**Michigan awards $3.6 million in grants to combat invasive species in 2018**

**23 projects receive funding**

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Twenty-three projects in Michigan will share $3.6 million to help combat invasive species.

The Michigan departments of Environmental Quality, Natural Resources, and Agriculture and Rural Development today announced that the projects will receive funding through the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program, an initiative launched in 2014 to help prevent and control invasive species within the state.

The program has four objectives, including preventing new introductions of invasive species through outreach and education; monitoring for new invasive species and the expansion of existing invasive species; responding to and conducting eradication efforts for new findings and range expansions; and strategically managing and controlling key colonized species.

This year, the program will fund two new Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas to meet a program metric of providing management services to every county.

The Jackson Conservation District will initiate the Jackson, Lenawee and Washtenaw Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area, while the St. Joseph Conservation District will lead the development of the Southern Michigan Invasive Species Team for Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties.

Ten existing CISMAs across the state will receive grants this year.

More than $850,000 will go to three programs that will survey, map and treat trees infested with hemlock woolly adelgid. Treatments will occur in Allegan, Muskegon, Oceana and Ottawa counties, where outbreaks have been documented, and survey efforts will span an additional 10 counties along Lake Michigan to determine the extent of the infestation.

Hemlock woolly adelgid can kill hemlock trees in as little as four years.

Grant funding will also fund projects focused on aquatic invasive species:

* Testing responses of different Eurasian watermilfoil hybrids to herbicide treatments to improve management of this invasive plant that is plaguing Michigan’s waters.
* Evaluating control options for European frogbit, an invasive plant spreading along Michigan’s eastern coastline.
* Assessing methods of grass carp management in Lake Erie to improve future efforts and inform early-detection actions for other invasive carp species not yet in the Great Lakes.
* Providing opportunities to paddlers and other recreational users on 12 water trails across the state to identify, report and reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species through a comprehensive outreach and education project.