

Treeways

2020 -3

Managing Invasive Species

The presence of alien and invasive species in Minnesota and Sunfish Lake is increasing and many non-native species are here to stay. Some of the usual suspects we hear about are buckthorn, garlic mustard, honeysuckle, burdock, DED, EAB, various thistles, worms, carp, Eurasian milfoil, curly leaf pondweed and knapweed. The uncomfortable truth is that all important invasive species have been directly or indirectly introduced by people. With respect to invasive species we are our own worst enemy.

Any of these problem species can be managed so it is important to set priorities so you can be successful. I commonly say that “buckthorn is forever” by which I mean even when you eliminate every visible buckthorn tree on your property this year, if you don’t do follow up management each following year, you will be back where you started originally in only 5-10 years. The existing buckthorn seed bank in the soil plus all the seeds that will be carried in by birds from adjacent properties guarantee reinfestation following your apparent eradication of this invasive species. It is best to set reasonable management goals and stick with your management plan. Invasive species can be managed and the ongoing efforts must be consistent. Each invasive species has a different best way to control it and research is ongoing to improve the best management practices for each. We have been very successful in nearly eliminating wild parsnip and oriental bittersweet in the City and I check for them each year to see if there are any follow up activities to keep them away.

If winning against invasive species means 100% control then that usually means that we cannot win.

If managing them at a reasonable level is success, then we will succeed.

Your City Forester is available to consult regarding the best management practices for invasive species control and management – just call.