

**DI Critical Area Stabilization
Added Eligible Component**



Establishment of Cooperative Weed Management Areas

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Definition

Establishment of Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) for the control of invasive species and noxious weeds.

Purpose

CWMAs are developed to restore or enhance natural communities and manage existing and emerging invasive plants that are detrimental to natural lands.

Primary CWMA goals include:

- Development of strong partnerships based on cooperation among agencies, landowners and other interested partners to control invasive species.
- The creation of long term and sustainable Cooperative Weed Management Areas.
- The removal of invasive plant species through the combined efforts of partnering entities.

Conditions Where Practice Applies – one time start-up expense

This practice applies only to the BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Area Grant Program and involves a one-time start-up expense for beginning Cooperative Weed Management Areas.

Criteria

A Cooperative Weed Management Area is a partnership of federal, state and local government agencies; tribes; individuals; and various other interested groups that manage noxious weeds or invasive plants in a defined area. General criteria for Cooperative Weed Management Area establishment include the following:

- CWMAs occupy a defined geographic area with a common geography, weed problem, community, climate, political boundary, or land use.
- The majority of natural resource managers and key private landowners in the area are involved or represented.
- CWMAs are committed to cooperation.

- CWMAAs operate under a comprehensive plan that addresses the management or prevention of one or more noxious weeds or invasive plants.
- CWMAAs have a project Steering Committee composed of cooperators who are committed to working together to manage invasive species within a defined geographic area.
- CWMAAs have a clear long-term weed management plan based on an integrated pest management approach using the principles of ecosystem management.

Source: Center for Invasive Plant Management

Steps common to setting up a CWMA include:

- Determine common goals
- Choose a CWMA fiscal manager
- Hold a public meeting and invite all partners
- Establish a steering committee
- Select a chairperson and a vice-chairperson
- Develop agreements (Cooperative Agreements, Hold Harmless Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding are common)
- Develop a strategic management plan (including invasive species mapping)
- Develop an annual operating plan
- Establish and utilize committees
- Implement plans

Considerations

When developing a Cooperative Weed Management Area the following are key considerations for the establishment of an efficient and sustainable CWMA:

- Completeness of plan for setting up a CWMA
- CWMA long term sustainability
- Strength of partnerships
- Number of partners involved
- Cash and/or In-kind contribution
- Efficient use of funding
- Development of concrete and attainable weed management goals and strategies to control invasive plant species from natural lands through an integrated pest management approach
- Development of strategies for the restoration/reconstruction of native communities through an ecosystem approach
- Development of plan for public outreach and publicizing the project.

Eligible Expenses

Funding for this practice represents a one-time base allocation for start-up expenses. Eligible expenses include equipment necessary for implementing CWMA goals, staff time and expenses related to establishing Cooperative Weed Management Areas, publicity and outreach costs and travel expenses.

Equipment purchased with the funding provided will remain the property of the State for its useful life. After the contract period, it may remain in the custody of the Grantee so long as it is used for the purposes of promoting and supporting the project. The State may take possession of the equipment at such time as it becomes necessary to use it for State purposes.

Plans

Strategic management plans and annual operating plans are commonly used to guide the activities of CWMA. Strategic management plans help define the goals of the CWMA and the steps planned to accomplish those goals. It serves as a road map for the CWMA as it begins to carry out projects. The strategic plan should clearly define CWMA objectives and priorities. A strategic management plan will help identify concerns, quantify scale and scope of problems, and set short-term and long-term priorities for CWMA operations. Strategic management plans generally include:

- An accurate map of the CWMA
- An inventory and a map of known priority invasive plant infestations
- Management responsibilities including the establishment of management areas or zones
- Criteria for the prioritization of invasive plant management activities
- Control techniques likely to be used in your CWMA
- Equipment, supplies, people, and other resources available for the CWMA from each partner

For examples of a strategic management plan, see www.mipn.org.

Once the steering committee develops the strategic plan, work priorities for the upcoming year can be identified in an annual operating plan. This document will detail annual projects; expected in-kind contributions, necessary funding, and the personnel needed for project completion, and will serve as the basis for outside grant requests. Each project identified in the annual operating plan should have an assigned project manager. This is the person responsible for project implementation, coordination, expenditures, in-kind documentation, completion, photo records, and final reports. Annual operating plans vary greatly in size and complexity. Newly established CWMA may have one or a few annual projects and may include grant applications as part of the annual operating plan. For examples of an annual operating plan, see www.mipn.org.

Source: CWMA Cookbook

Operation and Maintenance

CWMA can vary in their focus. Common focus areas for CWMA include education, prevention, early detection, control efforts and monitoring. The focus of CWMA should be included in the strategic management plan and annual operating plans. The

strategic management plan and annual operating plans will guide project implementation. Plans should be revisited periodically to ensure that project goals are being met.

Citations and References

CWMA Cookbook <http://www.mipn.org/MIPN%20Cookbook%20Lo-res.pdf>

Midwest Invasive Plant Network www.mipn.org