

Invasive Plant Management Costs Hoosiers over \$5 million in 2012

Report from the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee to the Indiana Invasive Species Council

September 19, 2013

A recent survey conducted by the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee found that land owners and managers in Indiana spent \$5.85 million (Figure 1) in 2012 to manage invasive plants on their land.

The Committee surveyed 116 agencies, land trusts, municipalities, contractors, and private land owners around the state, representing more than 650,000 acres of managed public and private land in Indiana (Table 1). The survey did not include invasive control in agricultural crop settings, just in natural areas like forests, prairies, and wetlands.

“The survey is a strong representation of the invasive plant management that is going on in Indiana,” noted Ellen Jacquart, one of the Committee members. Jacquart also works for The Nature Conservancy, one of the land trusts whose lands are plagued by invasive plants. “The responses demonstrate how invasive species have gotten a strong foothold in Indiana and how expensive it is to remove them.”

Of the groups, state agencies spent the most on invasive plant management last year totaling nearly \$3 million. Land trusts and municipalities came in second and third respectively by spending a little more than \$1 million each.

The survey also revealed that land owners and managers in Indiana have to control a wide variety of invasive plant species. The survey identified nearly 50 different species of invasive plants being managed statewide (Figure 2 and inset of top ten). More than 73 percent of survey participants reported that they manage garlic mustard, making it the most commonly controlled invasive plant in Indiana.

Controlling invasive plants such as garlic mustard or Asian bush honeysuckle not only requires money, but also a considerable amount of time (Figure 3). The total estimated hours spent on invasive plant management in 2012 came to 120,256 hours, the equivalent of 51 years.

Controlling invasive species is made even more difficult by the fact that many plant stores in Indiana still sell several invasive plant species.

“More than 95% of those surveyed supported removing invasive plants from commercial trade,” said Jacquart. “The State is currently exploring a rule that would do just that.”

The Invasive Plant Advisory Committee was created in September 2010 to help the Indiana Invasive Species Council work on

Top Ten Invasive Plant Species Being Managed in Indiana

- 1) Garlic Mustard
- 2) Asian Bush Honeysuckle*
- 3) Multiflora Rose
- 4) Japanese Honeysuckle*
- 5) Autumn Olive*
- 6) Canada Thistle
- 7) Burning Bush*
- 8) Tree of Heaven
- 9) Asian Bittersweet*
- 10) Purple Wintercreeper*

***Still sold for landscaping in Indiana**

invasive plant issues in the state. Chaired by Ellen Jacquart, the committee is working on updating Indiana’s Invasive Plant List and on a pilot implementation of Best Management Practices designed to decrease the movement and spread of invasive species.

Figure 1. Money spent on invasive plant management by land management group

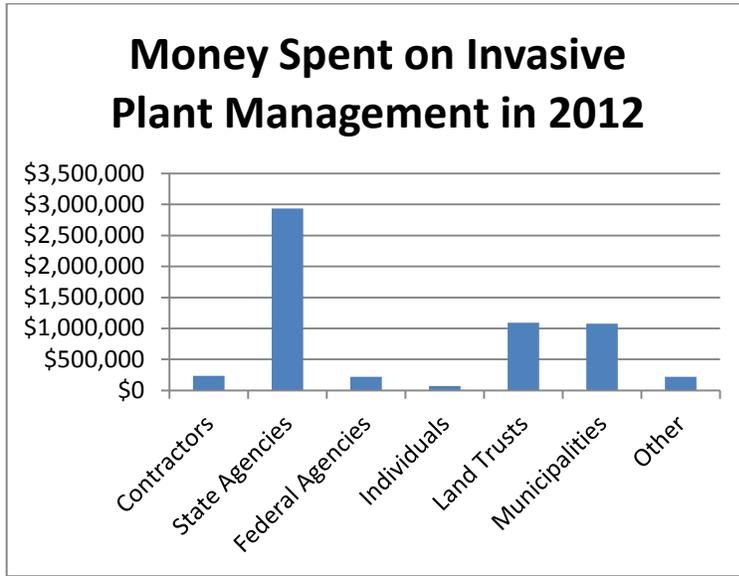


Table 1. Summary of 116 responses to Invasive Plant Management Cost Survey for 2012.

Category	Time (hours)	Money spent	Acres Managed
Contractors	16,572	\$233,162	898
State Agencies	40,919	\$2,932,019	34,015
Federal Agencies	4,350	\$219,941	755
Individuals	3,794	\$72,274	1,152
Land Trusts	23,465	\$1,093,659	6,907
Municipalities	30,554	\$1,076,291	1,162
Other	602	\$219,587	583
Total:	120,256	\$5,846,933	45,472

Figure 2. Invasive Plant Species Managed by land owners/managers.

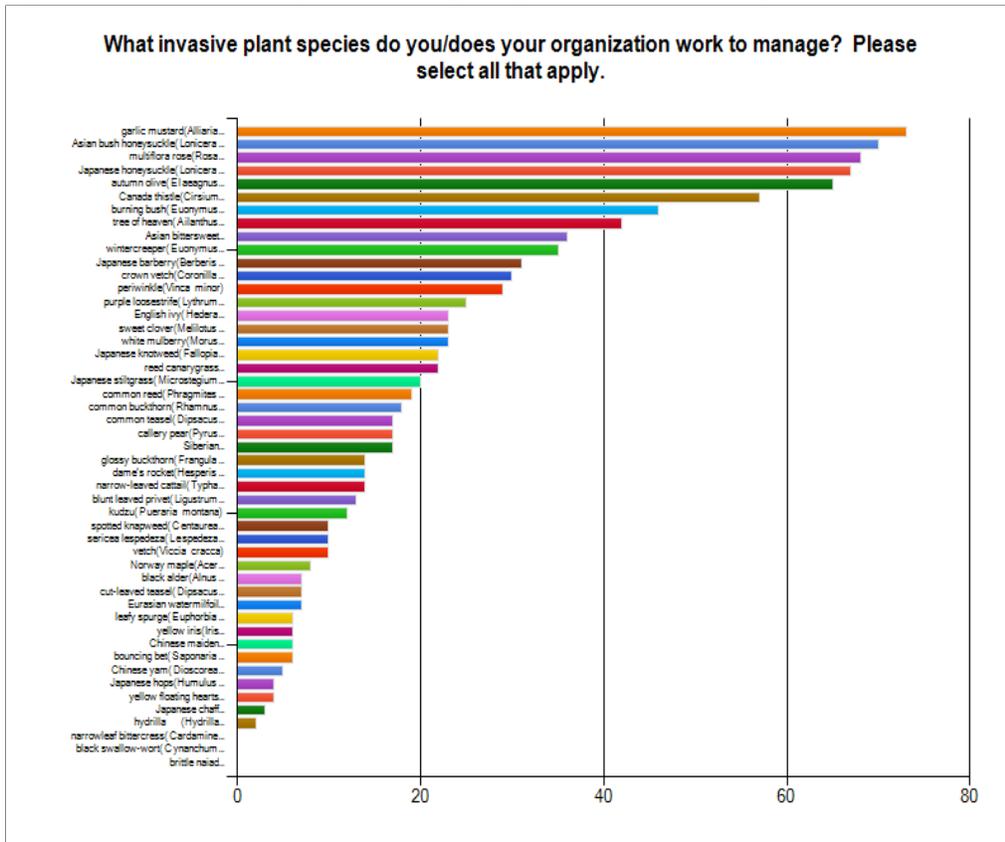


Figure 3. Time spent on invasive plant management by land management group.

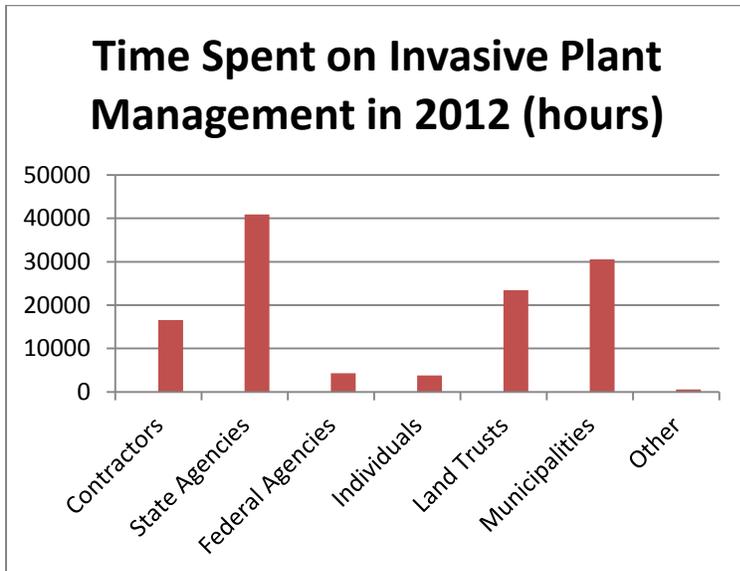


Figure 4. Acres of invasive plant management by land management group.

