

**Current Initiative:
Grant from CSREES Integrated
Research, Education and Extension
Competitive Grants Program,
National Integrated Water Quality
Program**

**“The Chippewa Flowage Invasive
Species Education Initiative”**

"The Chippewa Flowage Invasive Species Education Initiative"

- Map the existing areas of Eurasian water-milfoil and purple loosestrife infestation on the Chippewa Flowage.
- Explore and promote discussion and deliberation on public policy, educational, and management options to develop integrated and collaborative solutions for invasive species management. Assess and recommend management options for control and eradication of the invasives.
- Provide targeted education and leadership to organizations, stakeholders and volunteers to implement selected management strategies.

Step 1 Collaborations

The opportunity for water quality program (406) funding was originally brought to the attention of Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (LCOOCC) by State Community Natural Resources and Economic Development (CNRED) Program Leader-Robin Shepard.

UW Extension Community Resource Development Educator for Sawyer County/LCO Tribe- David Berard arranged several meetings (Fall 03-Jan. 04) at Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (LCOOCC) where the funding opportunity was discussed.

Initial Meeting Participants:

State Community Natural Resources and Economic Development (CNRED) Program Leader- Robin Shepard

UW Extension Community Resource Development Educator for Sawyer County/LCO Tribe- David Berard

N. District Director UW-Cooperative Extension -John Preissing

LCOOCC President- Schuyler Houser

LCOOCC Community Development/Extension Director-Monica White

This helped to continue a prior long-term relationship between UW Extension and the Lac Courte Oreille Tribe.

Step 2: Research and planning

Initial meeting participants contacted and invited a core group of stakeholders to form a grant advisory writing team. Regular meetings were conducted between Jan.-April 04. All participants had prior working relationships and knew each other.

This team consisted of:

- UW Extension Community Resource Development Educator for Sawyer County/LCO Tribe- David Berard
- LCOOCC Community Development/Extension Director-Monica White
- LCOOCC Community Development/Extension Staff-Jennifer Bunker
- LCOOCC Life Science and Water Resources Faculty-Deb Anderson
- LCOOCC GIS Lab Manager/Faculty- Tracey Mofle
- LCOOCC Office of Sponsored Program Director-Dan Gretz
- LCO Conservation Dept. Environmental Engineer- Dan Tyrolt
- LCO Conservation Dept. Environmental Specialist-Brett McConnell
- LCO Conservation Dept. Wetland Ecologist- Kristi Maki

Step 2: Research and planning

Reviewed current management plans developed by Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe and other regional agencies for the water resources of the reservation. These included:

- Water Resources of the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation Northwest Wisconsin
- Chippewa Flowage Joint Agency Management Plan
- Lac Courte Oreilles Intergrated Resource Management Plan
- Water Master Plan developed by the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Step 3: Identification of core project idea and additional collaborators

Grant advisory writing team identified a needed project from the researched management plans.

Members of the group who already had previous working relationships with many different agencies and tribal representatives contacted potential additional collaborators and got their feedback on the project idea and how they would like to participate.

For example: LCOOCC Community Development/Extension Director – Monica White contacted LCO tribal member, spiritual advisor and LCO Historic Preservation staff member (Jerry Smith) to see if the proposed project would impact cultural resources or their preservation on the reservation.

Primary collaborators identified

- Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Government,
- LCO Conservation Department,
- Sawyer County UW-Extension,
- UW-Cooperative Extension Specialists,
- Hayward Chamber of Commerce,
- Wisconsin DNR,
- U.S. Forest Service,
- Chippewa Flowage Property Owners Association,
- Chippewa Flowage Resort Owners Association,
- Sawyer County Lakes Forum,
- Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission,
- Sawyer County Land and Water Conservation Department,
- NRCS,
- Wisconsin Regional Water Quality Team,
- Upper Chippewa River Basin Team,
- Local Citizen Volunteers.

Operational collaborations were developed between UW-Extension, LCOO Community College Faculty and Extension Staff, LCO Conservation Department, LCO Tribal Historic Preservation Department, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, and Wisconsin Regional Water Quality Team.

Broader collaborations were developed through use of a steering committee for the project including all regional environmental agencies and associations. Most of these groups were contacted during the grant planning process and wrote letters of support for the grant.

The project applied Best Practices in Environmental Education methodology designed by UW-Extension Specialist Elaine Andrews under the US EPA/Cooperative Extension Partnership.

UW Extension Community Resource Development Educator for
Sawyer County/LCO Tribe- David Berard assisted in the process by:

- Polling tribal council members and existing environmental departments to assess the project potential.
- Convening meetings making sure the appropriate tribal interests who had not previously collaborated were on-board and involved with the project.
- Networking with the regional water quality team to engage support and advice on the project.
- Facilitating planning sessions to identify project opportunities and program objectives.
- Guiding the grant advisory writing group through the development of a rough draft of the grant.
- Providing assistance in communication and conflict management when obstacles were encountered.
- Researched the information on best practices in environmental education that were used to develop the program.
- Enlisting broader collaborators, agencies, and associations to support and engage in the program development.

OUTCOMES

- The LCOO Community College Extension Project was innovative as it was one of two tribal programs funded nationally under the water quality (406) program at that time (2004). Funding received for the project was \$300,000 for a 3 year period. LCOOCC is the first tribal individual 1994 land grant college funded under this program.
- The project served as a vehicle to implement priorities identified in the national award winning Chippewa Flowage Joint Agency Management Plan.
- A LCOOCC Water Quality Extension Educator Erik Olson was hired with funds from the grant by LCOOCC Extension Program. His job is building local environmental and water education capacity, facilitating the implementation of the grant project and enhancing LCOOCC College Extension's visibility. This project is LCOOCC Extension's first foray into environmental and water education since its inception in 1997.
- Student interns, and local volunteers have been incorporated into the program building long-term leaders in environmental sustainability.
- The project is off to an auspicious start, and ongoing program evaluations will contribute to provide evidence of broad based impacts.

After receipt of the grant in 2004, LCOOCC was visited by the CSREES National Water Quality Committee for Shared Leadership on September 1, 2004. Participants were given presentations and tours at LCOOCC.

The collaborations developed through this process are continuing and the level of interactions between these groups are growing.

The end.