

## **Invasive Species FAQs**

**1. What are invasive species?**

Invasive species are non-native plants that usually have no natural enemies in Michigan and can therefore multiply greatly, causing harm to the local environment, economy, roadway and public health.

**2. How do invasive species affect the roadway?**

Invasive species overrun the roadside ditches and shoulders, compromising road drainage and sometimes visibility for motorists. In addition, invasive species spread quickly and can kill native plants.

**3. What invasive species plants are in Michigan?**

There are many invasive species in Michigan including:

- Common buckthorn
- Giant knotweed
- Autumn olive
- Multiflora rose
- Japanese barberry
- Japanese knotweed
- Phragmites

**4. What are common invasive species affecting the road right-of-way?**

Phragmites and Japanese knotweed are common invasive species that affect the road right-of-way. Phragmites (frag-MITE-ees) are a perennial, wetland grass that can grow 15 feet tall. Invasive phragmites create tall, dense stands which crowd out native plants and animals, block roadside views and create fire hazards.

Japanese knotweed is an invasive plant that was introduced from Asia as a decorative plant. It became very popular in the U.S. during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Knotweed forms dense monocultures with a thick layer of accumulated leaf and fibrous stem litter. It suppresses native plant by releasing toxic chemicals. Knotweed contributes to flooding. It thrives in sunlight but can tolerate shade and can survive in a wide array of soil and moisture conditions.

**5. How are invasive species eradicated?**

Mowing or chemical treatments are used to destroy invasive plants and may take several applications before it is destroyed.

**Missaukee County Road Commission**

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