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Erik Rantala, Administrator, with Langlade County Forestry and Recreation and Sarah Repp, with Antigo Park, Recreation and Cemetery Department collaborated to compile the following educational information for our residents and visitors.

“This document was funded in part by an urban forestry grant from the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Forestry Program as authorized under s. 23.097, Wis. Stat.”

INVASIVE PLANTS



Getting out and enjoying the many miles of trails offered in both the City of Antigo and Langlade County is an amazing experience. Whether you are biking, hiking, trail running, or bird watching Langlade County is a great place to get out and enjoy nature. It's important to remember that the forests and natural areas that we enjoy and utilize for recreation are dynamic and constantly changing. Some of these changes are a direct result of invasive plants.

Invasive plants also have an adverse effect on forest management. These plants often lack natural predators or competitors once they get established in their non-native ecosystem. Invasive plants often out compete and reproduce more rapidly than native species.

Garlic Mustard, Wild Parsnip and Buckthorn are the primary invasive species of concern on the Langlade County Forest. Garlic mustard and buckthorn can reproduce rapidly in a forested setting, and inhibit natural regeneration of the forest. This creates the possibility of compromising the sustainability of forest management for future generations.

Efforts to control the spread of invasive species include: seasonal restrictions on timber sales where invasives are present, washing equipment prior to operation on County Lands, inventory and mapping of forest roads and trails, closure of forest roads/trails to motorized traffic in areas where invasive plants are located, and educational information at recreational trail sites. Avoiding trails or roads that are muddy, keeping vehicles clean, and staying on designated trails will help slow the spread of invasive species throughout the forest.

The Springbrook Trail has a number of identified invasive plants. We will be working at controlling the invasive plants in the upcoming years with funding from Inland Lakes. Below are some tips regarding good stewardship and trail use.

1. Help prevent the spread of invasive plant species. Walking through wooded areas will cause seeds, burs, and more to stick to your clothing and boots providing a free ride to plant species that want to take over a new open area. When traveling between tracts of land it's always a good idea to clean your boots and equipment before you leave for your next adventure.
2. Some sections of the trail run through private property. It's important to be respectful of the landowners that have provided the City of Antigo an easement to utilize their land for a community trail system.
3. Some plant species can cause an adverse reaction, rash or burn to your skin. Just because flowers look pretty doesn't mean you should create a bouquet. Know your plants before you pick. Wild Parsnip is an example of a plant you would want to avoid picking, because the sap will react with sunlight and can cause a rash, burn and/or blistering of skin that has come in contact with the sap. Wild Parsnip has been identified along the Springbrook Trail.
4. It's always a good idea to wear clothing that covers your arms and legs if you plan on hiking off the designated trail (if off-trail hiking is allowed).

More Information:

For additional information about invasive plants and species please visit the following DNR website: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/>. You can also visit the Timberland Invasives Partnership website at: <http://www.timberlandinvasives.org/about-tip.html> for information, resources, and assistance.