

Forester's Report 12 29 2014

One burning permit was issued during December.

An Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation was confirmed in Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan on December 23. This means that Dakota County is now under the EAB quarantine and that means no ash trees, ash tree branches, or any kind of hardwood firewood may be moved out of Sunfish Lake or Dakota County.

The primary activities during December included recruiting committee members for the Parks and Public Lands 5-Year Plan Committee and the Firewise Committee, gathering literature and background information for the committees, and leading the first meetings of the respective committees.

The Parks and Public Lands 5-Year Plan Committee met on December 3rd and made excellent progress after hearing some deep Sunfish Lake history from Dick Bancroft. This first meeting set the stage for making decisions and preparing recommendations in future meetings.

The Firewise Committee met on December 10th. After wide ranging discussions plus viewing a video from the MN DNR regarding wildfires all agreed that there are in fact potential wildfire issues that should be addressed. The Committee felt strongly that the City must retain its' park-like feel and that potential wildfire issues on private land should be addressed on a voluntary basis. In that light the Committee will be focusing at the next meeting on an educational campaign to bring these issues to Sunfish Lake residents.

A second infestation of Oriental bittersweet has been found near the western end of Salem Church Road. This is an old infestation and some of the vines have 2" diameter stems. Personal visits with adjacent property owners are planned for January to determine a course of action.

Trails though Musser and Harmon Parks were checked and were clear of major deadfall branches.

The deer herd aerial count will likely occur sometime during January 2015

Jim Naves
City Forester