

MONROE COUNTY - IDENTIFY AND REDUCE INVASIVE SPECIES

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2022



PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

2022 was another great year for MC-IRIS. Educational events, a special workshop for landowners on prioritizing invasive control, and even bigger Native Plant Sale, and sooooo many Weed Wrangles! I'm still not sure how we fit all our activities into one year, but I know the answer really lies in all the dedicated volunteers who helped out this year. To get more involved, go to MC-IRIS.org to get on our listserve, or contact us at MCIRIS2022@gmail.com.

Please read on to learn the specifics of all our work this year, and thank you for your support!



ELLEN JACQUART

President

*MC-IRIS is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization in compliance
with Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code*

WEED WRANGLES

We held 190 Weed Wrangles (workdays to control invasive species) in 2022. You read that right - through the involvement of many partners we exceeded all past years' numbers. All those events added up to 3,464.5 volunteer hours contributed.

Partners included Hoosier National Forest, City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation, Monroe County Parks and Recreation, Monroe County Solid Waste Management District, Sassafras Audubon Society, DNR – Division of Reservoirs, The Nature Conservancy, Wylie House, and more.

Where land managers need help with invasive species, we are there to help.



INVASIVE PLANT SURVEYS

We provided 23 free invasive plant surveys to county landowners, complete with a management plan on how they can address the invasive plants that were found.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS AND GRANTS

Prospect Hill Neighborhood received the The Small & Simple Grant to Control Invasive Plant Species (SSCIPS) in 2022. This program funds efforts to remove invasive plants throughout your neighborhood. Grant monies can be used to purchase tools and supplies or to rent equipment to help remove invasive plants, as well as to purchase native plants to replace the invasive species that have been removed. This grant program is available through a partnership between MC-IRIS and Housing And Neighborhood Development (HAND).

The Woodlands HOA has made native habitat restoration a priority and hosted a very successful invasive removals event, followed by planting of native plants. MC-IRIS helped by providing guidance and introductions and publicizing their efforts in the local newspaper

TOOL KIT LOANS

After creating eight tool kits in 2020, we continued to loan these kits across the county. The kits, which include pruners, loppers, folding saw, soil knife and sheath, Pullerbear, and a bag of herbicide application supplies, were loaned out a total of 14 times in 2022. The tool kit borrowers used them to control invasives on their land, including Asian bush honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and more.



REDUCE ONE INVASIVE SPECIES CHALLENGE 2022



Twenty-nine people signed up for the Reduce One Invasive Species Challenge 2022, in which landowners agree to reduce the amount of the challenge species (in this year's case, Callery pear) on their land. In exchange for their work, we handed out twenty-nine free native trees including Allegheny serviceberry, pagoda dogwood, hop hornbeam, yellowwood, black gum, white oak, Schumard's oak, and American hornbeam to those who participated.



Reduce One
Invasive Species
Challenge | **2022
Callery
Pear**

RESEARCH

- We worked with Dr. Heather Reynolds of the IU Biology Dept. to study the impact of invasive shrub removal and the use of deer cages on native plantings. Approximately 250 hours were spent on establishing plots, controlling invasives, planting natives, putting up cages, and revisiting plots in fall 2021 and spring 2022.
- We worked with City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation to conduct a study on how to best control lesser celandine, a particularly difficult invasive plant species to control. Preliminary results expected in spring 2023.



WORKING WITH SCHOOLS & UNIVERSITIES

- Biodiverse-City Class (Dr. Heather Reynolds, Indiana University) students provided service hours and created two educational videos for MC-IRIS, one on Japanese stiltgrass and one creating invasive species social media content.
- Taught Take Control Workshop to Dr. Brian Forist's Intensive Freshman Seminar class August 4 and had them cut invasive shrubs in Dunn's Woods on August 11.
- Taught Take Control Workshop to Dr. Brian Forist's Integrated Resource Management class (Indiana University) October 21 and had them cut and paint Asian bush honeysuckle at Dunn's Woods October 28 (before and after pictures to the right, with all of the green in the first photo being Asian bush honeysuckle), and taught the Take Control Workshop to Dr. Brian Forist's Happy Hoosiers class (Indiana University) on August 3.
- Co-led invasive control workday at the IU Auditorium woodlot (Indiana University) with Dr. Jon Eldon on November 11
- Led Environment and People class (Les Wadzinski, Indiana University) at Dunn's Woods on February 24 and October 19 to teach them how to identify and pull purple wintercreeper.



EARLY DETECTION/RAPID RESPONSE EFFORTS

- For very uncommon invasive plants like mile-a-minute vine (pictured below), purple loosestrife, and kudzu, we monitor and control them on private land. Approximately 25 hours were spent on this in 2022.



MC-IRIS NATIVE PLANT SALE

We held our second native plant sale on September 10 with thousands of plants sold including approximately 110 different native plant species. We included many shrubs grown by the City of Bloomington and trees purchased from Woody Warehouse this year, a great addition to the sale.



EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

- How to Prioritize Invasive Management Event – in a new partnership between MC-IRIS, Sycamore Land Trust, and Eco Logic, we invited landowners to learn how to prioritize invasive species control on their land, including hands on experience with how to control invasive plant species at the Porter West Nature Preserve on Sept. 17.
- Earth Day - We partnered with City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation at RCA Community Park to host an educational Earth Day event. The city and volunteers planted bareroot trees and MC-IRIS led a Weed Wrangle to remove invasive shrubs from the park's forest.
- Library Hikes – We led two hikes from Monroe County Public Library in Bloomington to educate the public on native and invasive species in the area.

FIGHTIN' IRIS AWARDS

These annual awards go to individuals, groups, or businesses that are working to decrease the impact of invasive species in Monroe County. This year the awards went to:

- Ann Kamman – Action Award
- Elisa Pokral – Partner Award
- Margaret Dalle-Ave – Action Award

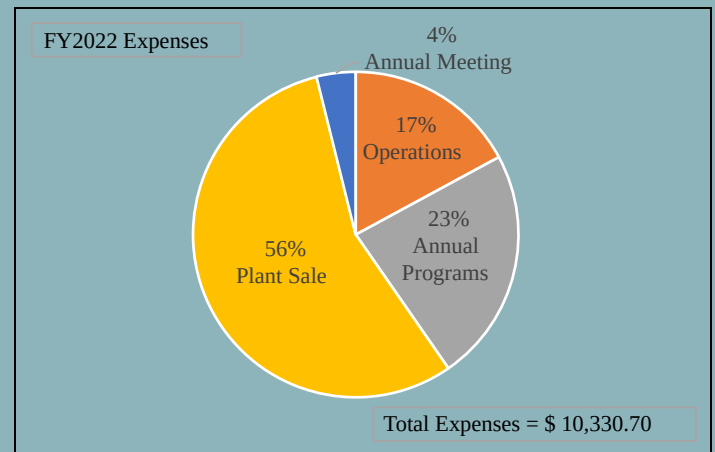
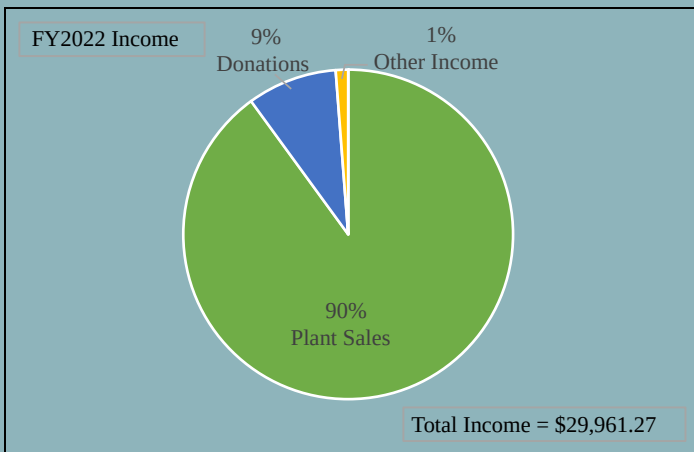


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

MC-IRIS was able to increase its financial reserves through generous donations and the very successful Native Plant Sale in September 2022 while keeping expenses low for the year.



MC-IRIS Treasurer's Report



This Financial Statement Activity was developed by the outgoing MC-IRIS Treasurer, Mary Welz, and is true to the best of her knowledge and belief.