

Clint Gilman, Forester, **Tomah Ranger** Fort McCoy; **Jessup Weichelt**, Threatened and Endangered Species Biologist, Natural Resources Branch NRB, Fort McCoy; **Rikki Rasch**, Colorado State University, serving Fort McCoy Wildlife Dept; **Joey Esterline**, Adrian Township and Monroe Co. District 15. Supervisor; **Dave Ellison**, Culverts and Crossings Intern, Monroe County Land Conservation Department. **Mic Armstrong** Soil Conservation Technician and MCISWG Scribe, Natural Resource Conservation Service

Field Trip- Premeeting

Armstrong and **Ellison** had been out in the morning walking the Kickapoo and last year's EQIP seedings of erosion prevention and native species with **Ben Johnston**, who sends his apologies. Dave and I stopped back at the office on the way to Quirin's, meanwhile NRCS conservationist Eric **Ressel** and Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist **Luke Romance** were just leaving in the Jeep, so we carpooled with **Ressel** at the helm, to join the group starting to assemble. **Pete Quirin** gave us a nice welcome and then a short history of the property and the Mississippi Valley Conservancy (MVC) that has Easement on a beautiful part of the Driftless, preserving it for the wildlife and keeping it from becoming subdivision (in a nutshell). <https://www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org/>

Pete worries the deer will clip all the (5000) oaks and a bushel of acorns he planted that he is nurturing in an effort to supplement the regeneration pushing through the slash from seed trees left for the purpose and the stump sprouts, of a fairly recent clearcut managed by DNR foresters. The plan was to hike the trails through the clear cut and our expert group would point out invasive species so that Pete would at least know them. Pete invited us into the sunroom where he had clip boards, yellow flags and sharpies for us to take on the hike. We would label and flag with a number the invasive species we encountered. The clip board guys would write the plant name next to the number and on we would go. First, we would study Pete's dock where he has a wonderful resource for his grand kids, the fish are healthy looking in an elaborately stream fed pond. On the trail up a hill through the clearcut, we found Garlic mustard, autumn olive, barberry and multiflora rose were vying with each other for space. Each got a yellow flag. **Howard Garves** was worried about how on earth to spray them all, he is the neighbor and helps Pete, specifically with the black locust problem areas. In the end we found 9 invasive species and documented 8 native tree species as well as many native shrubs. We didn't make it up to the field where he noticed a maple with stunning fall foliage, he is worried might be the invasive one. **Gilman** would be there sometime in the not-too-distant future and will check it out. While we walked **Armstrong** talked about and demoed the GLEDN app for mapping invasive species. Back at the sunroom Pete shared a wonderful sandwich lunch with us. We ate and chatted; Pete had provided literature on the MVC. The topics centered on wildlife. There are guys who hunt the property that sit at their offices in the Twin Cities and have trail cams set up on

Pete's they watch a lot. Every now and then Pete gets a call from one of them to tell him a bear is walking on one of his trails, or something. We left for the meeting back in Sparta thanking Pete for his hospitality. **Gilman** is confident the oaks will get above the browse height of deer and will survive. Pete sprays the deer repellent Plantskydd in the fall, but it doesn't last all winter. Pete is concerned that the deer herd locally is too big, his oak trees are constantly getting munched, and he has written to the DNR suggesting they put more emphasis on harvesting does. No response yet.

Core Meeting

Agendas passed around. We were supposed to start early, but the room had been occupied a few minutes later than our start time but we were running well before one p.m.

Outreach media: **Gilman** reported that **Weedman**, who was at Quirin's said she had emailed Moran and Mailman of the Herald about getting a regular article in the paper on MCISWG and invasive species activities. No response received.

Agenda additions.

Leaflets. **Armstrong** had been updating the MCISWG trifold brochure adding **Gilman** as the contact and the QR bar code in a more or less blank spot. He also showed the best fact sheet he has found on Knotweed, an old one from Tech News, but searching online the illustrated one seems to have disappeared so scanned the last printed on in the archives at the Conservation Office in Sparta. The next handout **Armstrong** showed was the one for Wild Parsnip produced by the MCIPWG circa 2007. As it had been scanned as a pdf it was editable; changed contact info from old numbers, after passing it around there was a discussion about herbicide recommendations. **Rasch** thought we could update to current recommendations. He would work on that.

Armstrong Recap meeting minutes. Agreed to waive as they were sent out via email and are now posted to the website.

Vice Chair election. No takers. Table for next meeting

Mapping Invasive Species on Monroe County Highways. **Armstrong** said details are still being worked out, but **Ben Johnston** has been hired by the University to lead, with two other qualified local individuals, the effort to map invasive species as well as certain Threatened and Endangered ones on Monroe County Highways.

Brief discussion about some Avenza maps users going to "Field Maps"

Monroe County Invasive Species Grant for Landowners. No new applicants, which provoked a discussion about the original rule which that you had to be a registrant at a Field Day to be eligible. We thought we might bring that back.

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. A grant application for native plants was unsuccessful, but there are offers to help get started. The library expansion project has taken over the parking lot. It may be tricky to do anything now anyway, with fences and silt fences in the way. **Armstrong** pointed out there was a clump of Japanese (Bohemian?) Knotweed growing in the storm drain in the middle of the project. He sent a photo to Sparta Parks who have been good at trying to do the right thing at the right time to kill knotweed. The group had initially talked about the dream of doing a mural even a glass mosaic one similar to the one at the food coop in Ashland on the blank concrete "canvas" next to the covered bridge

<https://www.chequamegonfoodcoop.com/community-mural-project/>

Farmers Market; opening weekend with MCISWG on stage. **Gilman** said he thought it went well, **Colton Wolosek** showed up with the Golden Sands aquatic display and they passed out quite a bit of literature. **Rasch's** plant pressed vouchers were great and people came to the tables and learned from them.

Purple Loosestrife. **Esterline** has a rearing area set up with Purple Loosestrife plants growing. (DNR permissions on file). Will contact **Wolosek** for Gallerucella Beetles to rear for biological control of Purple Loosestrife. **Armstrong** would check to see if the site where we had the mass rearing cage to see if we have some there, Joey could harvest. She also mentioned they are interviewing for a new 4 H coordinator, so there is hope to get a new group of kids in 4 H.

Esterline also noted she has found Cheat Grass on their new property. They are employing multiple resources to eliminate the infestation. Keep your eyes peeled for Cheatgrass it could be a huge issue on sandy sites. Contact MCISWG to get it mapped.

Phragmites. No report on the Rapid Response.

Play clean Go signs. **Armstrong** said Monroe County Land Conservation Department are purchasing 4 Scrushers to put in strategic trail heads to public land. The Scrusher Company are local, from Coon Valley and because we are doing it for conservation and the boot brushes will get well used, they will send us brush replacements for life. Monroe County LCD staff will install next to a post kitted out with a "Play Clean Go" sign and our QR code. More are planned to install in coming years.

Field Day. **Rasch** The Food Truck is still not a done deal, probably won't know until the week before. Backup plan: Brats on the grill- we would need to bring charcoal and some potluck items . **Luepke** has received approval for goats. **Vern Klingbiel** from Goats on the Go will be there with a small herd. There will be a Buckthorn treatment station and the Gledn mapping station nearby. Rick Schulte will talk herbicides and field a Q&A session. There will be equipment on display from the Natural Resource crew, as well as technicians to explain it all. The ever-popular Forestry Speak will return. Golden Sands RC&D will there talk about and demonstrate samples of Aquatic Invasive Species and will scoop up some live stuff to look at from the creek. Volunteers Working: any volunteers? There will be no Halfman's Half Hour this year, he fled the coop for somewhere up north. After lunch we will wrap up with a session on funding sources. Promotion: Facebook, word of mouth, Fliers at Farmers Market and June Dairy Day. Spread the word please. Post the Flier.

If you are planning on coming, Please RSVP to Clint

Phone: (608) 387 0782 Clint.Gilman@wisconsin.gov

A conversation about biocontrol of leafy spurge popped into the meeting after someone commented on the dense areas along Highway 16 by south post. **Rasch** explained the duff layer slows them down so you get only spotty control. Hawk Moths seem to work better in that situation.

Field Day at Cranberry Research Center. Suggested at our Annual meeting at the Doghouse last January we are planning a Field Day at the Center on County Highway O, between Millston and Shamrock. Proposed date August 24th. **Armstrong is** talking with manager **Wade Brockman**. We are in the process of planning an afternoon session similar to the Field Day at the campground. **Rick Schulte** is on board. **Kyle Johnson** of Diversity Landworks LLC will bring goats. The idea is to promote this educational meeting , not only for Monroe County, but also Jackson County landowners and practitioners of invasive species management.

Fort McCoy Report All Garlic Mustard (GM) at the moment, using the Oust stock solution recipe, through next week, then GM will be forming pods and crews will switch to Leafy spurge, Knapweed and Crown vetch.

Updates from the front line: **Gilman** mentioned they are spraying buckthorn the County Highway I/ La Crosse River State owned area.

We adjourned on time with the Tri Creek meeting attendees streaming in for their meeting.

No Date was set for our next meeting. Perhaps a core group will set one while at the Field Day.

