone for two meetings a year	Twice a year, ongoing	CISMA Partners	Ongoing
Steering committee and partners will receive informational newsletters or handouts four times a year with invasive species and CISMA information	Four times a year, ongoing	CISMA Partners, Steering Committee	Ongoing
Identify partner organizations and seek new partnerships to increase the scope and strengthen CISMA organization	Ongoing	Steering Committee, Coordinator, Districts, Partners	Ongoing
Complete Strategic Plan, plan shall be reviewed and revisions made as determined by the steering committee	Ongoing	Steering Committee, Coordinator, Districts, Partners	Fall 2020
CISMA partner meeting to share successes and to receive input from partner organizations and the public	Once a year or as needed	Districts, Partners, Coordinator, General public, Local entities and Government agencies	Ongoing

## 2. Long term management and CISMA sustainability

<b>Apply for MISGP Grants</b>	<b>As necessary</b>	<b>CISMA coordinator, partners, steering committee</b>	<b>Dependent on grant cycle</b>
Seek out additional CISMA partners to strengthen CISMA and increase collaboration	Ongoing	CISMA coordinator, Partners, Steering Committee	Ongoing
Develop a contingency plan to designate roles for CISMA operations in the event of funding loss	Ongoing	CISMA Coordinator, Partners, Steering Committee	2021
Seek out additional grant funding options	Ongoing	CISMA Coordinator, Partners, Steering Committee	Ongoing
Develop a protocol for dealing with future invasive species	Ongoing	CISMA	Ongoing

# 3. Early Detection and Mapping

<b>Intermediate Outcomes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Completion By</b>
Determine a list of priority invasive species as well as a “B and C list Species” for early detection and rapid response. This list is adaptive and can be amended as needed to address emerging threats	Ongoing	Districts, Partners, and Coordinator	Completed
CISMA members will be committed to mapping and reporting through the MISIN program	Ongoing	Districts, Partners, and Coordinators	Ongoing
Utilize MISIN treatment tracker to manage invasive species monitoring and treatment sites	Ongoing	CISMA Coordinator	Ongoing

