



Wicomico County Invasive Species Initiative

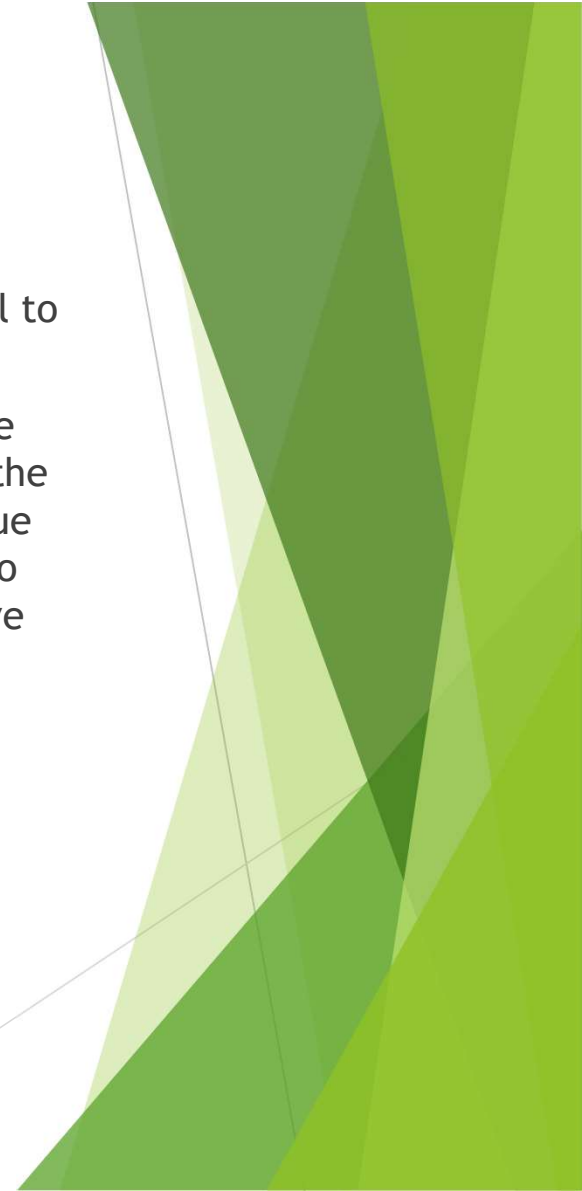
Tyler Walston, CBLP
Environmental Planner

Background

- ▶ Wicomico County has a Natural Resource Conservation Advisory Committee (NRCAC)
 - ▶ Ten members, various environmental backgrounds
 - ▶ Advise County Executive on environmental issues that affect the County.
 - ▶ In January 2017, a NRCAC member got a complaint about callery pear on a property adjacent to the County owned airport and wanted to know what the County was doing about invasive plant species.



- ▶ The group decided to research funding opportunities with the ultimate goal to hire a full time invasive species manager.
- ▶ There seemed to be funding available for multi jurisdictional efforts, so the group decided to ask the four Lower Shore Counties for \$25k each to fund the invasive manager position. The manager would then write grants to continue funding the program, which would include educating roads and park staff to prevent the spread of invasives, as well as identifying and removing invasive infestations.



How did we do?

- ▶ Mostly struck out—Wicomico County Executive Bob Culver pledged to include \$25k in his budget, but other Counties were not interested.
- ▶ What do you think were some reasons why Counties were not interested?
 - ▶ Budget constraints
 - ▶ Concerns about enforcement/politics
 - ▶ Messaging

Messaging

- ▶ Too focused on jargon (biodiversity, ecological health, etc.)
- ▶ Should have focused on the cost of not dealing with invasives up front
- ▶ <https://cligs.vt.edu/blog/applying-xmnr-lessons-in-the-field-.html>

Moving Forward

- ▶ October 2018 CBCA Planners meeting
 - ▶ Chesapeake Bay Trust Education and Restoration Grant
 - ▶ CBCA and FCA Fee in Lieu funds for invasive removal and restoration
- ▶ Hired a grant writer in April with a portion of the \$25k to apply for CBT grant
- ▶ Selected Pemberton Park with a wisteria infestation as our pilot project

Pemberton Historical Park

Wisteria Location

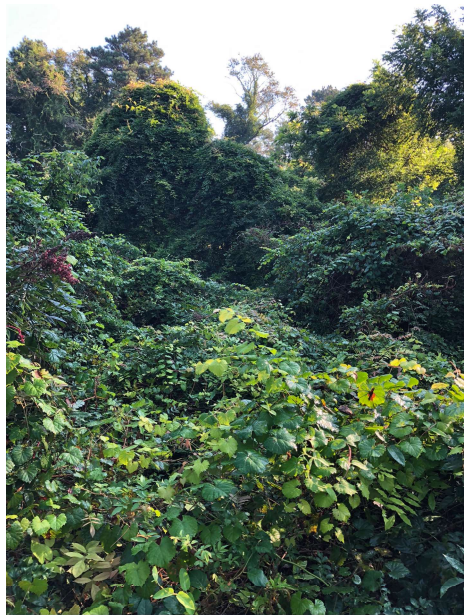


Mapping Services Provided by Wilcox County
Planning, Zoning & Community Development
May 28, 2019

Approximately 11.5 acres of forest has been
affected by Wisteria.

0 250 500 Feet

Wisteria
Trail



- ▶ With the remaining funds of the \$25k, we hired a contractor to clear pathways through the affected areas so a vehicle equipped with a sprayer could cover the infestation. We then hired a pesticide applicator to treat the area twice this summer/fall









Next Steps

- ▶ We should hear back from CBT in December
- ▶ Invasive funding was cut for the new fiscal year, however the County Executive's office has indicated there may be some available money to go to this project from other sources within the budget
- ▶ Spraying at Pemberton should continue for 4-5 growing seasons, followed by a tree planting in the area where wisteria has killed the trees.
- ▶ No FCA or CBCA FIL funds have been used on this project yet.

Questions

