

City of Olivette
Parks & Recreation Commission

AGENDA ITEM REPORT
November 28, 2017

ITEM NO. 7

ITEM:

Missouri Invasive Species Task Force

COMMENTS:

Recommendation to pledge to stop the spread of invasive plant species.

Invasive species in Missouri have a negative economic impact on forestry and wildlife management, farming, and tourism each year. Many government and non-profit agencies are dedicated to stopping invasive species, both plant and animal, from spreading. A new state-wide initiative is bringing all of the disparate groups together to increase public awareness and improve success rates.

Missouri Invasive Species Task Force (MoIP)

Formed in 2017, the Missouri Invasive Species Task Force (MoIP) is a multi-agency, multi-industry networking and advocacy group to bolster statewide efforts to identify and control the invasive plant species that severely impact native biodiversity.

MoIP is comprised of representatives from the Missouri Department of Conservation; National Forest Service; Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Botanical Garden; University of Missouri, Missouri Department of Transportation; Missouri Department of Agriculture, Missouri Forestry Council; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Kansas City Native Plant Initiative; Missouri Consulting Foresters Association; Missouri Walnut Council; Natural Resources Conservation Service; Grow Native!; Missouri Prairie Foundation; commercial nursery industry representatives; and private citizens.

The MoIP mission is “to identify and control the invasive plant species that severely impact native biodiversity”. Its goals are:

- Develop a list of top invasive plant species and their assessment scores so we can focus efforts.
- Become a portal for invasive management in the state. And contribute to regional and national efforts (such as the Midwest Invasive Plant Network).
- Develop recommendations to influence policy and strategies to influence action to manage invasive species within Missouri and the Midwest region.
- Track and stop continued distribution of known and future exotic invasive plants.
- Reach new audiences.
- Find sustained, stable funding.
- Determine geographic priority areas for invasive control, including education opportunities (high public use areas) and native biodiversity.
- Focus our efforts in a unified front to impact things on the ground; priority geographic areas; agency cooperation and coordination.

The Task Force offers many free resources including identification and management guides, support organizations, reporting tools, species specific identification and management practices, educational videos, academic studies, native plant resources, removal techniques, management practices, and online access to current field study cases.

Invasive Species Impact

Each year, invasive species have over a \$120 billion impact on the U.S. Economy.¹

Economic Impacts

- High control and management costs
- Infrastructure damage
- Reduced productivity in forestry, agricultural, and fishing sectors
- Property value reduction
- Decreased tourism



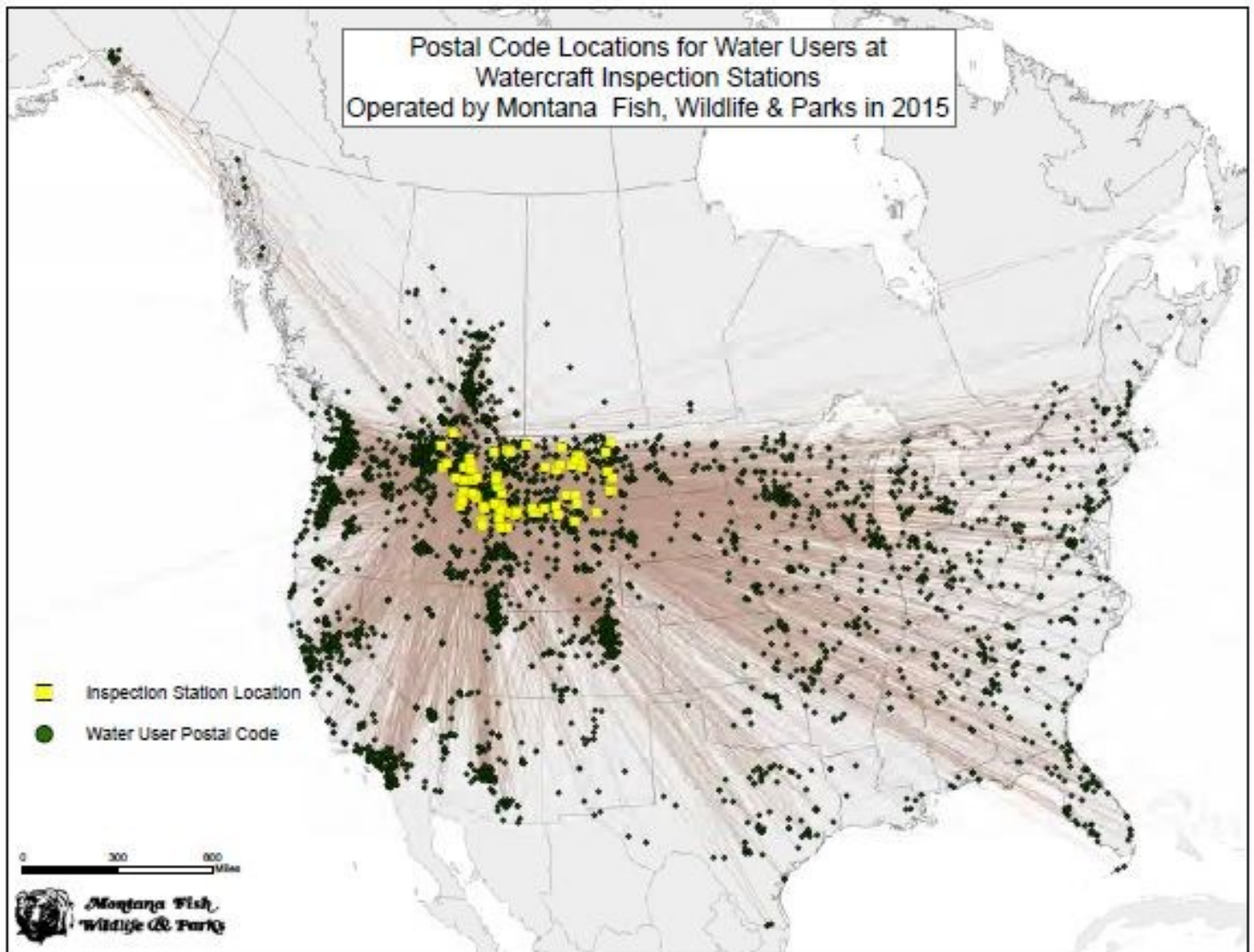
In total, invasive species cost the US ~ \$120 billion/year
(Pimentel et al., 2005)

It can be difficult for people to understand how clearing just one City park or one individual homeowner's property of bush honeysuckle can make any sort of difference in stopping the spread of an invasive species. Each plant produces hundreds or even thousands of seeds each year. These seeds are eaten by birds and then spread across the neighborhood and the larger region as soon as the bird eliminates on its next couple of stops. Taking the seeds of one or two plants out of production has an immediate and significant impact. Replacing the cleared bush honeysuckle with native plants improves the diet of native birds which in turn increases their survival rate. Native plants also improve the habitat for native mammals, reptiles, insects, amphibians and even lichen and mosses.

From Memorial Day to Labor Day in 2015, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), examined and collected the home zip codes of 36,997 watercraft at 18 inspection stations across the state. Some of the stations were mobile and some didn't operate every day of the week, so this total doesn't capture every boat brought into Montana that summer, but it does

provide an excellent illustration how quickly an invasive species can spread purely by accident. Of the 36,997 boats examined, 227 showed visible signs of contamination by an invasive plant, animal or water.

The chart below shows the home zip code of all 36, 997 watercraft inspected in Montana in 2015.²



The Pledge

The Pledge helps further several of the Task Force goals at once:

- Become a portal for invasive management in the state. And contribute to regional and national efforts (such as the Midwest Invasive Plant Network).
- Develop recommendations to influence policy and strategies to influence action to manage invasive species within Missouri and the Midwest region
- Reach new audiences.
- Focus our efforts in a unified front to impact things on the ground; priority geographic areas; agency cooperation and coordination.

When an agency takes the Pledge, it lets the stakeholders of a campus, business, community, or other entity who may be concerned with invasive plants on that property know that the entity, by taking the pledge, has committed to developing a plan and dedicating resources to the control of invasive plant species. Second, it helps stakeholders understand that controlling invasive plants on that property will take time. Additionally, when a community or other entity lets its stakeholders know it has signed the pledge, it provides an opportunity for stakeholders to get involved in the effort.

“Invasive plants are serious threats to Missouri’s native ecosystems, as well as many native plants and animals, the built environment, and many facets of the state’s economy, including cattle production, the timber industry, and many aspects of outdoor recreation, including fishing and hunting industries,” said Carol Davit, Executive Director of the Missouri Prairie Foundation and current MoIP Chair. “Missouri will control invasive species only with the concerted efforts of many entities, including private citizens working together. Our state is a long-time, nationwide leader in natural resource conservation, and by leading in invasive plant control as well, we can further safeguard Missouri’s habitats, fish, wildlife, and other cherished aspects of our natural heritage.”

Agencies may sign the Pledge online via a Google form. MoIP can also provide a pledge document suitable for signing ceremonies and framing.

Olivette in Bloom will discuss signing on to the Pledge at their board meeting on Monday, November 26, 2018.

Pledge to Stop the Spread of Invasive Plant Species

An invasive plant is defined as a species whose introduction to Missouri causes economic or environmental harm. In most cases, invasive plants evolved in other parts of the world and were introduced to Missouri by people. It is also important to understand that some native plants, usually via land disturbances by people, can exhibit aggressive qualities similar to invasive plants and may also need to be controlled. An example is eastern red cedar, which has spread beyond its original habitat and abundance in Missouri due to landscape changes and suppression of fire.

Invasive plants pose serious threats to Missouri’s native ecosystems, as well as many native plants and animals, the built environment, and many facets of the state’s

economy, including cattle production, the timber industry, and many aspects of outdoor recreation, including fishing and hunting industries.

We/I, the undersigned representative(s) of [please submit your information below], are committed to the identification and control of invasive plants on land under our jurisdiction. We pledge to plan and budget funds and/or human resources for the removal and ongoing management of invasive species in order to reduce the spread and impact of invasive plants and to help native species thrive. We understand that control efforts may take years of work, and are committed to this long-term process.

We also pledge to cease planting any species or cultivar of species listed on the current edition of the MoIP Missouri invasive plant master listing (other than for controlled research purposes), and to incorporate plants native to Missouri when practical.

By taking the MoIP Invasive Plant Management Pledge, we signal our resolve to control invasive species and encourage other entities to follow suit. With many entities taking action to control invasive species on land within their own jurisdictions and by collaborating across property boundaries, together, we can positively influence the perpetuation of native ecosystems, native wildlife, economies based on wise land use, and the communities in which we live, for the benefit of all.

1. David Pimentel, Rodolfo Zuniga, Doug Morrison: Ecological Economics, Vol 52, Issue 3, Feb 15, 2005, pgs 273-288
2. 2015 Watercraft Inspection Annual Report; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

ATTACHMENT:

1. MoIP Fact Sheet 06.19.2017
2. Invasives Brochure – *Midwest Invasive Plant Network*
3. General Guidelines for Controlling Invasive Plants - MoIP

PRESENTED BY:

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