



Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (OC CISMA) 2018 Annual Report

Executive Summary

In 2018, the Oakland County CISMA reached hundreds of thousands of Oakland County residents to educate them about invasive species through television interviews, Facebook posts, newspaper articles and at public events and workshops. The Steering Committee met every month and partners were educated about emerging invasive species such as European frog-bit, Japanese stiltgrass and oak wilt. A city of Novi official discovered European frog-bit and reported it to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Early Response Team.

During 2018, the Oakland County CISMA held three grants from the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program—IS17-1106 funding the Coordinator's position and IS17-1209 funding the currently unfilled Technician position. In addition, The Stewardship Network was still processing final reimbursements for the 2015 MISGP grant. The Road Commission for Oakland County provided \$50,000 for treatment of non-native Phragmites along county roads, with many municipalities matching their local costs as two contractors treated a total of 95 miles of right-of-ways.

The Stewardship Network determined that they were no longer able to serve as fiduciary for the Oakland County CISMA, and Six Rivers Land Conservancy assumed this role. Erica Clites started as the first full-time Oakland County CISMA Coordinator in October 2018. There were 34 CISMA member organizations and three active subcommittees at the end of 2018.

Steering Committee Meetings

Twelve Steering Committee meetings took place during 2018. Special guest speakers included:

- Karen Alexander from the Great Lakes Commission on the Phragmites Adaptive Management Framework (PAMF)
- Paul Steen from the Huron River Watershed Council on the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP)
- Andrea Matthies and Jim O'Dell on Japanese Stiltgrass in Washtenaw County
- Dr. Marianna Szücs from Michigan State University on biological control for swallow-wort
- Tom Alwin from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on European frog-bit identification and control
- Julie Stachecki from the Arboriculture Society of Michigan on oak wilt
- Tim Jones of MDOT on Roadside Vegetation Management
- Charlie DeVries and Mike McNulty of ITC on Vegetation Management



In addition, CISMA members presented education sessions on Land Preservation and Stewardship through Local Government (Mike Losey, Ben VanderWeide) and Invasive Species Mapping (Sarah Cook-Maylen, Kegan Schildberg).

Invasive Species Treatment

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) provided \$50,000 for treatment of Phragmites in county road rights-of-way (ROW). Local cities, villages, and townships (CVTs) provided 50% match of RCOC whenever possible, bringing total treatment funding to \$69,016.25. Staff of several CVTs mapped Phragmites in road ROW, while contractors mapped Phragmites in the remaining areas as part of their treatment work. Ben VanderWeide managed the ROW contract on behalf of the CISMA. Six Rivers Land Conservancy (SRLC) staff obtained county-wide Aquatic Nuisance Control Certificate of Coverage (ANC COC) and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for the term 2018 to 2019 from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, with renewal possible for two subsequent years. As approved these permits only cover activities in road ROW, and any additional areas need to be submitted to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) for approval before treatment. RCOC handled questions and complaints from county residents through their customer service department. OC CISMA legally noticed the upcoming ROW treatment in the Oakland Press, as required.

Bids from county contractors were solicited, bids received, contracts were let, and fall treatments were completed along county ROWs across Oakland County. PLM Lake and Land Management Corp. was contracted to perform ROW treatments in Addison, Commerce, Groveland and Milford townships, as well as in Walled Lake, Wixom and the villages of Lake Orion, Leonard, Milford, Ortonville and Wolverine Lake. Brandon, Oakland and Orion townships had separate contracts in place with PLM and were reimbursed for 50% of their costs from RCOC money. Six days of treatment (9/17 – 9/19, 9/23 – 9/24 and 9/26) totaled 135.96 acres of *Phragmites* controlled along county primary, local and natural beauty road ways. Cardno Inc. was contracted to perform ROW treatments in Highland, Holly, Independence, Waterford, White Lake and West Bloomfield townships as well as Auburn Hills, Village of Holly, Keego Harbor, Lake Angelus, Orchard Lake Village, Pontiac, Sylvan Lake and Clarkston. Six days of treatment (10/1-10/4 and 10/9-10/10) totaled 48.88 acres of *Phragmites* controlled along road ways. Ninety-five total linear miles of county road right-of-ways were treated to control Phragmites. This represented 72% of estimated Phragmites infestations in county road right of ways (575,955 linear feet/799,918 estimated total county linear feet).

Additional treatments were performed in Springfield Township (township staff), Rose Township (by North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy) and the city of Novi (contractor). In total, 1930 acres were surveyed for *Phragmites* and 185 acres of *Phragmites* were chemically controlled in 2018. In future years, pre-treatment meetings will be held with contractors to clarify OC CISMA policies and procedures. 2018 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and



Aquatic Nuisance Control (ANC) permits treatment reports were successfully submitted to MDEQ before the November 30 deadline.

Public Education and Outreach

Interviews of SRLC Executive Director, Chris Bunch, highlighting *Phragmites* were provided to local media sources for broadcast on commercial networks (WDIV Channel 4 news, 126,000 households; and Detroit Public radio). Emily DuThinh (OC Cisma Executive Committee Chair) also had an invasive species interview that aired on channel 4 Live in the D show (113 shares, unknown households reached). Planning and implementation is underway for a SEMCOG series of informational videos that will be made available to all partners for distribution through their electronic media outlets.

The Clinton River Watershed Council (CRWC) organized a boat wash event Saturday July 28 at Cass Lake. CRWC also hosted public workshops on RIPPLE (Reduce Invasive Pet and Plant Escapes, Oct. 11), Michigan crayfish ID (Oct. 18) and oak wilt (Nov. 15), reaching a total of 55 attendees. The oak wilt workshop was especially well-attended. SRLC staff distributed Cisma/invasive species information at their scheduled public engagement events including the South Lyon and Oakland County farmer's markets and stewardship work days (50 attendees). There was also a Cisma table at the SRLC Fall Conservation Celebration. Emily DuThinh presented on the Cisma and invasive species ID to a class of MSU Conservation Stewards. The Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy led a hike at Lost Lake where invasive species management was discussed (33 attendees).

The Oakland Press and Rochester Post published articles on *Phragmites* right-of-way treatments (distributed to 96,000 households). Brandon Township shared Oakland County Cisma information on their website. CRWC, West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation, and SRLC shared Oakland County Cisma and general invasive species information to their Facebook pages, reaching 6,419 people.

The Oakland County Cisma Facebook page was created in 2017. Between July and October 10 2018, ten posts reached 675 people. Between October 11 and December 31, 14 posts reached 1,151 people. The posts with the highest number of impressions discussed: WDIV Channel 4 TV segment on *Phragmites* (412), reporting invasive species via the MISIN app (490) and New Zealand mud snails MDEQ Minute video (128). The yearly total for Facebook included 24 posts reaching 1,826 people. The OC Cisma Facebook page had 77 followers as of 12/31/2018.

Planning took place for the First Annual Spring Invasive Species Summit, which will be held at the Waterford Oaks Activity Center in March 2019.



Early Detection and Response (EDR)

On August 10, a City of Novi official discovered European frog-bit in a retention pond in Novi. Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)/MDEQ verified the identification, as well as two other infestations, and completed a day of monitoring with CISMA volunteers September 28. On October 12, a second survey was completed by six CISMA members. Frog-bit was documented in nine small bodies of water. The first frost occurred shortly after October 12 postponing any further surveys.

Red swamp crayfish was discovered in Novi in 2017 near the intersection of I-696 and I-275. MDNR/MDEQ completed some surveys in 2018 and at least one project where they tried to drive the crayfish out of a small body of water with carbon dioxide as a possible control technique. MDNR/MDEQ are planning additional survey and control efforts in 2019.

Staff and interns from the Clinton River Watershed Council surveyed all public boat launches in the Clinton River Watershed (36.5 acres) as part of their grant obligation for Tier 2, discovering four launches with priority invasive species including *Phragmites* and Flowering rush (Cass Lake, Shoe Lake, Mace Day Lake and Orchard Lake).

Funding / Revenue

An extension request will be submitted seeking an additional 90 days on the 2017 MISGP Tier 1 grant (IS17-1106 funding for the Coordinator's position), extending the deadline from April 30, 2019 to June 30, 2019. Spending on the 2017 MISGP Tier 2 grant (IS17-1209 for implementation of the Strategic Plan) grant will increase once a technician has been hired in March 2019. The technician will be tasked with invasive surveys and outreach to private homeowners. An additional grant to fund the Coordinator's position was received through a 2018 MISGP grant (IS18-6006).

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) provided \$50,000 for treatment of *Phragmites* in county road rights-of-way (ROW). Local cities, villages, and townships (CVTs) provided 50% match of RCOC whenever possible, bringing total treatment funding to \$69,016.25.

Additional funding is being sought from the Oakland County Commissioners through the Quality of Life initiative to fund the Coordinator's salary, mileage, printing and other costs. This administrative base funding, if received, would allow us to use MISGP funding for the Oakland County CISMA Technician, making both positions permanent and full-time.

During the January 2019 Steering Committee meeting, OC CISMA members approved a voluntary CISMA membership contribution for 2019 of \$250 to support operating expenses not covered by the current MISGP grants. Operating contributions will be used to support speaker mileage and honorarium for the joint meeting with speaker Dr. Janice Gilbert, Spring Invasive Species Summit, and other public workshops as well as professional development for the Coordinator and Technician



(registration fees for The Stewardship Network Annual Meeting and similar meetings), supplies for outreach events (signs, give away items) and other similar items.

Donations will also collected from sponsors of the Spring Invasive Species Summit, as well as from vendors who choose to exhibit at the Summit.

Organizational Structure and Function

The Stewardship Network, which had been the Cisma fiduciary since 2015, re-evaluated their organizational goals and in March 2018 determined that they were no longer able to serve as fiduciary for the Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area. Six Rivers Land Conservancy (SRLC) accepted the role as fiduciary in order to advance their overall conservation mission. SRLC cooperated with Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Oakland County Cisma (OC Cisma) Executive Committee to submit revised Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program grant applications. SRLC and OC Cisma Executive Committee members generously volunteered their time to help guide the transition of SRLC into their role as Cisma fiduciary. SRLC on behalf of the OC Cisma was awarded a \$60,000 2017 MISGP Tier 1 grant (MISGP IS17-1106) to fund core Cisma functions, and a \$100,000 MISGP Tier 2 (MISGP IS17-1209) to begin implementing the Strategic Plan. Both grants were successfully executed on June 5, 2018. The current end date for IS 17-1106 is April 30, 2019 (though an extension will be requested), and IS17-1209 ends on April 30, 2020.

OC Cisma Executive Committee members assumed Coordinator responsibilities following the resignation of the part-time acting Cisma Coordinator Mike Sobieski in January. Following approval from the SRLC board, SRLC staff worked closely with OC Cisma Executive Committee and Steering Committee members to get up to speed on Cisma operations and oversee daily operations. This included attending meetings, contributing to the application for next round of coordinator funding, and other administrative work. OC Cisma steering committee members were instrumental in providing support to sustain ongoing efforts and momentum during this transition period. Erica Clites began as the Cisma Coordinator, the first full-time Coordinator for the OC Cisma, on October 10, 2018.

Oakland County Parks and Recreation has generously offered Cisma Coordinators housing at their administrative headquarters at 2800 Watkins Lake Road in Waterford Township. Providing offices for the Cisma Coordinator and eventually the Technician was used as match for the IS17-1209 grant.

SRLC established separate banking and bookkeeping systems for both Lake St Clair (LSC) and Oakland County (OC) CismAs. Lacking a Coordinator for most of the year dampened many areas of the OC Cisma's capacity to implement additional structure and function. The OC Cisma plans to confront this matter in 2019.



2018 CISMA Executive Committee Members

Executive Committee Chair: Emily DuThinh, Board President, North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy

Executive Committee Vice Chair: Mike Losey, Natural Resources Manager, Springfield Township

Oakland County CISMA Secretary: Leslie Clark, Parks and Recreation Commissioner, Keego Harbor

Executive Committee Member-at-Large: Ben VanderWeide, Natural Areas Stewardship Manager, Oakland Township Parks and Recreation

Executive Committee Member-at-Large: Kathy Thurman, Supervisor, Brandon Township

Oakland County CISMA Education/Outreach Subcommittee Members

Lauren Azoury, West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation

Emily DuThinh, North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy

Matt Einheuser and later Eric Diesing, Clinton River Watershed Council

Oakland County CISMA Projects Subcommittee Members

Leslie Clark, Keego Harbor Parks and Recreation

Mike Losey, Springfield Township

Kegan Schildberg, Oakland County Parks and Recreation

Ben VanderWeide, Oakland Township Parks and Recreation

Brad Knight, Road Commission for Oakland County

Oakland County CISMA Communications Subcommittee Members

Sarah Cook-Maylen, Oakland County Parks and Recreation

Kegan Schildberg, Oakland County Parks and Recreation

Ben VanderWeide, Oakland Township Parks and Recreation



Oakland County Cisma Members as of 12/31/2018

Charter Township of Bloomfield
Charter Township of Brandon
City of Village of Clarkston
Township of Commerce
City of Farmington Hills
Township of Groveland
Township of Holly
Charter Township of Highland
Charter Township of Independence
City of Keego Harbor
Charter Township of Milford
Village of Milford
City of Novi
Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission
Charter Township of Orion
Village of Ortonville
City of Rochester Hills
Rose Township
Charter Township of Springfield
Charter Township of Waterford
West Bloomfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission
City of Wixom
Total Cities, Village and Townships (CVTs): 22

Oakland County Conservation District
Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission
Oakland County Water Resources Commission
Road Commission for Oakland County
Total Oakland County organizations: 4

Clinton River Watershed Council
Michigan Nature Association
North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy
Royal Oak Nature Society
Six Rivers Land Conservancy, Highland Chapter
Oakland University
Six Rivers Land Conservancy
Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy
Total Non-profit partners: 8



Total Oakland County CISMA partners: 34