

## CCIT MEETING MINUTES

June 25, 2015

USFS Gunflint Station



### Members Present:

Laurel Wilson – CCIT Coordinator

Jack Greenlee – United States Forest Service (USFS)

James Raml – Gunflint Trail Scenic Byway Association

Mike Hedlund – Minnesota Dept of Transportation (MNDOT)

Anna Heruth – Dept of Natural Resources (DNR)

Theresa Oberg – Cook County Soil and Water Conservation

Molly Thompson -- Sugarloaf: the North Shore Stewardship Association (via Teleconference)

### Additional Attendees:

Nanette Arands – Cook County Highway Department (CCHD)

At 1:05 p.m., Laurel called the CCIT meeting to order. Meeting agenda and Play, Clean, Go boot brushes were made available. The team proceeded with progress updates since the last meeting, and plans for the upcoming year.

Laurel began by reporting that the new CCIT website has launched! She welcomes any feedback. She is finalizing a distribution letter regarding our accomplishments as a group for the last five years, just waiting on some treatment numbers to include. An invasives phenology/treatment calendar is now available on the website. It's prioritized by time of flowering and treatment recommendations are given. She is open to ideas and feedback. She did a presentation for the Master Naturalists program in Cook County. Also, she did public presentations on aquatic invasives and emerald ash borer. Well attended was the presentation at Cascade State Park on Play, Clean, Go Day. Lastly, she's done 3 newspaper informational inserts so far, funded by the Coastal Program.

Jack Greenlee of USFS reported they are gearing up for spraying gravel pits in Cook County and following up on some wild parsnip sites. For weeds work, he has 4 employees in Grand Marais and 4 in Aurora. He will be meeting with the Timber Sale administration to discuss identifying and avoiding invasives as well as equipment cleaning. Also, a St. Louis County weed management area is still in the works.

James Raml of the Gunflint Trail Scenic Byway Association reported that there was a weed pull at Chik-wauk Museum. Eleven people participated and they pulled a lot of thistle and hawk weed. Also, there are a number of areas on the Gunflint Trail where he's seeing tansy, spotted knapweed, thistle and/or hawk weed. Specifically mentioned was an area near Seagull Guard Station, the Gunflint Tower site, the North Star Trail by Ham Lake, and the Gunflint Trail Wildflower Area.

Mike Hedlund of MNDOT reported that they are still in need of a District Vegetation Manager. He is working on localizing weed control efforts rather than bringing staff up from Duluth. He will be treating toadflax in Schroeder and Lutsen. He asked if anyone knew where/how to get licensed to do weed control. Anna Heruth said the Dept of Ag offers licensing at 3 levels. Testing is done every Monday in the Twin Cities area. It is all self-study, no classes.

Anna Heruth of the DNR reported their weeds control program mostly consists of carrying a sprayer on an ATV. They are working on more funding for educating local foresters about invasives.

Theresa Oberg of Cook County Soil & Water reported that they have been helping Laurel get grants for education and outreach. An AIS Coordinator was hired/contracted and her name is Amanda Weeber. The plan for AIS is available on the DNR website. Also, they are seeing lots of interest in native planting projects. They are looking for funding for the removal of invasives and planting of natives.

Nanette Arands of the CCHD reported (on Dave Betts' behalf as he was delayed on a job site) they are mowing on the east end of the County and have mowed a number of side roads on the Gunflint Trail. Jim Raml asked if they will mow the Gunflint Trail soon. Nanette didn't have that information but suggested he call Russ Klegstad or Dave Betts.

Molly Thompson of Sugarloaf reported the Community Shed is up and running. They have 3 landowners signed up so far. Also, they are holding Lost Forest classes for private landowners. Through the North Shore Collaborative they have done treating of invasives at Sugarloaf and the goal is to have only boreal natives on site.

Regarding the rest of the summer for Laurel, a shoreline planting with Cook County Soil & Water is schedule for July 7 & 8. This includes going out in a pontoon boat looking at aquatic plants and identifying aquatic invasives. Weed pulls are scheduled for July 9 on Schroeder, July 19 at Devil Track Sanctuary and in August at Brandenburg Landing. Also in July, she will be teaching restoration techniques through the Lost Forest program at Sugarloaf. In August, she will be doing a gypsy moth presentation and an education program at Brandenburg Landing regarding identifying invasives and removal techniques. She will be meeting with the volunteer trail supervisors of the Superior Hiking Trail and educating them on invasives. The wildflower walks will continue through the summer at Temperance River and Cascade State Parks as well as at Sweethearts Bluff in Grand Marais. Viper Bugloss is becoming a problem in Grand Marais so she will be pulling and treating it in the area, including at Artist's Point. Jim Raml pointed out the knapweed by the new brewery and the Highway Department. He suggested she contact the City and see if they could get involved. Through the incredible exchange program, she has a 14 yr old student who will be assisting her on some of these projects. Finally, she will continue with the Sugarloaf Community Shed, educating and supplying homeowners once a week.

Lastly, Laurel asked how others are disposing of noxious weeds. She learned that, according to the MDA, they should not be disposed of in solid waste bins or at land fills. They must be brought to a registered disposal site. Theresa Oberg said the closest site is WLLSD in Duluth. Also, it is illegal to transport when flowering. Jack Greenlee recommended she leave them in the bag and bake in the sun or throw on a current USFS burn pile. Theresa suggested she contact North Shore Waste and see if they have a burn pile. Also recommended was to let it dry out or burn in a designated spot in the forest.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

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