



Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership

May 2024 Update to Steering Committee

Submitted by Rosie Page, Coordinator

GRANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- As of late April, our proposal for Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) was selected for full funding! Title: “*Continuing Collaborative Management of Terrestrial & Wetland Invasives in the WI Headwaters of Lakes MI & Superior*” and totals \$42,029 for 2 years. Grant goals include:
 - Site visits for forest landowners at Natural Lakes and Frontier Lakes in Presque Isle
 - Working with Frontier Lakes and DNR on honeysuckle removal from island
 - Invasive plant survey and bootbrush sign at the new Headwaters Cedar Community Forest in Land O’Lakes (Hwy B) see <https://www.northwoodalliance.org/hccf>
 - Shoreline surveying for high priority IS like purple loosestrife, *Phragmites*, and knotweeds along the E. Branch of the Presque Isle River
 - Continuing purple loosestrife biocontrol beetle control work for 2024 and 2025
 - See the 2024 GLRI funding awarded to Great Lakes CISMAs here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r9/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD1172850>
- WHIP has confirmed a new 2024 contract with WPS for fieldwork to manage purple loosestrife (hand removal and beetles too) at Lake Mohawksin and the Grandfather Falls sites. We have hours for myself plus Lumberjack colleague Derek Thorn to assist in the field.
- We set up our beetle mass rearing cages on May 6th again in Crandon, in partnership with Vilas Co, Forest Co, DNR staff, and Lumberjack’s FLOW program. We uncovered our overwintered plants that morning with excitement and will report on their growth progress.
- A new beetle release site for 2024 will be Rainbo Lodge, in Land O’Lakes, very close to Tenderfoot Lake. Landowners contacted me for information and to help with an article for their membership.
- WHIP was featured in the recent federal *GLRI FY2020-21 Report to Congress* for our work on purple loosestrife in the Lake Superior watershed over recent years. Thank you, Justin Bournoville, for getting in touch to share this snippet! (see pics page)
- I had a couple of phone conversations with DNR Forestry Team Lead John Gillen who is working on designating a DNR rep for our WHIP Steering Committee; and we are also in talks about proceeding with woody invasives on the state-owned island at Frontier Lakes, and plan to meet up there on May 23 along with Mary Bartkowiak and Cody Starman of DNR.

OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

- **Partnership with Blackwell:** We’ve had some very successful events with the Blackwell Job Corps students this spring after they officially signed our MOU in March:
 - On April 18th, WHIP worked with USFS to hold a training for students on invasive plant species and control methods. Thanks to Nicole Shutt, Casey Allen, Susan Krage, and Lauren Jewell.

- On April 24th, WHIP held a field session at Trees For Tomorrow with six participating Blackwell students to work on ongoing TIS on campus, as identified in the IS Management Plan.
- On May 8th, WHIP was asked to help organize a Field Day at TFT for ALL Blackwell students as part of a new pilot project involving conservation education for all the students at the job center! We had 58 students, 10 student leaders, and roughly 20 additional staff from USFS, Society of American Foresters, Blackwell, and various media organizations. Students rotated through 4 stations to work on goutweed, marsh thistle, buckthorn, and barberry, and achieved a significant amount of work for TFT. Thank you to Lou Hall and our USFS colleagues for great teamwork and effective leadership too. Check out these media pieces:
 - <https://www.wxpr.org/podcast/wxpr-the-stream/2024-05-10/blackwell-job-corps-pilots-conservation-education-program-for-students>
 - https://www.facebook.com/CNNF002/posts/856641049836799?ref=embed_post
 - Note: we expect to be able to work with Blackwell crews at other locations this summer and fall as well.

- **Rhineland High School:** I'm excited to begin a new project with RHS, to help students identify and remove invasive buckthorn from school edges and forests; plus install a new bootbrush sign setup. Our classroom visit is May 28th and first field workday is May 30th (supported by Lumberjack's LSR).
- **Tara Lila:** Following our Annual Meeting in March, I had a meeting with Quita, Chris Nafziger, and Mike Robillard from Tara Lila LLC who manage three large park units totalling 1600 acres of undeveloped forests and 20 miles of silent sport trails on the border of Oneida and Vilas Counties. They are interested in working with WHIP to identify their invasive plants, train volunteers, and create new signage. We are aiming for a meeting with their volunteers on site in early June (supported by Lumberjack's LSR grant).
- **Holmboe Pines SNA:** On April 2nd I met Frank Schroyer and DNR staff to do a walk-through of this SNA plus their newly acquired parcel, which is severely infested with woody invasives. Their control plans will be led by the DNR but with some WHIP involvement. We have scheduled a volunteer workday May 31st and will be installing a new bootbrush sign at the Holmboe entrance that day.
- I attended the annual statewide CISMA meeting in Stevens Point (May 1st) to give a report and attend sessions with other coordinators and staff. One key highlight was a new campaign from North Country CISMA in Michigan focusing on invasive species outreach to off-road-vehicle enthusiasts. It's called "Dirt Never Hurt.. but invasive species do". [Check it out here](#). Since they've made it available for use, I'm going to try to incorporate these graphics into outreach moving forward.
- I presented at the Discovery Center's *Woods and Water Conference* (May 3rd) to describe WHIP's mission and projects, and to offer assistance to Northwoods landowners.
- I wanted to mention a congratulations to our partners from PIF: Joe and Mary Hovel, who were just recognized as this year's Land Legacy Award recipients by Gathering Waters, Wisconsin's alliance of land trusts.
- **ALSO, YES we are holding our free Spring Workshop on May 30th, 5-8pm at Nicolet College in Rhineland! Scheduling it for outside of working hours will allow more landowners to attend. Please help by sharing the flyer with your networks. Thank you!**



Above: WHIP helps USFS with an invasive species control training at Blackwell Job Corps in Laona, WI on April 18, 2024.



WHIP has been part of Wisconsin's NR40 invasive species legislation review which held public input sessions recently.



A snap from WHIP's Annual Meeting, March 15, 2024.

Supporting Landowners Who Protect the Headwaters of Lake Superior



Where Wisconsin's far northern border meets Michigan's Upper Peninsula in the Tenderfoot Forest Reserve, the Wisconsin Headwaters Invasives Partnership has worked with Vilas County and private landowners for the past five years to prevent invasive purple loosestrife from spreading through the headwaters of Lake Superior. With support from the U.S. Forest

Service (USFS), program partners rear and release biocontrol beetles to feed on purple loosestrife, thus reducing that invasive plant's expansion and reducing the use of herbicides in sensitive wetlands. In 2020, partners began catching beetles locally for use on the site, an indication that the beetles were successfully surviving the winter and consuming purple loosestrife.

Beginning in 2020, partners observed lower numbers of purple loosestrife in this site compared to locations without biocontrol. Native plants also appeared to be thriving and increasing, including noticeably larger populations of native calla lily, swamp milkweed, sweet gale, and blue flag iris.



Removing invasive species in the headwaters of Lake Superior using a canoe. (Credit: USFS)

