



Summer 2015 Newsletter

As Chair of the SICIM Steering Committee I am very pleased to announce the roll out of the CWMA Start-Up Grants Program. Through the collaborative efforts of SICIM and the IDNR Division of Forestry, (DOF), SICIM will be administering a minimum of 15 grants to new CWMAs within our service area. The grants will be in the amount of \$1500 distributed equally over a three year period. Those groups or organizations wishing to apply may contact me at the address and phone number provided below.

Thanks to the leadership of past Chair and current secretary Beth Mizell, SICIM is applying for a \$190,000, two year PTI grant through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to establish a Southern Indiana Invasives Strike Team. The Strike Team proposal includes a team leader and two seasonal employees equipped to do early detection surveys and rapid response treatment in critical areas, on both public and private lands within the SICIM service area. The most impressive aspect of Beth's effort is that she has garnered over \$390,000 in in-kind match from partners including INDOT, IDNR Division of Forestry, IDNR Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology, The Nature Conservancy, Purdue University and many more. There is great cause for optimism for the success of this grant. If awarded it will elevate SICIM to a new level of prominence and credibility through the visibility and recognition it will provide. Well done Beth and keep up the good work!



Our various committees have been working hard to keep SICIM moving forward. The Projects Committee has completed the Japanese chafflower survey (chafflower photo shown at left) in all counties bordering the Ohio River. Special thanks to Ron Rathfon and his group for a lot of hard work and a job well done. The creation of a directory of contractors providing invasives treatment for private landowners is also near completion. With help of a Purdue University Intern, Ron is creating a series of educational videos on various invasive species that will be a valuable resource. Also on the radar screen is creating "Tool Kits" for new CWMA's that would include

backpack sprayers, weed wrenches and safety equipment for loan to landowners to treat invasives.

The Operations and Development Committee under the leadership of Cheryl Coon put together a very successful annual meeting in Bedford. Turnout was excellent as were the speakers and program. They have also been very involved in creating the CWMA Start-Up Grant Agreement with DOF as well as the documentation and guidelines necessary for SICIM to administer this program with our new partners. Their efforts and support have been indispensable during this process.

The Education and Outreach Committee under Teena Ligman's guidance updated the SICIM Brochure and are in the process of revamping the SICIM Website. As always they continue to find opportunities to reach more people with our message. There have been too many presentations and appearances made to list, all done by volunteers.

Jamie Renner and the Finance Committee are working to keep the books balanced and the bank balance in the black. Keeping track of our CWMA Start-Up Grant expenditures as well as staying current on all of the various sources of in-kind match will be very challenging, but work is progressing onward. This committee deserves much credit for doing a job with little excitement or glamour.



As Chair of SICIM, I am humbled and inspired to be surrounded by such a dedicated and selfless group of volunteers. It goes without saying that our accomplishments would not be possible without the continued financial support of The Nature Conservancy and the many Soil and Water Conservation Districts whose sponsorship keep us afloat. As we continue to bring new CWMA's on line and spread the message of natural resource stewardship I can only express a profound sense of gratitude to all who have helped make it possible!

Congratulations to this year's special award winners. At the annual meeting SICIM recognized Ecologic as the Partner of the Year for their generosity in donating one day of invasive work which was then auctioned off as a fund-raiser for the organization.



Jean Merritt (shown in red with Beth Mizell past SICIM Chair) was recognized as the Volunteer of the year for her tireless efforts in public outreach, giving programs, maintaining the Facebook page, and supporting our organization.

Steve Cotter was given the Chair's Award for his advice, insights and consistent support over the past many years of his involvement with SICIM. He has been a true friend of the organization.

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