

**Ten-Year Work Plan and Measurable Outcomes
for the Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Partnership
and
Coordinator**

PRIORITY 1: DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1 *Formally Establish the CWMA*

1. Identify, contact key partners that represent major landowners, stakeholders and other categories of interest to determine potential interest and commitment to participating in the CWMA.
2. Develop and define procedures for establishing a formal steering committee and advisory group with specific responsibilities for Steering and Advisory members.
3. Identify any unique or new objectives for CWMA identified by specific partners; work with steering committee and advisory group to incorporate new ideas into the work plan.
4. Identify the capacity of each partner to contribute (e.g., in-kind support) and participate in the CWMA.
5. Determine a name for the CWMA that Partners within the CWMA boundary can relate to and that identifies a uniqueness of the Region's natural or cultural history.
6. Draft a CWMA partnership Agreement (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding, Memorandum of Agreement) that formalizes partner agency and organization commitment to participation in the CWMA. The agreement should clearly identify the mission of the CWMA, partner commitment to work towards identified goals and objectives and partner capacity to participate. The agreement should also clearly state a procedure to add new partners to the CWMA and agreement.
7. Submit draft Agreement to CWMA partners for review, and comment.
8. Secure signatures from representatives of each partner on the Agreement.

Goal 2 *Establish CWMA Structure, Develop Reporting Procedures*

1. Identify partners for the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee members (major landowners and stakeholders) will help develop and revise the long-term CWMA work plan, provide input on annual objectives for the CWMA, assist in developing and preparing project proposals for grant funding, act as a liaison between the CWMA and the partner's organization, county, agency, etc., participate in CWMA projects that help meet partner agency goals and objectives.
2. Identify partners for the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee (much smaller than the Advisory Group), will assist in preparing the annual work plan for the CWMA and

coordinator, help assist the CWMA evaluate progress, successes, and shortfalls, provide guidance to the CWMA Coordinator as needed.

3. Develop and implement a system to track partner contributions (cash or in-kind time, donation of space, etc.), CWMA expenditures, such as travel, contractals, equipment, supplies, and grant awards. Use partner contributions to leverage additional funding for implementation of CWMA projects and demonstrate broad support for the CWMA.
4. Develop and implement straightforward method of tracking CWMA efforts and success that includes accounting for measurable outcomes defined in grant proposals.
5. Work with CWMA partners to develop impact-based measurable outcomes for CWMA initiatives and projects.

Goal 3 *Establish a working Relationship with CWMA Partners and Increase Regional Awareness of CWMA*

1. Meet CWMA Partners. Learn in more detail about partner's invasive plant related priorities and needs, constraints of partners to achieve invasive plant related priorities, look for common constraints and needs among CWMA partners. Maintain communication with partners.
2. Actively educate and encourage new partners, such as municipalities, villages, townships, etc. to join CWMA.
3. Gather ideas for future projects based on expressed need from CWMA partners and other audiences and groups.
4. Help CWMA partner's stay aware of ongoing work, such as field experiments on control, use of new management strategies, development of new outreach materials and educational initiatives, and encourage collaboration and coordination of invasive plant outreach and management efforts, including coordination of grant proposals, where such collaboration and coordination will enhance outcomes and impacts.
5. Develop a recognizable, unique logo to be placed on letterhead, outreach materials, collaborative projects, and electronic communications.
6. Develop a website for communication of CWMA events, make accessible outreach materials, announce early detection species alerts, provide species information, current literature, BMP's, etc. and links to related invasive plant initiatives, programs, and information.
7. Offer presentations for organizational chapter meetings, regional conferences and workshops, etc. to inform people about the CWMA, CWMA projects, invasive plant issues, and available resources.
8. Provide information to local media outlets on invasive plants, efforts to control invasive plants and restore habitats, and on CWMA events.
9. Provide partners with information on where CWMA Coordinator will have offices and

office hours, contact information, etc.

10. Establish a working relationship with CWMA's in adjacent regions, such as the River to River CWMA, NW Indiana CWMA, and SE Wisconsin Invasive Plant Working Group, to encourage collaboration and information sharing.

Goal 4 *Identify and secure additional funding for CWMA initiatives, projects and Coordinator position*

1. Identify possible funding sources and match CWMA funding needs with appropriate funding sources. Funding sources may include: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, State and Private Forestry, State Wildlife Grants Program, Private funding, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (EPA, USFS, USFWS, NOAA, NRCS, and DOT), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service Programs, and others.
2. Encourage effective and appropriate collaborations on CWMA projects and initiative, leveraging CWMA Partner in-kind contributions to attain matching funds.
3. Directly contact representatives from potential funding sources to make them aware of what the CWMA is, our mission and goals, and who is represented by the CWMA.
4. Aggressively submit grant proposals
5. Develop an annual operating plan and budget

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Post final CWMA Agreement on the internet, accessible to all interested partners and audiences.
2. Post CWMA Work Plan on the internet, accessible to all partners and audiences.
3. Record the number of agencies, organizations and individuals who sign the Agreement.
4. Record percentage of lands in Northeastern Illinois covered by CWMA partnership.
5. Provide a report of in-kind contributions of partners towards CWMA goals and objectives, specific grant funds and projects. Reports may be grant-specific or cover an entire fiscal year (e.g., multiple funding sources).
6. Make accessible a list of CWMA partners on the Advisory Committee and Steering Committee.
7. Make accessible a list of all CWMA partners, their affiliations, and county where they are located.
8. Develop a list of regional CWMA partner contacts that can provide expertise on various invasive plant issues or on specific invasive species.
9. Develop an archive of invasive plant-related presentations given by CWMA partners and CWMA coordinator that can be accessed on the CWMA's website.
10. Track the number of articles, interviews, and stories that come out in the media about the CWMA or CWMA partner efforts related to invasive plant issues.
11. Record number of hits on CWMA website, participation in blogs, etc.
12. Record number of proposals written vs. number of proposals funded
13. Track where (geographically) in the CWMA funds are being used to implement CWMA initiatives.
14. Track potential fund sources and funding cycles and make available to CWMA

- partners.
15. Launch website

PRIORITY II: INVASIVE PLANT EDUCATION

Goal 1 Increase awareness of prevention and help change the behaviors and actions of target audiences to reduce the spread of invasive plants in the CWMA.

Goal A Reduce **intentional** planting or introduction (dumping, and escape) of invasive plants through outreach and incentive to the following priority audiences: 1) Planners/Designers, 2) Producers (live plants, root stock and seed): Nurseries, Wholesalers, Vendors,; 3) Consumers: Landscapers, Garden Clubs, General Public, and 4) Youth

1. Compile a working list of known and potential invasive plants (including hybrids and cultivars) that are frequently sold or promoted in the CWMA region, state of Illinois and through major catalogue and online vendors. Use best available resources to compile the list, including existing invasive plant lists developed by the Chicago Botanic Garden, Morton Arboretum, City of Chicago, New Invaders Watch Program, Midwest Invasive Plant Network (MIPN), Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Missouri Botanic Garden, Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS). The list should provide categories that indicate how confident regional experts are about the invasive behaviors of each species.
2. Identify and develop educational messages, presentations and outreach materials that can be provided to the target audiences that clearly explain the impacts of invasive plants, how specific target audiences can help prevent the problems and identify incentives for not promoting invasive plants.
3. Identify existing opportunities and outlets to provide presentations and provide outreach materials to target audiences (e.g., Master Gardener Annual Meeting, agency regional meetings, annual meetings, Landscape conferences, Illinois Association of Park Districts, Illinois Landscape Contractors Association, Illinois Green Industry Association, local garden club meetings)
4. Assist in the dissemination of existing outreach and educational materials to focus audiences, includes outreach materials produced by Sea Grant, MIPN, IDNR, Federal Highway Administration, INHS, Extension, APHIS, etc.).
5. Meet with representative owners and managers of leading vendors and suppliers in the region to establish a working relationship, provide outreach and garner support for non-invasive plant alternatives. Determine if these suppliers are interested in distributing information to consumers to reduce and prevent use of invasive plants.
6. Provide outreach materials to target audiences on non-invasive plant alternatives, work with partners to develop methods or strategies of identifying non-invasive landscape / aquatic garden plants in stores and nurseries.
7. Provide input and suggestions to assist in the strengthening of Illinois Noxious Weed Law and Illinois Exotic Weed Law.

Goal B *Reduce unintentional transport, of invasive plants through outreach to the following priority audiences: 1) Recreationists, such as: boaters, hikers, equestrians, birders etc. 2) Hunters and Anglers; 3) Construction and Maintenance Crews; 4) Land Managers, Educators and Outreach Specialists; 5) Gardeners; 6) General Public; and, 7) Youth*

1. Develop and offer presentations for organizational chapter meetings, conferences and workshops to inform people about invasive plant issues, pathways of spread, how they can help prevent spread and available resources.
2. Identify and build upon outreach and education programs maintained by partner agencies .
3. Place and distribute outreach materials in participating suppliers/retailers to inform consumers how to properly dispose of unwanted aquarium, pond or landscape plants, and to indicate which species are problematic.
4. Work with landowners (public and private, individuals and associations) to install signs and distribute educational materials at boat ramps that educate public about proper cleaning and the dangers of unintentionally transporting aquatic plants and at trailheads to encourage people to check shoes and clothes for seed material, e.g., boot brush stations, information kiosks.
5. Provide information on how to identify known and potentially invasive plant species.

Goal 2 Increase the awareness and understanding of local politicians, commissioners, and congressional representatives about invasive plant issues.

1. Develop a list of congressional and local representatives by District with contact information and provide to CWMA partners via website.
2. Meet with politicians, policy makers, and municipal managers to discuss invasive plant issues, how invasive plant issues relate to broader issues of concern such as the economy.
3. Compile and distribute educational materials packages.
4. Develop annual invasive plant regional tours that bring politicians, policy makers, and municipal managers into the field to learn about invasive plant problems, success stories, needs, etc. in their own districts, counties and region.
5. Attract media attention to CWMA events, workdays and tours and invite politicians to participate.

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Develop (if it does not exist) a working list of green industry contacts in the region
2. Provide educational information online and provide links to existing educational and outreach information in a central location that local Green industry can readily access.
3. Record providers and vendors contacted (by county) and indicate potential participants.
4. Make regional list of invasive plants (known and potential) available online.
5. Make list of non-invasive alternatives available online and distribute information to planners and suppliers.
6. Track presentations given by location, organization, and attendees.

7. Develop outreach needs using target audience feedback to help guide future CWMA priorities and projects.
8. Record the number of educational materials distributed.
9. Record the number of signs, boot brushes, kiosks, etc. installed.
10. Record the number of retailers that provide the outreach materials to consumers.
11. Track number of tours provided and politicians who attended
12. Record time meeting with policy makers

PRIORITY III: EARLY DETECTION AND RAPID RESPONSE (EDRR)

Goal 1 *Coordinate regional early detection*

1. Use the established capacity, database and website infrastructure, and volunteer base of the New Invaders Watch Program to continue to increase awareness of early detection plant species and monitoring for new populations.
2. Recruit new volunteers from partner organizations and their volunteer networks (e.g. master naturalists and master gardeners).
3. Share information about regional early detection with other EDRR programs in the state and nationally.
4. Improve communication and outreach within the existing professional and volunteer network.
5. Assist partners in reporting target species and encourage agency staff involvement with partners and other organizations.
6. Offer at least 1 training in each county in the CWMA each year.
7. Prepare a quarterly electronic update on early detection related information.
8. Enhance and update the website with current news, species information and events.
9. Coordinate the development of the online mapping of location data.
10. Coordinate improvements and updates to the database.
11. Facilitate and coordinate addition of new species to the target species list and identification card set based on partner feedback and requests.
12. Conduct outreach to make partners and volunteers aware of any new target species additions.
13. Expand the New Invaders program to new counties in the CWMA.

Goal 2 *Facilitate and coordinate regional rapid response.*

1. Use the established capacity, rapid response communication database and website infrastructure of the New Invaders Watch Program to continue to increase rapid response actions to eradicate and contain early detection plant species.

2. Share information about regional rapid response with other EDRR programs in the state and nationally.
3. Improve capacity of partners to complete rapid response by coordinating reporting and mapping, securing funds for management, tracking rapid response efforts, and making partners aware of rapid response efforts and results
4. Expand the rapid response network to lands owned by park districts, villages, non-governmental organizations and non-conservation organizations, such as departments of transportation, railroads, etc.
5. Prepare a quarterly electronic update on rapid response efforts related information.
6. Track control and management strategies and develop best management practices for regional eradication and containment of target species.

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Record the number of trainings and new participants trained for EDRR.
2. Document and track new populations of target species reported and verified.
3. Record the number of new partners added to Rapid Response Network.
4. Record the number of acres covered by the Rapid Response Network.
5. Document and track target species populations treated (controlled and/or eradicated).
6. Track the number of electronic newsletters produced and number of people on the mailing list (i.e., program participants).
7. Record number of ID card sets distributed.
8. Record number of distribution maps maintained and available on the website.
9. Track updates and new information added to the website.
10. Record number of new counties added to the program geographic range.
11. Track number of professionals added to verify reports.

PRIORITY IV: COORDINATING CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT

Goal 1 Help coordinate actions between all types of landowners and land managers to help control invasive plants beyond property boundaries.

1. Make easily accessible current information on latest control methods, BMPs, and strategies for working in high quality areas via the CWMA website, workshops, exhibits at local conferences, and through local outreach and workshops for private and public landowners.
2. Assist partners in working with private and public landowners on adjacent lands where infestations overlap property boundaries to help coordinate and facilitate control actions.
3. Prepare and report regional ‘success stories’ for partners and media.
4. Assist, as needed, landowners in building their capacity to plan and implement invasive

plant management programs.

5. Work with other regional CWMA's (Southern Rim CWMA in NW Indiana, SE WI Invasive Plant Coalition) to establish cross state coordination of management priorities and objectives.
6. Choose a small number focal species for control and management across the region or within watersheds in the CWMA and assist landowners in securing funds to implement management.
7. Work with existing regional organizations and groups to develop a cooperative to share tools, equipment and materials within the CWMA to assist partners in management efforts.

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Prepare annual report concerning the control and management of invasive plants within the CWMA including information such as: area (acres) managed, cost of management, species targeted.
2. Document number of management recommendations compiled for invasive species in the CWMA region.
3. Number of 'success stories' for local partners and media concerning coordination of control actions across property lines, both public and private.\
4. Report successful eradication/control efforts.
5. Report number on-the-ground management efforts funded through the CWMA.

PRIORITY V: RESEARCH ON INVASIVE PLANT BIOLOGY AND CONTROL

Goal 1 Assist the Universities, Botanic Gardens, Chicago Wilderness Science Team, Arboretum, and other research organizations to address scientific questions related to invasive plants, including improvement of risk assessment, prevention, and control measures, including biological control.

1. Communicate new information from reliable sources on invasive plant biology and control, especially on region-specific information
2. Communicate observations and results from field managers to research community.
3. Coordinate workshops where current knowledge and new research can be shared among managers, scientists, educators, volunteers, and others working on invasive plant issues.
4. Help coordinate, between landowners and researchers, to provide appropriate study sites for working on invasive plant biology, ecological impacts and management, new strategies for effective outreach and education.

5. Support researchers applying for grants to conduct research on invasive plant biology and control that benefit CWMA partners.

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Report number and types of invasive plant research projects underway on CWMA partner properties and make accessible to CWMA partners on the website.
2. Report summary of important results and recommendations from research on invasive plant in the CWMA.
3. Track number of land managers that have changed management practices because of research results.

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