

# Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium, Inc.

## Five Year Strategic Plan

1/1/2011 – 12/31/2015



### Introduction

The Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium, Inc. (SEWISC) is a broad-based coalition that promotes efficient and effective management of invasive plant and animal species throughout an 8-county region including Sheboygan, Washington, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Milwaukee, Walworth, Racine, and Kenosha counties (Figure 1). SEWISC provides the opportunity for partners to share and leverage limited resources, raise awareness about invasive species problems, and collaboratively reduce the impact of invasive species on both public and private lands.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the SEWISC is to educate the public and protect biodiversity and ecological function throughout this region, contributing to a high quality of life for present and future generations.

### Brief Organizational History

SEWISC was founded in January 2007 as a coalition of land managers, researchers, and concerned citizens who sought to integrate and leverage invasive plant and animal management resources across jurisdictional boundaries for the benefit of the entire region. Following the Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Development Program designed by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network (*CWMA Cookbook: A Recipe for Success*), the initial steering committee developed a set of priorities for invasive species education, outreach and management that were unique to southeastern Wisconsin's needs. The steering committee was eventually phased out as a Board of Directors was established and with pro-bono assistance by John T. Barry (Quarles & Brady, LLP), SEWISC was incorporated as a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2010. SEWISC became a membership organization in December, 2010.

In 2009, the Governor-appointed Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species selected SEWISC for an Invader Crusader Award. These awards are presented to a small number of individuals or groups each year to recognize their commitment to preventing the spread of invasive species through public education and/or on-the-ground management work resulting in measurable benefits to the people and lands of Wisconsin. The Council wrote:

*"SEWISC's dedication to being part of the solution has been of inspiration to those around you. It was with great pleasure that we (the members of the judging committee) took on the task of learning about your tireless efforts."*

## **Need for Strategic Planning**

The most cost-effective way to address invasive species is to prevent them from reaching the SEWISC region (Figure 1). If, despite prevention efforts, new invasive species spread to the SEWISC region, early detection programs can help locate and eradicate populations before they become widely established. For invasive species already established within the SEWISC region, management programs to monitor and minimize their negative impacts to the economy and environment are necessary, but with the understanding that these efforts will be relatively costly.

The sooner SEWISC can act to prevent or control new infestations, the more effective our efforts will be. This SEWISC Five Year Strategic Plan has been developed with the goal of reducing the environmental, economic and human health impacts of invasive species in southeastern Wisconsin by emphasizing public awareness, rapid response to new invasive species threats and building long-term organizational capacity. Obtaining funding for our programs is crucial to long-term success, and although we have estimated timelines for each goal, we are prepared to identify and acquire specific funding opportunities as they arise. Achievement of the goals put forth in this strategic plan is dependent on obtaining and maintaining adequate funding and volunteer resources.

## **Funding for Strategic Planning Process**

SEWISC's 2011-15 strategic plan was developed with funding from a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Grant administered under USDA Forest Service Participating Agreement #10-PA-11090100-36.

## **Summary of Strategic Planning Process**

A strategic planning process was developed that included examination of ideas, programs and initiatives that emerged during the course of SEWISC's organizational history. An invitation and description of the strategic planning process was sent to all SEWISC members and to other key stakeholders. Prior to the first of two strategic planning sessions, a survey was conducted to gather information on the general scope and direction of SEWISC's efforts over the next five years and to develop an initial list of organizational challenges and opportunities.

During two facilitated strategic planning sessions held at Havenwoods Environmental Awareness Center on 2/23/2011 and 3/14/2011, attendees (listed in Appendix I) worked to produce an initial draft of strategic priorities and goals. That list was distributed to the

Board of Directors for review and comment, resulting in the strategic priorities and goals included in this Plan and approved by the Board on September 21, 2011.

### **Abbreviations & Acronyms**

AIS = aquatic invasive species

CISMA = Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

CWMA = Cooperative Weed Management Area

ISAM = Invasive Species Awareness Month

GIS = Geographic Information System

MOU = memorandum of understanding

NNIS = non-native invasive species

NR-40 = Chapter 40 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Invasive Species Identification, Classification and Control Rule

ROW = right of way

RR = rapid response

WDNR = Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

WDOT = Wisconsin Department of Transportation

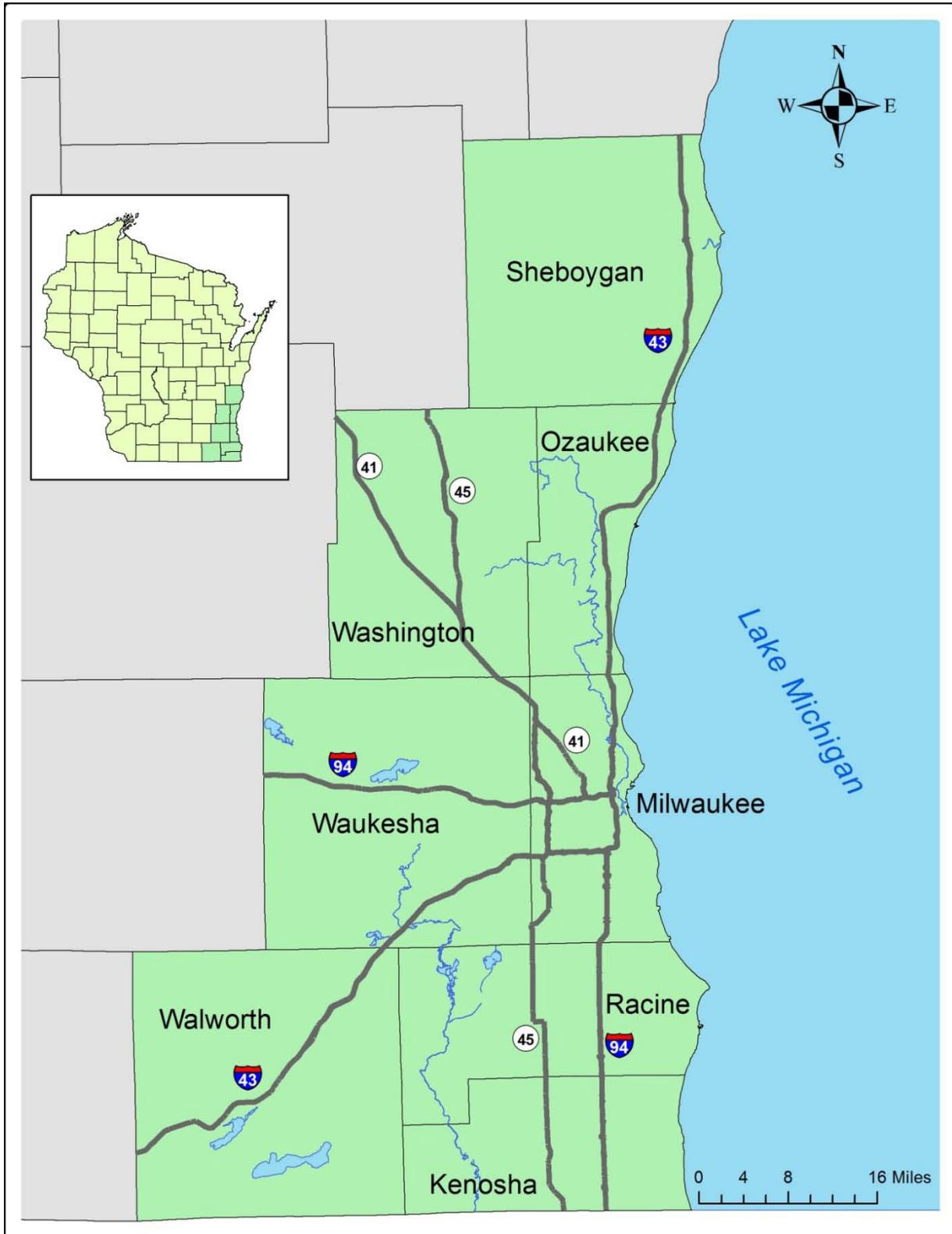
January 1, 2011 - December 31, 2015

Priority	Goal	Begin	End	
1. Organizational	1.1	Successfully complete all grant funded projects and meet all deadlines for reports and deliverables.	2011	2015
	1.2	Actively publicize SEWISC efforts and activities through press/photo releases and solicited interviews.	2011	2015
	1.3	Schedule and hold at least six SEWISC board meetings annually.	2011	2015
	1.4	Evaluate existing SEWISC committee structure and modify as needed.	2011	2015
	1.5	Establish and implement a decision matrix and communication plan to guide SEWISC's organizational response to NNIS reports.	2012	2015
	1.6	Recruit and/or maintain a geographically representative SEWISC board of directors with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 17 active members with the skills, desire and commitment to strengthen SEWISC. Desirable skills include (but are not limited to) fundraising, education, GIS, ecological management, accounting, law, business, and government	2011	2015
	1.7	Following the Strategic Plan, develop annual work plans using clearly defined criteria to evaluate and prioritize activities.	2011	2015
	1.8	Develop and present annual reports summarizing SEWISC's financial status and progress toward goals listed in the annual work and strategic plans.	2011	2015
	1.9	Complete and approve the 2016-2020 strategic plan.	2015	2015
	1.10	Employ at least one (more, based on available funds) full-time equivalent employees and/or contractors to coordinate and implement SEWISC programs.	2012	2015
	1.11	Evaluate and select one or more nationally recognized invasive database(s) to receive SEWISC NNIS data.	2012	2015
	1.12	Establish a Development Committee to guide the development of donations, grant funding, memberships and sponsorship programs.	2011	2012
	1.13	Establish a Control & Management Committee to guide the development of NNIS control and management programs throughout the SEWISC region.	2011	2012
	1.14	Establish an Education & Outreach Committee to guide the development of education and outreach programs.	2011	2012
	1.15	Establish an Early Detection & Mapping Committee to guide the development of prompt detection and accurate mapping and reporting programs.	2011	2012
	1.16	Develop and maintain a list of Foundations and Grant Programs with mutual SEWISC goals and objectives.	2011	2015
	1.17	Develop a core proposal to expedite grant-writing tasks.	2011	2011
	1.18	Recognize and integrate current and foreseeable impacts of global climate change on SEWISC's goals and priorities.	2011	2015
2. Membership & Development	2.1	Raise at least \$56,000 annually in grant awards to support the SEWISC mission, strategic goals and annual work plan.	2012	2015
	2.2	Select recipient(s) and present the Sweat Equity Award annually (Issue press release.)	2011	2015
	2.3	Raise at least \$10,000 in donations and sponsorships over the 5-year period from 2011 to 2015.	2011	2015
	2.4	Recruit and maintain members with the goal of generating at least \$5,000 annually in membership fees by 2015.	2011	2015
	2.5	Transition from MOU-based partnerships to non-profit, governmental and organizational annual memberships.	2011	2015

Priority	Goal	Begin	End	
3. Control & Management	3.1	Annually reassess and reprioritize SEWISC RR species, update lists and alerts. Develop and implement a ranking system that considers NNIS impacts on species and communities of greatest conservation need, quality of life in southeastern Wisconsin and feasibility of management.	2012	2015
	3.2	With our partners, assemble a clear and consistent set of training materials that includes guidelines, policies, procedures and approved methods for the control of NNIS populations in SE Wisconsin.	2012	2015
	3.3	Develop a rapid response system pilot composed of a trained and coordinated SWAT team with a dedicated team leader who is capable of controlling small, isolated populations of newly established NNIS.	2011	2015
	3.4	Rapidly respond when called upon to aid control of small, isolated populations of high priority NNIS on public and private lands.	2011	2015
	3.5	Track SEWISC-assisted management actions using GIS and report invasive species data from field observations to one or more nationally recognized invasive databases.	2011	2015
	3.6	Develop and maintain a list of recommended private land management firms for NNIS control efforts and make referrals for restoration activities that go beyond the scope of SEWISC's assistance.	2011	2015
	3.7	Manage the 2011 Havenwoods Prairie Establishment Project	2011	2011
4. Early Detection & Mapping	4.1	Regularly review national and regional NNIS alert system databases for new terrestrial and aquatic invasive species threats to the SEWISC region. When new species are identified, evaluate them for inclusion in SEWISC LOOKOUT Flyers and alerts.	2011	2015
	4.2	Develop and maintain a GIS database to record NNIS locations in the SEWISC Region. Explore the development of an interactive web-based version.	2011	2015
	4.3	Develop and maintain a NNIS alert network with CISMAs adjacent to SEWISC. Communicate with this network as new threats and emerging issues are identified.	2012	2015
	4.4	Encourage all partners, members, cooperators and contractors to report new NNIS sightings to SEWISC and to the WDNR.	2011	2015
	4.5	Report invasive species data from mapping projects to one or more nationally recognized invasive databases.	2012	2015
	4.6	Develop and implement a roadside survey project; mapping at least one species.	2011	2011
5. Education	5.1	Provide workshops targeting parks, right-of-way, nursery and landscape professionals. Explore teaming highway workers with volunteers to extend training into the field.	2012	2015
	5.2	Plan and host a Symposium annually to provide current information regarding invasive species ecology and management through expert presentations and to promote sharing of knowledge and resources between SEWISC members.	2011	2015
	5.3	Develop and offer educational programs targeting land managers, staff and volunteers who work to manage high priority areas. Provide training in identification and control of high priority invasives and recent advances in invasive species control methods.	2012	2015
	5.4	Develop and implement at least two educational volunteer events annually to build public engagement and raise invasive species awareness. Issue press releases before and after each event.	2011	2015

Priority	Goal	Begin	End	
6. Outreach	6.1	Develop a list of SEWISC table display venues and coordinate display schedule, transport, set-up, maintenance, updates and staffing.	2011	2015
	6.2	Develop and maintain a list of NNIS and distribute as <i>LOOKOUT</i> Flyers	2011	2015
	6.3	Develop and distribute a quarterly e-newsletter.	2011	2015
	6.4	Develop a list of strategic partners and offer presentations to these entities to introduce SEWISC, SEWISC's goals and policy tools available to complement NR-40.	2012	2015
	6.5	Co-promote regional invasive species activities during Wisconsin's Invasive Species Awareness Month (ISAM is held annually in June)	2012	2015
	6.6	Develop a list of UW-Extension offices and environmental education centers within the SEWISC region and provide them with materials about SEWISC's programs and goals.	2012	2015
	6.7	Develop and maintain a communication network for private industries and organizations, utilities and rights-of-way agencies (e.g., railroads, utilities, nurseries, botanical gardens, pet stores, landscapers, landscape architects, foresters, county animal control, WDOT, and other ROW agencies)	2013	2015
	6.8	Work cooperatively with government agencies and Lakes Organizations to promote and increase the effectiveness of AIS programs.	2011	2015
	6.9	Work cooperatively with state and federal agencies to slow the spread and reduce the impacts of invasive pests and pathogens.	2011	2015
	6.10	Develop a SEWISC Brochure and keep it updated.	2011	2015
7. Website	7.1	Explore the feasibility of a stand alone SEWISC website.	2011	2011
	7.2	Maintain and continue to improve SEWISC website	2011	2015
	7.3	Develop landowner outreach packets that can be downloaded and/or delivered electronically to landowners (include SEWISC information and other resources).	2012	2015
	7.4	Develop a natural landscaping recommendations and resources packet that can be used to support sustainable land management within the SEWISC region.	2013	2015

Figure 1. Location of the SEWISC Region in Wisconsin. The 8-county area encompasses 3,206 square miles with a 2010 population of 2,135,477 residents.



## Appendix I.

### Attendance at SEWISC's Strategic Planning Session I – 2/23/2011

Nancy Aten  
Belle Bergner  
Dan Collins  
Kim Forbeck  
Jill Hapner  
Marlin Johnson  
Judy Klippel  
Steve Klock  
Lee Krueger  
Stephen McCarthy  
Phyllis McKenzie  
Jim Reinartz  
Brian Russart  
Carl Schwartz  
Derek Strohl  
Melissa Warner  
Marc White (facilitator)

### Attendance at SEWISC's Strategic Planning Session II – 3/14/2011

Belle Bergner  
Jill Hapner  
Marlin Johnson  
Judy Klippel  
Brittany Pierpont  
Jim Reinartz  
Brian Russart  
Carl Schwartz  
Marc White (facilitator)