

**Kevin Luepke**, Natural Resource Specialist, Fort McCoy; **Jessup Weichelt**, Threatened and Endangered Species Biologist, Natural Resource Branch, Fort McCoy; **Rikki Ratsch**, Colorado State University, Serving Fort McCoy; **Bob Micheel**, Director and **Roxie Anderson**, Land Use Planner, Monroe County Land Conservation;; **Bill Halfman**, UW Extension, Monroe Co. Agricultural Agent; **Mark Pfost**, Private lands Biologist, Necedah Wildlife Refuge and Partners for Fish and Wildlife, **Randy Poelma**, Environmental Science Program, Ho-Chunk Nation, Black River Falls, **Megan Mickelson**, DNR Forester; **Ben Johnston**, Wilton Township; **Dave Texley**, Lead Pest Control Specialist, MTNT, Serving Fort McCoy, **Michelle Komiskey** -District Conservationist, USDA NRCS. **Mic Armstrong** Soil Conservation Technician and Scribe.

**Luepke** thanked **Armstrong** for sending out the email invitation to join the meeting.

**Mark Pfost** sent apologies and **Chris Barlow** could not get the link to work. Virtual meetings are tricky for sure.

**New Faces.:** None

**Report on Field Trip/Pre-meeting-** None

**Last Meeting Recap.** **Luepke** summarized the minutes of the December 10th Teams meeting. <https://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/land-conservation/invasive-species-workgroup>

**Micheel** needed to leave the meeting early to attend yet another one, agreed to move his agenda items to the top.

Set up account for income(s) to MCISWG.

Both **Luepke** and **Micheel** reported back on difficulties of housing the small amount of money currently being amassed (buckthorn walking sticks). Agreed to keep track of in a spreadsheet as IOU's **Luepke** to head. At such time as we develop grants or the like to the tune of \$1000.00, we will revisit the concept and we would need to define purpose and outcomes for the monies.

Monroe County Cost share Applications for Private Land Invasive Species Management:  
Micheel listed 4 applicants for the project in 2021: Brecheisen, Arena, Leis, Flasher.

**Poelma** is happy to ground truth the Arena project. **Armstrong** would visit the Flasher application and we agreed to ask **Fraze** and **Esterline** to tackle the Leis one. The Brechenstein application was already mapped and documented by **Armstrong**.

**Mickelson** continues to track the program and asked the Inspection Committee ensure landowners have a written proposal, maps clearly delineating the project and the inspectors provide good photos both before and after.

Annual Report

The last one was held in Jakes by the fire in January of 2020. Since then Jakes is no longer in business due to impacts of the pandemic on profitability of the restaurant.

**Mickelson** found the last version of the Annual report on file and we were able to view in Teams. It was a list of possible directions the group could take, and who would head up each tract. For example, **Micheel** would be responsible to liaise with the Boy Scouts. 4 H group working on Loosestrife with **Armstrong**. Once again Covid 19 has thrown a wrench in these plans and many are unfulfilled. **Poelma** commented that it might be better that priority species and areas be

defined as there seemed to be a lot of different activities in different parks. For example concentrate efforts the Bike trail -prioritize species such as Amur Maple , Garlic Mustard and Barberry

**Armstrong** said many of these projects seemed to be rolling along without too much of our input For example City of Sparta was still spraying the knotweed below Perch Lake and he thought they were still going after the barberry and multiflora rose between Amundson Park and Hammer Road. Initially these invasive plants were flagged with ribbon by **Armstrong** but now the parks crew was able to identify and continue basal applications with Garlon without assistance. He would check back with Parks Director Brad Gilbertson. The bike trail has two group activities that have continued during the Covid outbreak- the June Garlic Mustard Pull and the winter Amur Maple Reduction Program. So, with some initial input these different threads in different parts of the county have taken on lives of their own.

**Johnston** plans on leading the annual Garlic Mustard Pull in early June, details to be announced.

**Luepke** thought it might still be possible to have a group from Challenge Academy do some Garlic Mustard Pulling on the bike trail with minimum input from MCISWG.

Field Days, Farmers Market displays Loosestrife with 4H probably won't happen in 2021 either given the current situation. **Halfman** still cannot program in person meetings. We agreed to convene in August and have an Annual Planning meeting then.

### Action Updates

The meeting with **Mickelson** and **Luepke** still has not transpired in order to pass on the MCISWG binders, however **Komiskey** has handed the binder on to Armstrong in the hope he will get to **Luepke** on an ice fishing trip.

CISMA: **Armstrong** thought we were still waiting for a signature from 1 partner. **Mickelson** was unable to find one from Ho-Chunk in her files. **Poelma** seemed surprised and said he thought he had sent it to someone. A quick check of **Armstrong's** inbox confirmed the notion and the missing document was sent on to more reliable files.

So,..we are a CISMA !!!

Mission Statement. **Komiskey** shared two ideas. **Armstrong** read out a third which he found in one of the original MCIPWG fliers (Buckthorn). **Texley** wondered if we didn't need both a vision statement and a Mission statement. The vision statement would define the standards we hold to, the mission statement snappier. A final version(s) will be presented at the next meeting, this time **Komiskey** and **Armstrong** set a date to convene and write a final proposed version. **Texley** to "proof".

Gravel/ Fill Certification. **Luepke** is still pursuing the possibilities of getting gravel /fill certified free of invasive species and weeds. The idea is gaining traction in McCoy and now waiting for a response from DOT before contacting the major vendors such as Gerke, Milestone and Mathy to see if they would be interested in a meeting on the topic

- Display Printing Update **Komiskey** stopped bugging NRCS State Office as it is still not needed.
- Fort McCoy Updates **Ratsch** reported crews were conducting buckthorn and autumn olive basal treatments, as well as ...? False spiraea and Robinia. A landowner from an adjacent property approached the crew while they were treating Autumn olive to compare notes, so to speak. It turns out to be the new landowner (Brian Lord) of the Chris Barlow farm recently enrolled with Mississippi Valley Conservancy. **Ratsch** is also updating the application rate check sheet and is in consultation with vendors. **Armstrong** wondered if they had ever tried Garlon in aqueous solution on Garlic Mustard in late fall? It is supposed to work. No
- Phragmites-Tomah **Komiskey** still in the process of applying for the Early Detection grant to manage the phragmites in Tomah there was a question on establishing a non-government identity after consulting with **Alex Selle** of DNR. **Luepke** agreed to help Michelle.
- Buckthorn Walking Sticks **Luepke** already covered the topic.
- Updates from the front line: **None noted**
- Amur Maple. **Luepke** has been looking into the possibility of a McCoy crew working for half a day or so as the bike trail is, perhaps, close enough to Fort or the Maple population to constitute a threat. He and **Rasch** had visited the site and worried that without a long-term plan buckthorn and Amur Maple would continue to invade. **Armstrong** agreed but the most pressing problem is that there are still large trees overhanging the trail and could easily spread a long way on equipment, such as mowers and groomers, not to mention snowmobile tracks, bicycles etc. **Luepke** also commented that although CSU crews were chainsaw certified they did not all have current First Aid/CPR certifications and that may be another hurdle.

**Armstrong** had been invited at short notice to do a presentation to the Sparta Kiwanis club and showed an updated version of the MCISWG power-point and answered quite a few questions on a zoom call with a fair sized group. Jumping worms probably got the most interest. Kiwanis wanted a copy of the power point and as it is rather large, we thought perhaps we could share it publicly on our MCISWG webpage. **Armstrong** posed that question then went through the slides (and speaker notes) to finish up the meeting. The consensus was to share it after adding the NRCS civil rights statement and change the contact Phone # to Monroe Co. LC

Next Meeting: **Thursday March 11<sup>th</sup>** 1 to 3 p.m.  
Microsoft Teams/phone in