

**CENTRAL MI COOPERATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT AREA
ZOOM MEETING**

Wednesday, November 18, 2020
2 PM – 3:30 PM

Attendance: Elan, Shelby, Tom, Ashley, Ben, Karen, Julie, Jim, Ryan, Megan

Steering Committee Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Midland Conservation District
- III. Update from Each Partner
- IV. 2020 GLRI grant update
- V. 2019 MISGP Grant update and remaining funds discussion
- VI. 2020 MISGP Grant
- VII. 2021 GLRI grant opportunity
- VIII. Updates from Megan

IX. Call to Order

X. Midland Conservation District – New Steering Committee Member

- Megan: We have a few new people joining us today from the Midland Conservation District. As a committee we did decide to have you join the Steering Committee, as we do have it in our strategic plan that CDs have priority, so welcome! We have Ben VanDyke and Karen Thurlow joining us. I previously met with Ben to discuss MCDs involvement in the CISMA. If you guys would like to give an introduction of yourself and why you were interested in joining the steering committee.
- Ben: I was previously a CISMA coordinator for the CAKE CISMA and left that job when we lost funding due to COVID-19, as you guys experienced with the freeze. And after that I found this job with the MCD. In wanting to continue work with invasive species, being involved with the CISMA is a way to do that.

XI. Update from Each Partner

- Elan and Shelby: Finishing up field season and monitoring.
- Tom: Continuing to do some treatment. We've been able to hit some areas that we haven't and others seem to be staying at bay.
- Ashley: Finishing up some big bridge projects.
- Jim: Same as Ashley, continuing to work on projects. Excited to partner with the CISMA on projects for the upcoming season.
- Julie: Upper Pine River Watershed Management Plan has taken a turn with the Healthy Pine River Group turning in a grant as well. Planning to submit next year if theirs falls through.

XII. 2020 GLRI grant update – Through September 2022

- Overall, Megan is planning to work more individually with each organization that has projects involved under this grant; instead of having everyone meet when she doesn't think everyone needs to be involved in

every project site. If you have input for projects, though, please feel free to share those with her or reach out if you would like to be involved.

- Megan has surveyed all of the road commission sites that were proposed, along with a few Little Fork sites. Some sites had no invasive species found. Some sites had very little, so those things were encouraging. Some sites had areas that continued onto people's properties; Megan would like to try and treat the whole site and not only what is in the right-of-way. She is working on getting a contractor that is willing to do the work for all or at least most of the sites and potentially some of the Little Fork sites as well.

If you know of any contractors you have used, please let her know.

- The larger Little Fork sites will have to be determined for who will do the work and some of these sites will have to be surveyed next year.
- Tristan and Megan surveyed part of the Gladwin State Game Area. Unfortunately, it did not go as they had hoped. They found A LOT of Oriental bittersweet. It's unfortunate that Oriental bittersweet is not regulated by the state, so Megan would like to do some more education on this. Because of this, they only surveyed the portion closest to the river. They did two sections and decided it was more worth their time to survey the rest of it from the river, and go from there if there were spots we found to investigate more. Elan and Shelby joined for surveying from the river. Thanks to Little Forks for lending their kayaks. Unfortunately, Megan thinks being on the river put them too low to see how the rest of the land really was compared to what they had walked by foot. However, this survey was still beneficial to see how close things were to the river and therefore their potential to spread downstream. Oriental bittersweet seems to span most of the river bank, with some even growing into the river. There were a few spots that seemed to be more sparse. Some good things were found along the river, but overall there was mostly invasives (honeysuckle, buckthorn, autumn olive, bittersweet). Treating this area will be a tricky one and we will have to do some brainstorming on the project to determine the feasibility or best steps moving forward. If anyone has a

connection for someone who has worked with an area that is densely populated with vine (or another species) or know of someone who could be a help in anyway, please let Megan know. Or anyone who has treated along a river.

- So next steps are moving forward with contractors. Hopefully getting someone set in stone to do treatment of at least the right-of-ways and some Little Forks properties next season.

XIII. Megan showed an overview of the timeline of grants current open and ones to apply for. This is the *Grant details and timeline* tab on the spread sheet.

XIV. 2019 MISGP grant update

- 2019 Grant Options tab on spread sheet
- Megan: This grant is currently extended until March 2022; we originally did this in case the 2020 MISGP grant wasn't released. If you looked over the documents I sent, I originally presented two options, however, after discussing things further with Ryan, I believe option 1 is our best option. This option is that we decrease to length of the grant and use the remaining funds on a project instead of keeping the grant extended and overlapping it with the 2020 MISGP grant. Essentially to keep 2019 and 2020 separate and start new with the 2020 grant.
- Megan: That being said, you can see from the excel sheet, we have a range of funds remaining depending on what projects people may have to do. This is because it comes down to how much time I work as the coordinator. If we have projects to do, I would love to do them so I am not partial to how much time I work. I feel that after these grants are turned in, there will be minimal work for the 2020 GLRI grant for now, and the rest of the time would be spent on education and outreach. Because of how the trend is currently going with COVID, this restricts a lot of what I do and I think 3 days a week would still allow me to cover everything I need to.

- Ryan: I think Megan did a good job of explaining it. When we talked we discussed three different options: End the grant early and turn funds back in, which I for one don't want to see that happen, continue on the current timeline, or "hurry up and spend it," as Megan mentioned, using the funds. You could use this for equipment for anything under \$5,000, other equipment, or projects. Right now it is written to March 2022, so you have time to spend it. As Megan mentioned, the ideas is starting fresh with the 2020 grant and leaving the "mess" in the 2019 grant. With the projects, they need to be ones that you can show as "asset protection." High valued areas that you will continue to manage in the future.
- Megan: Project ideas don't have to be set in stone right now. I am hoping to get some quotes back for the work being done under the GLRI grant and then we could see what projects we may be able to do if those funds don't cover everything. Ideas for projects could be: renting a forestry mower for multiple partners to remove brush, treating right-of-ways, outreach ideas (boot brush stations, educational signs...), supplies for future grants. We do need to determine a plan for these projects, at the latest by March. Ideally I would like to know projects by the time these two upcoming grants are due which is December 11th, to see if we can use that work for match. We will have to determine how to decide what projects we do, based on how many ideas people have. The projects don't have to be completed by June/July when the coordinator switches over to the new grant, we can still keep this grant extended to a time period we could get our projects done, for example, doing brush clearing next Fall or Winter. The difference is that we wouldn't be overlapping deliverables.
- Megan will send out a sheet like we did for the current GLRI grant for people to submit their project ideas.
- Elan: The lane preserve is the under the GLRI grant as a current project. We've been looking into renting a forestry mower, but if more people wanting to go in on it, it would be cheaper or more worth the cost. As far as your time working, I think you work the time that you need to, to get

what needs to be done, done. I'm fine with whatever that number is as long as the work is getting done.

- Julie: I echo what Elan said. I know with my job it is nice to have flexibility with how many hours you work one week verse another. If that is possible with your current situation.
- Tom: Megan and I have talked and I agree on the flexibility part, it is an option for sure. I think doing projects would be great to get some things done in year three, as we've been the CM-CISMA for two years now with doing education and outreach and if we can get more on the ground work done in this year I think that would be great. Another reason I think keeping it part time right now, and Ryan may be able to attest to this, is if the MISGP falls through, picking up additional hours for Megan to stay full time is easier to budget for than if she goes back fulltime and we have to fill fulltime for her.
- Ryan: I don't think the grant being shut down is impossible but we did do a review of how CISMAs were impacted during the shutdown. I will send Megan the PowerPoint on how people have adapted. One big point, it seems, is keeping staff employed. A way to do this is funding diversity. One way to potentially account for this is having partners consider associating match as funding for staff, if this does happen and you need to account for this loss in funds.

XV. 2020 MISGP Grant – April/May 2021 Start Date

- Megan: As has been said, the 2020 MISGP has been released and is due December 11th, 2020. I think this one is pretty straight forward and aside from maybe a few tweaks in the budget is about the same as the 2019 MISGP grant. They did include the option of applying for up to an additional \$40,000 like we tried for last year. These funds are meant to be smaller projects that are species specific or location specific. Last year we did not get funded because of others having higher priority than ours, as it seems. Unless someone thinks there is a project that would be a high

priority, I don't think we should try for this with having, potentially, two GLRI grants open.

- I did have the idea of writing in survey work for boat launches as under the CORE Funding. This wouldn't get us more money, but would show that we are doing this work. This would be done by the coordinator and potentially partners that are willing to help. This could also be used as match for the GLRI grant.

- **Needs from partners:**

- Resume – if changed or not sent in the past
- Letter of support – if willing
- Letter for match support – if willing
 - match amount & calculations, signature of authorized official, date
 - Look at *Match Commitment* tab on excel sheet for what you have current committed

II. 2021 GLRI grant opportunity – June 2021 Approximate start date

- There is another GLRI grant coming out, due December 11th, to start around June. This one can be a two year grant, like the one we have open right now, and is up to \$50,000 (previously it was \$40,000).
- Megan: I mentioned in the October email about reaching out to EGLE for the potential of partnering with them to do work for the Sanford and Wixom Lakes. I have been trying to schedule a phone call with Anne Garwood, Water Resource Division, about this potential. They won't have a plan in place until at least summer 2021, therefore it would be hard to plan a grant for that right now. However, there could be potential to work together in the future. We are put as a contact on the page discussing the flooding as an invasive species contact. She wanted to discuss this further with me as far as what they are recommending people do or don't do on the lake property in front of their house.

- Megan: I am open to suggestions for this grant, however, my current thought is that we apply for funding to survey the Tittabawassee River for after flood effects of invasives. I spoke with Emily from the SB-CISMA about potentially partnering together or working off each other for this grant, if they are interested in surveying their part of the Tittabawassee River; I think this could bring more strength to our grant.
 - My concern for this grant is match. I have created a table for the match that we currently have committed from people, and what match we will be needing this upcoming year. Aside from this, I think we have a strong proposal. Adding in the boat launch survey would provide more match from the MISGP grant to help.
- Elan: Four Lakes Task Force, Lake Associations, or the NRCS could be options for match. Adding in, at least an educational component for planting native species along the shoreline to decrease erosion and prevent invasives from populating could be an option to add in as well.
- Megan: I met with a landowner that I know who lives on Sanford Lake. She wanted to get an opinion on what plants were coming up and what may be invasive. She didn't have any that were alarming to me, such as mullein and maybe reed canary grass. She said she hasn't noticed much purple loosestrife other than a small patch on her neighbor's property further down. She works closely with the Four Lakes Taskforce, so I think she could be a good contact for them as well.
- If you have match ideas, please let Megan know.

III. Updates from Megan

- As of now, I will be presenting for the Midland Garden Club in April to discuss what plants they may encounter in their yard and how to treat them. I'm going to try and at least do this virtual if need be.
- I sent out a newsletter update in place of our Partner Meeting. I would like to look into the option of doing a zoom partner meeting if we are unable to meet for our next one. If you are receiving this and have any suggestions on changes or things to add, please let me know. If you aren't receiving

them and would like to, please let me know as well; you should all be on the list.

- I had to cancel the Daylily Association presentation that was supposed to take place in Mt. Pleasant in the past April but hope to reschedule it. I may try and see about doing a virtual one for them as well.
- I continue to do Facebook post; as always, let me know if you have content to post. I would like to look into doing another paid advertisement post to expand our reach. Please share our page to help us get viewers from a broader area. We currently have 263 followers so we are growing!
- I am working to do more online events as things are still slow in some areas. If you have any ideas for online tutorials or topics to discuss, please let me know. I did put a Facebook out but have not had any comments.
- I have been in contact with Nia who is the district forester for Clare and Gladwin Counties to discuss how we can work together and the plan for the year.
- Elan, Shelby and I met with the new owners of the Village West Condos. If you remember this was the group that had two main people wanting to get buckthorn removed but wanted us to help convince their board. After the flood, most people left and now the two people that we met with before, their son owns it. They had done a lot of work on the buckthorn and wanted to know how they were doing. They've done a really good job with it and hopefully they are able to keep up with it.
- Regional Partner Meeting – I have been in touch with the other coordinators in our area regarding how things are going and how they are moving forward with things. We plan to have another meeting in November.
- I spoke with the new SB-CISMA Coordinator, Emily Leffingwell. She seems to be off to a good start and will keep things moving forward for them.
- The MISC Annual meeting for our region is planned for January 19-20th. They are still working on the details and it won't be a full two days. I will keep everyone updated if all are able to register.

- I signed a letter of support for the Midland Conservation District for an educational project they are working on.
- I did a survey day with Vicki Sawaki from North Country CISMA to see how they carry out their surveying to learn ways to do it for our GLRI grant work. I felt like it was well worth my time.
- I attended a week-long conference for the Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference. This conference had a lot of great speakers. I plan to put my notes together and send those out to people. I know some of you have mentioned having an education component to these meetings so I thought I would share some of the highlights I learned. On a side note, if you have ideas of what you would like to have as an educational component at these meetings, please let me know. Megan will be sending out her notes for people to look over.
 - Topics Megan mentioned: Red Swamp Crayfish, Sea Lamprey, Eurasian Watermilfoil, Deer and invasives, buckthorn and native plants.