

Education/Outreach Case Study: Meijer—TNC Partnership

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Scientist

AIS Stakeholder Meeting

March 5, 2008

The Nature
Conservancy 
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

The Nature Conservancy's Global Invasive Species

Team:
Voluntary Codes of Conduct
Valerie Vartanian



Missouri Botanical Garden



GIST's Goals



The Invasive Species Team's goals are:

1. ASSESSMENT OF INVASIVE SPECIES THREATS to biodiversity
2. PREVENTION of new harmful invasions
3. EARLY DETECTION AND RAPID RESPONSE to new invasions
4. CONTROL AND RESTORATION of invaders and invaded sites



GIST's Approaches

- Strengthening and advancing PUBLIC POLICIES,
- ENGAGING BUSINESSES & THE PRIVATE SECTOR to change practices
- Enabling effective LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT to prevent, contain & control invaders and restore sites.
- Promoting and providing RESEARCH and information



Missouri Botanical Garden



Linking Ecology & Horticulture to Prevent Plant Invasions

Government

Nursery
Professionals

Gardening
Public

Landscape
Architects

Botanic
Gardens
and Arboreta

The voluntary codes offer professional codes of conduct designed to curb the use and distribution of invasive plant species through self-governance and self-regulation by the groups concerned. Importantly, the Voluntary Codes of Conduct were developed recognizing that education must accompany all efforts to address the problem and that some future government regulation may perhaps be needed if such efforts prove insufficient. These codes are now being considered for endorsement by the major professional societies and organizations representing each of the groups covered.



Findings

1. **People are major dispersers of plants.**
2. **The magnitude of this dispersal is unprecedented introducing aggressive species in new areas.**
3. **Introduced plants are the foundation of modern living, yielding diversity to our supply of food, forestry, landscaping, medicinal and other purposes.**
4. **A small proportion of introduced plant species become invasive.**
5. **Plant species can be invasive in some regions, but not in others.**
6. **The impacts of invasive plant species can occur at times and places far removed from the site of introduction.**



The St. Louis Six

Principles

1. Plant introduction should attempt to minimize unintended harm.
2. Efforts should be consistent with national standards, while considering regional differences.
3. Prevention and early detection are the most cost effective techniques.
4. Research, education, and professional training are essential.
5. Individuals from many fields must undertake a broad-based and collaborative effort to address this challenge.
6. A successful invasive plant species strategy will make use of all available tools. Codes of conduct are an essential first step.



Nursery Professionals Codes of Conduct

- Ensure that invasive potential is assessed by qualified experts using appropriate methods prior to marketing plant species new to North America.
- Work with experts and stakeholders to determine which species in your region are currently invasive or will become invasive. Identify suitable alternatives.
- Develop and promote alternative plant material through selection and breeding.
- Where agreement has been reached phase out those specific existing stock.
- Follow all laws on importation and quarantine of plant materials across political boundaries.
- Encourage customers and garden writers to use and promote non-invasive plants.

Landscape Architects Codes of Conduct

- Seek out education and information on invasive species issues :
 1. Determine what species are highly invasive or may present a threat.
 2. Identify all solutions to problems caused by harmful invasive plants.
 3. Take advantage of education opportunities related to invasive species.
- Identify and specify non-invasive species that are suitable alternatives.
- Eliminate specification of species that are invasive in your region.
- Be aware of potential environmental impacts beyond the managed area.
- Encourage suppliers to provide non-invasive plants.
- Collaborate in the revision of landscape ordinances to include invasive species issues.

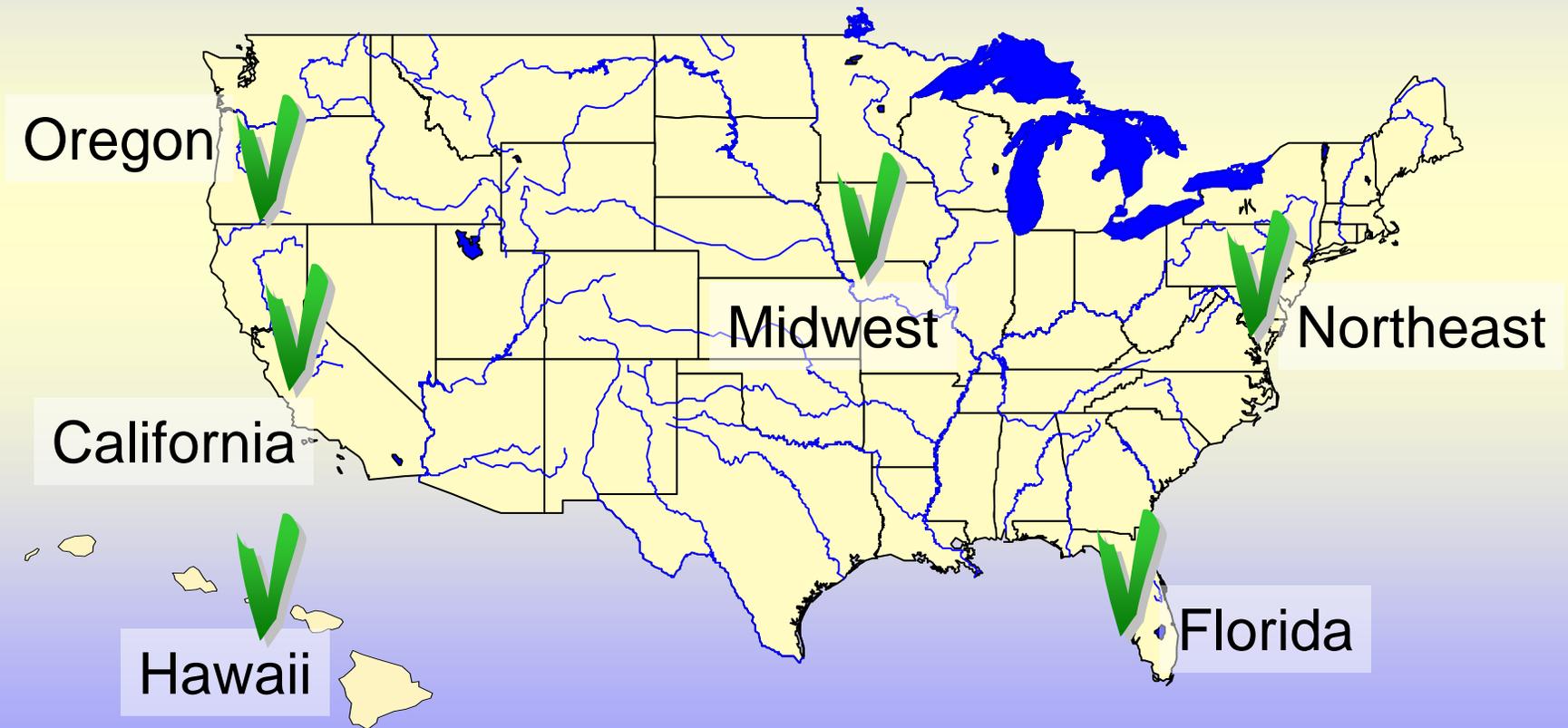
Gardening Public

- Buy and plant only non-invasive species.
- Remove existing plants that are known to be invasive.
- Educate those around you.
- Advocate to Botanic Gardens, nurseries, and garden media.
- Seek information regarding locally invasive plants.
- Participate in early warning systems by reporting sightings in your area.
- Promote “safe” gardening through clubs or homeowner groups.
- Reject invasive plants used in crafts, arrangements, etc.

Regional Criteria

- Regions with high biodiversity, medium to high quality habitat sites or large contiguous natural areas
- Regions with new urban sprawl developments
- Established invasive plant working groups
- Total participant group to include a variety of business types and sizes (single facility, regional, national)

Voluntary Codes of Conduct Regions



The Process

- Work with businesses to develop a set of achievable tasks for each Code
- Focus on plants that can be easily adopted, specific to that business, and establish phase-out timelines
- Work with local experts to develop alternative plant lists
- Develop educational materials for customers
- Complete survey and tally information

Benefits

- Be part of a successful, nationally recognized program
- Able to express ideas, concerns, or business needs
- Businesses will be promoted locally and nationally
- Fewer invasive plants escaping saves money
- Be part of the solution, not the problem
- It's good for the environment



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Problem: Invasives originating from the Landscape Industry



English Ivy

Opportunity with a Large Retailer



meijer



- “Hypermarket” Retailer
- 181 Locations in 5 Midwestern States
- 10th Largest U.S. Private Company, 2005 est. revenues of \$13.2 billion

Background of Meijer Project

- Started Discussions in 2003 on in-store partnership on sales/communications.
- Early 2006, Meijer told TNC they wanted to move on the project, including up to \$450,000 over three years for invasive species programs.
- TNC had to come to meeting with proposal for how to use program funding.

Project Components

- Remove (some) invasives from stock
- Label and promote known non-invasives
- Various in-store and advertising promotions about invasives and TNC



Private

Natives - Purple coneflow

© William S. Justice

meijer & the nature conservancy: Battling Invasives Brings Positive Media Coverage

The Washington Post
Invasive Decorative Plants Targeted
 By JOHN BREWER
 The Associated Press
 Friday, June 25, 2009, 1:34 AM
 TOLEDO, Ohio — Bushy-like plants that many adults have chinked out native plants that once thrived with life at Maumee Bay along Lake Erie.
 Wild flowers at the park have disappeared, birds have gone elsewhere. The parkland has become just another road grass towering 10 feet high.
 "I hate to spend an hour talking about invasive environmental groups hope to slow the spread to stop killing them and instead promote native plants."
 Big-box retailer Meijer Inc. announced in March that it will donate \$450,000 to help fund the project.
 "Meijer and The Nature Conservancy are pleased to partner with the state to help fund the project," said Dan Kahan, CEO of the Conservancy. "We are excited to see the project move forward and help protect the state's natural resources."

CNN
 THE WORLD'S NEWS LEADER

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

San Francisco Chronicle
BusinessWeek

Grand Rapids Business Journal
More Than Just a Plant
 Meijer Inc. donates \$450,000 to help fund the project.
 "Meijer and The Nature Conservancy are pleased to partner with the state to help fund the project," said Dan Kahan, CEO of the Conservancy. "We are excited to see the project move forward and help protect the state's natural resources."

The Columbus Dispatch
Meijer helps take stand against invasive plants
 Columbus, Ohio (AP) — A major retailer is helping fund a project to remove invasive plants from a park in Toledo, Ohio.
 "Meijer and The Nature Conservancy are pleased to partner with the state to help fund the project," said Dan Kahan, CEO of the Conservancy. "We are excited to see the project move forward and help protect the state's natural resources."

Lansing State Journal
State wants to nip illegal plant sales in bud
 Michigan's Department of Natural Resources is looking to crack down on the sale of invasive plants.
 "We are looking to crack down on the sale of invasive plants," said a DNR spokesman. "We are looking to crack down on the sale of invasive plants."

Los Angeles Times



Invasive Non-natives-

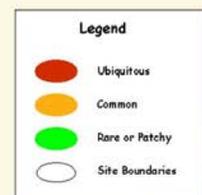
Final Component: Invasives Control (eradication) Project

- Needed to appeal to Meijer, as well as our own goals.
- Can't be just 'business as usual'.
- LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION
- Appealing habitat type.
- Something that could show dramatic results with these resources.

Lake Michigan Coastal Threat Assessment – MI Dune Alliance, 2001



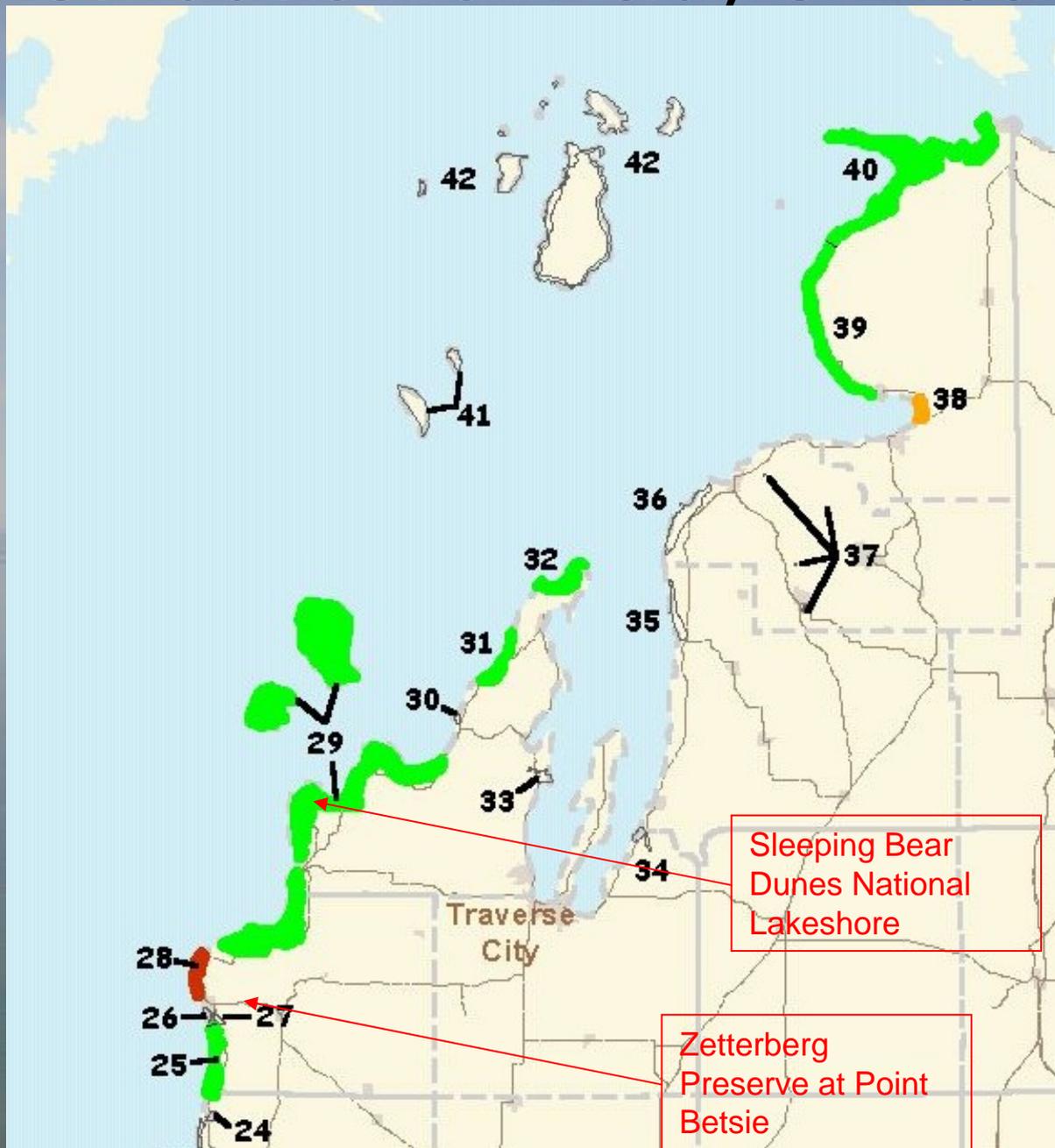
MAP 11: Distribution of Soapwort at Critical Shoreline Sites



- Key**
- 1 Galien River
 - 2 Warren Dunes
 - 3 Lower Paw Paw River
 - 4 Van Buren Dunes
 - 5 Glenn Bluffs
 - 6 Lower Kalamazoo River
 - 7 Saugatuck Dunes
 - 8 Grand River Bayous
 - 9 Hoffmaster Dunes Shoreline
 - 10 Muskegon Dunes
 - 11 Muskegon River Mouth
 - 12 Lower White River
 - 13 Flower Creek Dunes
 - 14 Flower Creek Marsh
 - 15 Stony Creek Dunes
 - 16 Stony Creek Wetlands
 - 17 Silver Lake Dunes
 - 18 Pentwater Marsh
 - 19 Big Sable Dunes
 - 20 Hagoon Creek
 - 21 Lower Manistee River
 - 22 Bar Lake Wetlands
 - 23 Portage Point Shoreline
 - 24 Arcadia Marsh
 - 25 Herring Lake Dunes
 - 26 Alberta Shoreline
 - 27 Betsie Bay Bayous
 - 28 Point Betsie
 - 29 Sleeping Bear Dunes
 - 30 Whaleback Point
 - 31 Gilks Pier
 - 32 Cathode Bay
 - 33 Lee Point Wetland Complex
 - 34 Petobago Creek
 - 35 Antrim Creek
 - 36 Fisherman's Island
 - 37 Lake Charlevoix Marshes
 - 38 Petoskey Dunes
 - 39 Forest Beach/Good Heart
 - 40 Sturgeon Bay/Waugeshance
 - 41 Fox Islands
 - 42 Beaver Islands Archipelago



Distribution of Baby's Breath



Invasive Species: Baby's Breath

(*Gypsophila paniculata*)

- Native to east and central Europe; introduced in 19th century as a cut flower in florist trade
- Hardy, diffusely branched perennial herb; 1 meter in height; 4 meter tap root



annually; wind-dispersed.
Point Betsie, probably mid-

Michigan Dune Alliance

- Coalition begun in 1999 dedicated to dune conservation, & coordinated by TNC.
- Includes all characteristics of a CWMA.
- Current members include 6 land trusts, NPS, DNR, Michigan Sea Grant.



“Lake Michigan Coastal Restoration Project”



meijer



Effectively eliminate baby's-breath as a threat in Lake Michigan coastal dunes.

Thanks to:

Valerie Vartanian—GIST

John Legge, Patrick Doran, Melissa Soule – MIFO

Ellen Jacquart – INFO

Gary Popotnik – OHFO

Deanna Zercher – ILFO

Lisa Morris - KYFO

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