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News

Shelby - Utica

Township joins cooperative to fight invasive species

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SHELBY TOWNSHIP — On Nov. 18, the Shelby Township Board of Trustees voted unanimously to send a letter of commitment to the

Lake St. Clair Cluster collaborative invasive species control proposal.

The cluster is made up of local governments, organizations and stakeholders in southeast Michigan to manage invasive species and re-

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ceive grant money from the state for control efforts.

The invasive species targeted by the proposal include phragmites, black and pale swallow-wort, Japanese and giant knotweed, European frogbit, flowering rush, and Chinese yam to promote improved recreation, tourism, public safety, property values, and fish and wildlife biodiversity.

"The grant is really only available for large cooperatives, as they work together," township engineer Shannon Filarecki said. "They're going to get the highest priority."

Stands of phragmites, a common and tall invasive reed, grow at Chief Gene Shepherd Park in two locations: the area being established as a wetlands and the detention pond, Filarecki said. The reed clogs waterways and chokes out other plants, she said, such as cattails.

Filarecki explained that the

township already is taking steps to eliminate the invasive species at Chief Gene Shepherd Park as part of a consent agreement with the Department of Environmental Quality, but being part of the collective would help with finding state funding for its existing efforts.

She added that the grant money would also help the township fight invasive species in other areas, such as in parks, along roadways and in drain networks.

Filarecki said the township would develop an active weed management program by mapping existing invasive species stands. The township also would work with the cluster to create goals and objectives to improve the management approach.

Supervisor Rick Stathakis said the township would pay 30 percent — or \$15,000 — in a local match for herbicide treatment toward the anticipated project cost of \$80,000.

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