

**Clint Gilman**, Forester, **Tomah Ranger Station Kevin Luepke**, Biologist, Natural Resources Branch (NRB), Fort McCoy; **Jessup Weichelt**, Threatened and Endangered Species Biologist, NRB, Fort McCoy; **Rikki Rasch**, Colorado State University, serving Fort McCoy Wildlife Dept; **Randy Poelma** Env. Sciences Program Manager, Ho-Chunk Nation Division of Env. Health **Joey Esterline**, Adrian Township and Monroe Co. District 15. Supervisor; **Connie Weedman** Sparta, **Skip Frazee**, **Alex Frazee**, **Mike Pace** Spring Bank Association; **Brandy Enders** and **Vern Klingbeil**, Goats on the Go, Trempealeau, and La Crosse. **Jenny Rodriguez Moran** and Adajio. Sparta and Monroe County Herald. **Patsy and Norb Brown** Angelo Township; **Mic Armstrong** Soil Conservation Technician and MCISWG Scribe, Natural Resource Conservation Service

No agenda additions

Minutes of last Meeting **Armstrong**: The recap of meeting minutes waived as they were previously sent out via email and are now posted to the website.

Outreach media: **Weedman** nothing to report but interested in getting a regular article in the paper on MCISWG and invasive species activities.

Fieldtrip Sparta School Forest. A good looking group met by the campfire with **Joe Cook** from Sparta School and student facilitator **Hunter. Armstrong** managed to slip on the ice coming off the parking lot landing flat on his back and was in some pain during the rest of the day, and as it turns out, cracked the number 6 rib. Mr. Cook gave a brief history of the school forest- it was very much **Carol Gatzke's** who with a lot of help over the years turned the deer trails traversing the 80-acre parcel of woods into a network of 3 trails, adding learning stations along the way. One of the problems in the early years was the lack of a means to transport students to the site, Carol went so far as to get her CDL license and drove the students there by bus. Now 400-500 students from every grade attend outdoor classes in the forest each year. **Cody Micheel** a former student who now runs his own sustainable forestry business, helped Mr. Cook blaze a third (hidden trail) adding to the area of forest available for walks and presumably more learning stations. They are also reestablishing an area of Oak savannah. The first three trails are now color coded, have some wonderful signage, are maintained to keep invasive species at bay, and open to the public and other groups year-round. Many come here to snowshoe in winter. Mr. Cook led us on a hike on the higher of the trails explaining different stations along the way. Back at the base hot dogs were cooking, and **Reinhard Mueller** took us inside the replica Aldo Leopold Shack explaining the history and ongoing work there. Reinie and his famed 5 shovel men built a wonderful composting bathroom facility in the school forest recently too.

Jackson County AIS Funding Opportunity. **Armstrong** reported that **Andy Ellingson** had written to Jackson County Land Conservation board requesting they consider the funding proposal for Aquatic Invasive Species. **Hamerla** would attend and explain the AIS grant opportunities. (April 19<sup>th</sup>)

New Chairperson/ Vice Chair. DNR Forester **Clint Gilman** was more than willing to step up from the vice chair position to chair MCISWG for the next 3 years. No takers in the room for a stint at vice chair.

Tricreek trial plots **Armstrong** explained that **Ben Anderson** envisioned herbicide trials with different rates, perhaps by research interns, comparing cut stump, basal and spritz treatments. **Armstrong** said he had seen garlic mustard (GM), Autumn olive, buck thorn, honeysuckle and he thought barberry on the property. **Weedman** confirmed the barberry and added that along the roadway it is thick buckthorn, there is a wall of burdock along the top of the property, GM in the draws, and a lot of Canada thistle. **Weedman** added that she is a part of group anti to proposed logging projects in Tri creek. **Gilman** said that TriCreek is separate from the County Forest- there is a Community Forest agreement with WI DNR. The timber sale is part of the managed forest plan. **Weedman** said there are multiple endangered species that would be impacted. The property used to be called Ridgeville. MCISWG procured a Play Clean Go podium style boot brush installed by Monroe County Land Conservation staff at the trailhead to facilitate education about and removal of seeds etc., from visitors' boots. **Weedman** added that the group Friends of TriCreek quit meeting when Covid 19 became epidemic. **Esterline** would like to come to their next meeting, she often hears that more and more people want places for quiet recreational trail hiking.

**Jenny Rodriguez Moran** told the group about the upcoming cleanup at Amundson Park and left some fliers. They are hoping we can have "experts" to help people identify which weeds to pull and which to leave as well as educate on MCISWG activities. There will be a crew of shovel men with weedwhackers in place of shovels, as well as a herd of goats, fenced in somewhere by the bridge on April 29th.

Amur Maple. **Armstrong** summarized the winter outings this year, we retreated sprouts and regrowth in the area across from Speeds bikes on the bike trail, proper, treated resprouts at the eastern (leading) edge of the population on the snowmobile trail that heads toward the Best Western and Fort McCoy, as well as treating with cut stump and basal the area around the main bathroom at the campground. **Gilman** added that he hadn't dealt with it until he came out with the Amur Maple reduction crew to the campground. A new the Xcel Energy vegetation manager had made contact and promised the Amur Maple on that property was back on a schedule to be managed. There is another population on County B/ I-90 which we have never had time to address, other than mapping and one call to DOT. It is heading down the interstate both ways, apparently from a planted windbreak.



It is hard to predict the end game in this effort, but the park is too nice to just let the 'Rotten Amur Maple' take over.

<https://www.co.monroe.wi.us/home/showpublisheddocument/25241/637877867968870000>

The first goal though is to reduce chances that seeds overhanging the trail from starting new populations after hitching a ride. It will be a while before we get to every seed-bearing tree in the park, but it is do-able and a couple of the lady volunteers have been talking about getting certified in chainsaw operation (and first aid), just so they can make a difference, Amur Maple will do that to you. From the Amur region in Asia, it is still a popular ornamental. The species was assessed for the NR40 rule as restricted, and the cultivars, (many of which, such as Flame Maple can be purchased by the pound as seed), were exempt. Stay tuned- the latest round of assessments may include the cultivars, but it will be another 3-5 years after that before they will be gone from the nursery trade.





**Rodriguez Moran** noticed that Amur Maple seems to be on every street, maybe we should ask the city to cut them all down. A Committee was formed to investigate the issues **Gilman, Esterline and Rodriguez Moran** agreed to meet. **Vern K** said goats would eat it.

**Rodriguez Moran** wondered if the group would be pulling Garlic Mustard (GM). **Ben Johnston** (phone call) organizes a half day pulling GM along the bike trail by Norwalk in June. This year it will be June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Details to follow and post on website.

Mapping Invasive species on Monroe Co. Highways. **Armstrong** summarized meeting he listened in on between Dave Ohnstad, Tyson Langrehr Monroe County Highway Department (MCHD), Mark Renz and Travis Wilson (UW Extension) in which Renz apologized for the situation which transpired during covid where the mapping team contracted by MCHD could not ride with more than 1 person in a vehicle. Since then, personnel have been depleted. The new strategy is for UW Extension to hire and train mappers to complete the survey, they will also redo the section already mapped as things have probably changed. MCHD could provide a vehicle with safety equipment, the conference room with computer access and oversight of crews. They will use cell phones loaded with the GLEDN app to record observations of most common invasive plants, as well as species that are less common but unwanted, and a list of threatened and endangered species MCHD would like mapped too.

Weedman wondered about the mapping app Gledn (Great Lakes Early Detection Network), **Armstrong** explained it was part of the EDDmapS system, when observations are submitted, they are verified by experts then posted to EDDMapS <https://www.eddmaps.org/>

and also, WI First detector Network Viewer <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wifdn/tools/wistipp-viewer/>

We have offered training at the Field days in the past. We discussed logistics, **Rasch** will have a laptop at the Field Day.

Monroe County Invasive Species Cost Share Program. No new applications

**Esterline Bridge Club restoration**, an area under the covered bridge by the farmers market is slated to be restored with native plants to benefit pollinators. Grant application that would have given the opportunity for lots of plugs was unsuccessful this time. There is a small area that was prepped last fall which will still be planted this spring.

Farmers Market. May 13<sup>th</sup> will be the MCISWG demonstration on the stage at Mueller Square. **Colton Wolosek** of Golden Sands will be there with an aquatic invasive species display, and plan on scooping samples from Beaver Creek behind the stage to see what is



there and keep the kids entertained. We are hoping also to display the collection of pressed invasive plants (vouchers) that **Rikki Ratsch** has been working on and answer questions on invasive species. **Esterline** pointed out that during the season **Armstrong** often comes to the Saturday morning Farmers Markets with the famous ‘Invasive of the Week’ easel display.

Purple Loosestrife **Esterline** is attempting to get a 4 H group off the ground with her daughter to rear insects for control of Purple Loosestrife. See Cella chow!  
<https://widnr.widen.net/s/pfrsqfqlrr/ss0981> However as there still is not 4-H coordinator in Monroe County it is difficult.

Phragmites. No report on the “Rapid Response”.

Field Day at Pine View Campground. As in the past we would organize stations with a theme at each. On the day we will decide if we need to rotate, splitting into smaller groups. Equipment Displays Forestry talk, Herbicide talk -**Rick Schulte** has June 15<sup>th</sup> on his calendar. Food: agreed to use the same food truck we had last time **Luepke** will arrange. Goats? We thought it would be good to have goats corralled in the glossy buckthorn by the creek and have the basal cut stump application station nearby. **Luepke** would seek approval for goats. Perhaps add a Gledn mapping station in a tent? Funding sources talk. **Armstrong** would try to track someone down from Fish and Wildlife. Advertise? Monroe County Herald; Facebook, Ft McCoy paper-The Real McCoy?

Fort McCoy updates: **Ratsch** Buckthorn shredding in training and designated habitat areas, will foliar treat in spring from UTVs. Common buckthorn, Eurasian honeysuckle, 2-3 acres Black locust, shredded, shredded again then foliar Milestone. Basal Glossy Buckthorn on a prior shred site.

**Randy Poelma** Ho-Chunk Nation. Working in various counties, not Monroe. Inventory lands in the Kickapoo trust. Basal and foliar treatment. Double mowed buckthorn along Wisconsin river to be followed by foliar.

**Gilman** Buckthorn treatments on 70 acre of Big Creek **and** 50 acres of La Crosse River area-focused on timber sales. 12 landowner grants in Monroe County.

**Enders** and **Klingbeil**, Goats on the Go. Goats currently working in Trempealeau, Buffalo, and Winona Counties. Vern has 110, Brandy is mostly working steeper residential projects on South side of La Crosse.

**Weichelt** recently attended a Department of Defense Natural Resource meeting (NMFWA) There is a movement away from chemicals-training problems, so looking at what goats can do may be a good fit.

Asked about prescribed burning as a management practice **Luepke** said probably not in woodlands- charring of tree trunks reduces their value.