

2007 – 03 MINNESOTA ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT

Native grasses and wildflowers are rapidly disappearing in Minnesota due to the labor expense of restoring these plantings. Of major concern is the maintenance of native biodiversity in the State of Minnesota within certain public land corridors such as rural and state highway corridors.

The Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America should be concerned about the use of roadside ditches and adjacent roadside rights-of-way for poor-quality grass hay vs. wildlife habitat.

The State of Iowa has a program in place for roadside management; Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management (IRVM), which has been operating successfully for the past 18 years.

The State of Minnesota has a program of the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) in place for roadside management called Road Sides for Wildlife.

Instituting similar programs will have the benefits of highway beautification, production of wildlife habitat, elimination of non-native species through competition and reduction in mowing needs due to introduction of natural plantings.

The Izaak Walton League of America realizes that present agreements between Federal, State County Highway Departments and individuals may require modification,

Be it resolved that:

The Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America in convention at Bloomington, Minnesota, April 29, 2007 urges the appointment of an ad hoc committee to work with the Issues Committee to work toward adoption of a statewide cooperative roadside management program using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's Roadside for Wildlife and the Iowa Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management (IRVM) models.

Further, the committee confers with the Minnesota DNR and the DOT (Department of Transportation) to ascertain the needs of the Roadsides for Wildlife program.

The committee will also encourage these entities to cooperate with this program and to share costs.

Finally, the Minnesota Division, Izaak Walton League of America will offer support, encouragement and limited manpower.

Submitted by the Austin Chapter