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#### Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our Programs.

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## LAND & NATURAL RESOURCES SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 Issue 1

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### Future Land Use Plan Community Open House

Written by Michelle Berdan, FCPC Community & Sustainability Project Coordinator

Community members gathered at the Museum on June 16<sup>th</sup>. to view and comment on the final draft of the Future Land Use Plan! The purpose of the Future Land Use Plan is to guide decisions on the development of Tribal lands, as well as coordinate future investment in transportation, infrastructure, trails, and recreation facilities.

*Your input and ideas have been very important to this Future Land Use Plan!*

*Migwetch to everyone who has contributed thus far.*

A second Community Open House will be held on Thursday, July 14, 2016 from 1-3pm at the Potawatomi Carter Casino in the Kishek Room.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the FCP Community & Sustainability Project Coordinator at (715) 478-4944.



Cover Page of the Future Land Use Plan



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# 2016 Fish Population Assessments

Water Resources Program staff- used fyke netting equipment to assess fish populations in Bug and Devils Lakes from April 17 - 28, 2016. Every day for those 11 days we checked our nets and recorded what we caught. By clipping a small piece of the caudal fin (tail) of each fish we caught, we could tell which ones were captured more than once. By comparing the total number of fish captured during the entire sampling period to the number of fish captured more than once, we can estimate the population of each individual fish species. All of the calculations only tell us about the fish large enough to get caught in the nets. Young fish are often able to swim through the mesh in the nets due to their small size. Therefore, the calculations do not include those fish.

Nearly 3,000 individual fish were captured in fyke nets during the entire 11 night sampling period, many of which were captured more than once. Well over 90% of the fish were caught in Devil's Lake. However, the Bug Lake fish community was more diverse, as eight species were observed during the survey when compared to just four species at Devil's Lake.

The incredibly successful catch rates from this year's survey at Devil's Lake allowed us to calculate population

estimates for bluegill, black crappie and yellow perch. Unfortunately, fyke nets are not very good at capturing largemouth bass, so once again we did not get enough bass to estimate their population. The bluegill population remains exceptional with an estimated population of 10,432 fish of catchable size or approximately 347.75 fish per acre. As expected, the black crappie and yellow perch populations were estimated to be much less abundant than bluegill at 257 crappie (8.58/acre) and 171 perch (5.73/acre).

We do expect to see the population of black crappie continue to increase. After taking a several-year break from stocking crappies to assess natural reproduction, which turned out to be not very much, the Natural Resources resumed bi-annual stocking of Devil's Lake in 2013. Several of the fish that were stocked in 2013 actually showed up for the first time in this year's survey. We expect to see increasing crappie numbers in the next several surveys as more of the stocked fish get big enough to be captured in the fyke nets, and especially when they begin participating in spawning activities.

Obviously it is very difficult to accurately calculate the actual population of each species. The number of fish  
*(Continued on page 3)*



Jason Spaude and Ben Koski hoist the largest northern pike and the only wall-eye that were collected in the Bug Lake fyke net survey.

# How to Mow Grass After it Rains

## Tribal Housing Department

Mowing grass works best when the grass is dry, as grass tends to bend over from the weight of the rain, making it difficult to get a straight cut. It also clumps inside your mower cavity and on your lawn, which can lead to dead grass underneath the clumps if not raked promptly. Although it is better to wait for a dry day to mow, a few techniques can help you mow after it rains.

1. Set your lawn mowers blade to its highest cutting setting. Turn off the mulching feature, which worsens wet grass clumping. Remove a bag attachment if your lawn mower has one and set the mower to blow grass out the side-discharge vent.
2. Mow around the perimeter of your lawn first, in a direction that blows the cut grass away from the middle of the lawn. Push the mower slowly so the blades have more time to cut through the wet grass.
3. Continue mowing around the outer edge of the "un-mowed" area, working your way inward. Cut half rows only; half the mower blade should be over a cut portion of the grass and half over the uncut portion so the blade has a limited amount of wet grass to push out the side of the mower.
4. Shut off the mower periodically and wait for the blades to stop. Put on gloves and turn over the mower. Pull away any grass that is clumping on the inside of the mower casing or sticking to the blades. Clean the side-discharge vent until it is free of wet grass.
5. Rake the grass clippings off the lawn, especially where clumps have formed. Alternatively, wait until the next dry day and run the lawn mower over the clippings to spread them evenly over the lawn. The decomposing clippings can add nutrients to the soil, but clumps of grass clippings can ruin the seamless green of your lawn.

## Things You Will Need

- Gloves
- Rake
- Blade-sharpening kit

## Tip

Only mow after rain with very sharp blades on your mower. Buy a blade-sharpening kit from a garden-supply store or take your mower to a mower repair center for regular blade sharpening. Too much grass building up inside the mower casing causes the motor to stop as a safety feature.

## Warning

Don't mow while it's raining, as the water can harm the mechanical components of your lawn mower.

Source: Home Guides





< Youth on the move with Community Health



Mish ko Swen: Watch Me Grow Toddler Program >



## Population Assessments continued...

*(Continued from page 2)*

that are recaptured allows us to calculate a population range that we can be 95% confident is accurate. The more fish we catch more than once, the more we can narrow down the estimated population range. In Devil's Lake, bluegill (9,423 – 11,683 fish) and perch (136 – 232 fish) had much narrower population ranges than crappie (137 – 2,084 fish).

At Bug Lake, we were able to estimate the population of pumpkinseed (488 fish or 61.1/acre), northern pike (66 fish or 8.25/acre) and yellow perch (115 fish or 14.42/acre). The calculated 95% confidence ranges for each of these species were as follows: pumpkinseed (271 – 2,446 fish), northern pike (39 – 215 fish) and perch (81 – 198 fish), which again are the ranges that we can say with 95% confidence that the actual population of catchable size fish falls between. Unfortunately, we were unable to calculate population estimates for largemouth bass, brook trout and white sucker, due to a lack of recaptures.

Those six species represent the species that have been captured in Bug Lake previously. However, the Depart-

ment also captured one walleye and two bluegill in this year's survey. In over 10 years of monitoring and hosting fishing contests at the FCPC lakes, neither of these species had previously been observed at Bug Lake. In addition, FCPC staff have observed smallmouth bass and black crappie in Bug Lake over the last calendar year and recently caught a green sunfish in Devil's Lake during an evening electrofishing survey. Each of these observations, were the first of each species at their respective lakes.

Since five new species have been observed in these lakes over the past 12 months and all of them were adult fish, there is concern that someone may be stocking new species in these lakes. Transporting fish between lakes is not only a way to introduce harmful invasive species or fish disease, but is also an illegal activity. The Water Resources Program has always, and continues to welcome input from Tribal members regarding the management of the fish in FCPC waters. If you would like to provide input regarding the management or the legal introduction of new fish species in any of the FCPC lakes, or if you would like more information about the FCPC's fisheries surveys, please contact Matt Steinbach at (715) 478-7361 or [Matt.Steinbach@fcpotawatomi-nsn.gov](mailto:Matt.Steinbach@fcpotawatomi-nsn.gov).



*In addition to fyke net surveys, the Water Program also conducts night electrofishing surveys to assess fish populations in lakes. Mason Wamego and Jason Spaude are holding up two of the largest bass that were captured in this spring's electrofishing survey at Devil's Lake.*

# Mason Wamego

I've been working for the Tribal Natural Resources department for four years. I started when my grandmother took me to the recreation center for my first job for Summer Youth. Usually, children pick up beautification (mowing lawns, picking up garbage). Then my grandmother introduced to the NR Assistant Director, Frank Shepard, who offered me a job at the department. Initially, I just wanted to do anything other than mow lawns, so I took the job.

Soon enough, I got sucked into the general aspect of the position: working outdoors, beautiful sights, and long nap times! (Just kidding, I wish) The real interesting stuff you find when you check out the various sub-divisions within the department. Air Quality management, Wildlife, Aquatics, Forestry, Botany, and even Sustainability. These sub-divisions offer interesting and, if it's your kind of party, fun lessons and activities.

For example, if you're interested in Aquatics and want to walk a mile in their shoes, have them take you out on their usual routine for the day. Aquatics specializes in, naturally, most things related to water. I have personally taken a few days to get to know them and work with them. Friendly, talkative, close, and motivated group that enjoys their work, they have a wide range of activities that they engage in: Shocking, analyzing water environments, identifying types of fish, lab work, maintaining and monitoring the quality of tribal lakes, river, and creeks. Through this, I've learned some pretty neat tricks, such as how to tell a fish's age from their scales, or how to tell the "health" of a river from the type of bugs that live in it. Or if you're more interested in the local wildlife and trekking around, wildlife divisions deals with surveying the landscapes, monitoring the local wildlife, tracking, wildlife identification, and trapping. All of this good stuff and more, you get the gist! There is just so much to explore and learn at the NR, and if you're passionate about it, it could very well become a future career!



## Environmental Education Program Activities



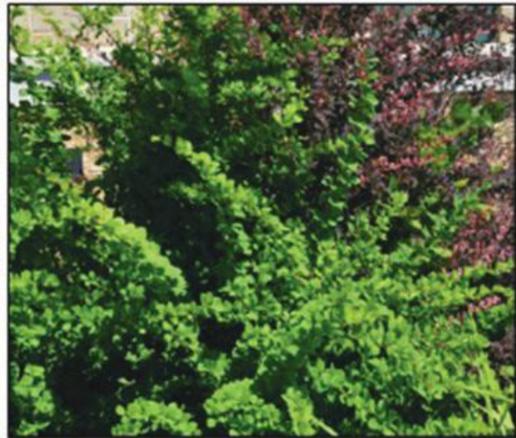
< Weekly science and nature activities continued at Gte-ga-gnes

Earth Day >



< Natural Resources Career Day for high school youth

## STOP THE SPREAD OF THESE PLANT INVADERS!



Japanese barberry  
(Common landscaping plant)



Swamp thistle



Goutweed/Snow-on-the-mountain



Common Buckthorn



Glossy Buckthorn



Garden valerian



Honeysuckle

## Non-Native/Invasive Plants

It's that time of year again where you may start to notice an abundance of unusual-looking plants popping up along the roadside, in your backyard, or in the woods. They never used to be in our area, yet over the last few years they appear to be showing up everywhere. These plants taking over our natural areas and roadsides are usually non-native, meaning they are not originally from Wisconsin. Some of these non-natives are also invasive which means they compete with our native plants for resources such as water and sunlight. Sometimes they take over an area entirely, pushing all of the native plants out.

What's so threatening about these non-native, invasive plants? These plants are disrupting our native plant communities and making it harder for our native plants to survive in the areas they once could due to the increase in competition. There are many ways in which these plants were introduced, and some were even used for erosion control and highway beautification programs. However, they continued to spread outside of their intended area. Once introduced, these plants spread quickly through their prolific seed dispersal and became aggressive by soaking up the nutrients and sunlight that are needed to sustain all plants.

A healthy plant community should have a wide variety of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants in order to be the most productive. As the number of invasive species in our area increases, our native plant diversity decreases. Our native pollinators and critters rely on native plants for nectar, shelter, and as in the case of the monarch butterfly, food for their young. When these invasive plants get established, they take over an area making it hard for our native plants to get the resources they need to survive, and eventually may kick them out of an area completely. Sensitive plants are affected the most since they often have specific habitat requirements in order to survive.

A lot of these plants got here because of human actions, so it will require human intervention to manage them. Here are some tips for minimizing the spread of invasive plants in your area:

Only landscape with plants native to your area or with plants that are not listed as invasive. If you would like some ideas for what to plant, the Natural Resources Department has a binder in their

front lobby showcasing native plants they used for landscaping their main garden.

If you notice a plant taking over an area or crowding out your other plants and you suspect it might be invasive, send a picture of it to the Botany/Wetlands Department at the Natural Resources Building and we'll help guide you on how to manage it.

When boating, clean your boat off thoroughly and empty all wells before bringing it to a new body of water to prevent movement of aquatic invasive plants.

Wash your vehicle tires and brush off the bottom of your boots/shoes before and after you visit an area to prevent transportation of any invasive seeds.

If you know of an invasive plant infestation on your property, take the appropriate measures to remove that plant before it goes to seed in the summer or early fall (ex: cutting, pulling, digging, clipping seed heads).

For more information about the invasive plants in Wisconsin, you can refer to the Wisconsin DNR's online manual, "A Field Guide to Terrestrial Invasive Plants in Wisconsin" or visit the Invasive Plants of WI page on the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay website.

