

RICE CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT *Dialogue*

Help Stop the Bullying in Our Woods

Believe it not there are bullies even in the plant world. One of the biggest bullies is buckthorn. Buckthorn is an invasive, non-native shrub or small tree that was introduced to North America during the late 1800's. Buckthorn was planted as a

popular hedge but has since escaped into virtually every corner of the state. Each buckthorn fruit produces 2-4 seeds that remain viable for up to six years! Birds eat these fruits and deposit the seeds everywhere. Because buckthorn tolerates shade, full-sun, drought and bad soil, it thrives just about anywhere.



Buckthorn is detrimental to the health and future of our woodlands, prairies, wetlands and parks because it takes over large areas destroying wildlife habitat and food sources and out-competes other important native plants that we need for a stable, healthy ecosystem. Both Common and Glossy Buckthorn are restricted noxious weeds. Sale, transportation, or movement of these plants is prohibited statewide by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.



Now is a good time to identify and cut down buckthorn because it will generally be the only plant in the woods with green leaves. Often buckthorn keeps its green leaves into December. If you don't find the motivation to actually remove the buckthorn this fall, at least identify the plants by painting the stems so you can tackle removing them when it warms up in the spring.

If you would like more information about identifying and removing buckthorn, visit this website: <http://www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/depts/parks/environment/buckthorn>. To volunteer to help rid our parks of buckthorn or for more information, contact Dawn at RCWD 763-398-3078 or ddubats@ricecreek.org.