

MINIMIZING THE THREAT OF INVASIVE EXOTIC SPECIES TO WISCONSIN'S FORESTS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH, 8:00-12:30, HALL OF IDEAS H & I

KEY ISSUES

- Invasive exotic species may present the greatest threat to the long-term health and sustainability of Wisconsin's forests. Human activities such as commerce, travel, gardening, and recreation have introduced many non-native plant and animal species to the state.
- Control of invasive species and outbreaks of pests or pathogens is complex and costly.
- Urban forests may become a focal point in a conflict between the traditional horticultural industry and ecological preservationists. Control measures for non-native species are often particularly controversial in developed areas.

IMPORTANCE AND IMPACTS

Invasive exotic species often have few competitors or predators, making it easy for them to alter an ecosystem. The effects of non-native species invasion is a homogenization of species.

Invasive species gradually unravel the threads of diversity that make up the fabric of our ecosystems, which can ultimately lead to loss of key functions and degradation.

Invasive species threaten our forest's economic capacity, the recreational needs of forest users, and the hundreds of plant and animal species that depend on forest ecosystems.

Landscaping is a \$1.3 billion industry in Wisconsin, and depends largely on exotic species. Therefore, efforts to eradicate invasive exotics will require consideration of related impacts to this industry.

SCOPE AND IMMEDIACY

Overall, the number of acres affected ecologically and economically by invasive species will increase significantly each year for the foreseeable future.

Invasive species are widely considered one of the greatest threats to world biological diversity. In Wisconsin all native ecosystems are at risk, including forests.

The invasive species issue challenges traditional ownership-based management systems as the scale of infestations is often broader than even the largest ownerships. Effective control efforts require multi-agency partnerships.

Stakeholders include the forest industry, private rural and urban landowners, all levels of government, and tribes.

CHAMPION

FRED CLARK, PRESIDENT, CLARK FORESTRY

Fred Clark is a consulting forester and the owner of Clark Forestry, Inc. of Baraboo, Wisconsin. Clark holds an M.S. in Forest Science from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and a B.S. in Horticulture and Urban Forestry from Michigan State University. He is a member-at-large of the Wisconsin Governor's Council on Forestry, and a member of the advisory council of the Forest Guild, a national professional forester's society. Prior to entering private practice, Clark worked as a forester for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and as a forest inventory specialist for The Nature Conservancy.

Clark Forestry provides consulting and land management services to land trusts, environmental groups, government agencies, and private landowners.

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Gene Roark, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association & Private Woodland Owner
Becky Sapper, The Nature Conservancy

MORE INFORMATION ON THIS THEME AND THE STATEWIDE FOREST PLAN

Many of the issues addressed by the Statewide Forest Plan relate to the impacts of exotic invasive species, including invasive exotic species as an increasing threat (Issue 8), changing forest disturbance patterns (Issue 10), an increasing number of people purchasing forest lands (Issue 32), the increasing popularity of motorized recreation (Issue 40), and the increasing creation and use of forest trails (Issue 41).