
General Information for Volunteers:

Three Rivers Forestry Staff welcomes and invites your group's participation in Adopt-A-Woodlot.

It's easy to forget all the amazing things forests do for us. Forests provide food and habitat for wildlife, provide clean water, and remove air pollution. These ecological services are being compromised by invasive species. Three Rivers Natural Resources Management (NRM) staff and volunteers continue the challenging work of invasive species control. An invasive plant species is defined as a plant that is not native to the area and is capable of rapid spread into relatively undisturbed natural communities that once established, causes adverse ecological impacts within the invaded community. Their introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human, animal, or plant health.

Help suppress and remove invasive plant species such as buckthorn, garlic mustard, and exotic honeysuckle from our woodlots. Volunteers help increase the amount of area we can cover to keep these aggressive invaders at bay. Please consider taking action by adopting-a-woodlot to assist with combating destructive invasive species. We encourage your school, organization, club, church, business, or family to become involved today! Select a park/area of interest and a woodlot will be assigned for you to keep invasive free through removal efforts such as cutting and hand-pulling buckthorn. Your help is extremely important to this battle on invasive species!

Application Process:

Please take time to carefully read the following information. Share it with group members as appropriate, then sign and return the Adopt-a-Woodlot Application Form (online fill-in form). Contact the Invasive Species Coordinator with any questions you may have. You will be contacted with confirmation of your sponsorship.

Three Rivers Park District agrees to:

- Provide sponsor sign recognition for 2-year commitment in the adopted woodlot.
- Provide information necessary to perform the work including online presentation and initial in the field training.
- Properly treat or dispose of invasive species or material that may harbor invasive propagules, insects, or diseases. (In general, the movement of invasive species offsite is not recommended and may be illegal.)

The Sponsor Agrees to:

- **Provide ongoing removal of terrestrial invasive plants from adopted woodlot**, such as garlic mustard and common buckthorn. No trimming, planting, seeding, earth moving, etc. may be performed without specific authorization from the Invasive Species Coordinator or Forestry Manager. Herbicide will typically be applied by park staff as needed.
- **Adopt woodlot(s)**. Potential work locations can be suggested by the sponsor or they will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Larger groups may inquire about multiple woodlots.
- **Commit to at least two years of sponsorship**. Agreements are renewable; you will be contacted by Park District staff prior to the expiration of your commitment. (Short-term projects may be possible as well.)
- **Schedule at least 2 removal events/year**. Removal is possible from April to October. Sponsors are asked to commit to a minimum of 2 removal events/year; preferably one in the spring and one in the fall.



- **Provide adequate supervision for groups.** Groups work independently, under the supervision of group leaders. Sponsors must ensure that there is one adult supervisor present for every 10 juveniles (under 16). Initial invasive removal and introduction to the work site MUST be coordinated with park staff to provide adequate instructions.
- **Review Safety Considerations** and share information with group members.

Procedures:

- Notify Invasive Species Coordinator or Forestry Manager of removal day.
- Contact the Invasive Species Coordinator or Forestry Manager after finishing your work for site evaluation and any proper disposal of removed invasive plants.
- Record your group's contribution. Please record the date, number of people, hours contributed, and description of invasive removal by your group. Please send this information to the Volunteer Office using the Reporting Form provided.

Safety Considerations:

- Sponsors/sponsor groups are responsible for reviewing and being familiar with the safety information provided in the online training presentation.
- Sponsors/sponsor group members are encouraged to use caution when picking up debris since items may be sharp or heavy and could cause an injury if not handled properly, using gloves or safe lifting techniques.
- In the event any suspicious-looking materials, unmarked containers or activities are encountered, please avoid contact, note the location and call the Invasive Species Coordinator or Forestry Manager.
- Watch for fast moving bike and in-line skate traffic, especially near blind curves on any of the paved trails.
- At no time should equipment, debris, or volunteers block the trail, creating an unsafe situation for trail users.
- At no time should sponsors or volunteers use gas or electric powered equipment or herbicide of any type.
- Sponsors may not drive any motorized vehicles on trails or in any area other than designated park roads and parking lots, unless granted special prior permission.
- Be aware that [poison ivy](#), [ticks](#), mosquitoes, hornets, etc. may be found in some areas.
- Severe weather in the form of thunderstorms, lightning, tornadoes, high winds or other dangerous phenomena are a frequent occurrence in Minnesota. Please be aware of weather condition before heading into the field and each park's specific severe weather plan. ([Volunteer Handbook](#))
- Carry a cell phone for emergencies, if possible.

List of Suggested Equipment/Clothing:

- Initial training provided on-site will have some equipment provided such as work gloves, loppers, and hand saws
- Dress for the weather. Recommended items to bring/wear:
 - Work or garden gloves
 - Collecting containers (5-gallon buckets work well) for gathering invasive species and moving to one general location for later disposal or to leave on-site
 - Dress to get dirty and wear comfortable, sturdy closed-toe shoes (no sandals) with long pants and a long-sleeved shirt
 - Bug spray, sunscreen
 - Drinking water, snacks
 - Brightly colored cap, hat, or vest

Parent Permission for Minors:

Groups are responsible for obtaining parent permission of minors under age 18. Individual volunteers must have a Permission Form on file.

Reporting Vandalism, Trail Hazards, Dumping or Unusual Activities:

Please let us know if you observe any inappropriate or suspicious behavior, or find evidence of vandalism, hazards or dumping within park boundaries. Carry a cell phone for emergencies if possible.

- Dial 911 to request Park Police. Please note time, location, physical description of person(s) or vehicle(s) and what is occurring.

Links:

- Forms, training and information:
<http://www.threeriversparks.org/volunteer/group-opportunities.aspx>

Contacts:

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Three Rivers Park District Volunteer Office

12615 County Road 9, Plymouth, MN 55441

763-559-6706

<http://www.threeriversparks.org/volunteer.aspx>

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