

Introduction & Contact information for providing input on *Amyntas* BMPs

The attached **Best Management Practices (BMPs)** were developed for use by Department staff, State agencies, the Green Industry and the general public to assist in:

- Education about and identification of *Amyntas spp.* and
- Preventing the spread and introduction of jumping worms (*Amyntas Spp.*) in Wisconsin.

The presence of jumping worms (*Amyntas spp.*) within the state is relatively new. These worms can have a negative impact on forest ecosystems and create problems in urban landscapes as they change the soil structure and make it difficult for plants and other species to establish and survive.

These BMPs were developed by a committee of green industry stakeholders (who represent nurseries, landscapers as well as composting and mulching facilities) and Department staff to provide general guidance to address jumping worms (*Amyntas spp.*) in the state. The Department is now soliciting comments from all external stakeholders. When the 21 day notice period is complete all comments will be considered, revisions to the BMPs will be made if needed, and a copy of the final BMPs will be made available to internal and external stakeholders and the public.

Jumping worms are currently listed as a “Prohibited” Species under Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 40 <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/classification.html> which makes it illegal to possess, sell, import, transport and introduce this species in the state. Pending approval of rule revisions currently in process, they will be reclassified as “Restricted.” Under the reclassification of “Restricted” selling, importing, transporting or introducing this species remains illegal and Best Management Practices offer guidance for complying with that law.

Comments related to these draft BMPs should be sent to Bernie Williams, via e-mail at bernadette.williams@wisconsin.gov or by phone (608) 266-0624.

Background on *Amynthas* in Wisconsin

In October of 2013 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources discovered a population of jumping worms (*Amynthas spp.*) in Dane county. That was the first known population to be identified and reported in the state. Since the adoption of Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 40 <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/classification.html> in September of 2009, all *Amynthas* species have been listed by the Department as “Prohibited” under the rule. That means possession, sale, introduction, transport and propagation of the species in Wisconsin is prohibited under the law.

The proposed, updated species listing in ch. NR 40, Wis. Admin. Code reclassifies *Amynthas spp.* as a “Restricted” species to better address its presence and potential spread in the state. Under the definition of ‘Restricted’ it is still illegal to sell, import, transport and introduce *Amynthas spp.* in Wisconsin.

The Department is still learning the full lifecycle and biology of this species. We do know they act as an annual species, reaching maturity in 60 days and dropping cocoons in the soil, which produces a second hatch. This second hatch can lead to infestation levels late in the growing season. We also know that the adult worms do not over winter, but the cocoons do, and those cocoons begin hatching after the spring thaw. Finally, we now know *Amynthas spp.* are more wide spread than we initially thought.

During the summer and fall of 2014 the Department was able to verify a number of populations in 5 counties. Given the press these discoveries received, the public became actively involved in reporting their presence, which allowed us to get a better idea of the spread of *Amynthas spp.* and the mechanisms by which they may be moving.

Development of *Amynthas* BMPs

The BMPs offer guidance to help people limit the introduction and further spread of *Amynthas spp.* and comply with ch.NR40, Wis. Admin. Code.

The Department realizes that those best suited to provide recommendations for best management practices are those whose businesses and livelihoods are most affected by the presence of this new invasive species. With assistance from multiple businesses, agencies and professionals we developed 5 general BMPs that address the basics: education, identification and prevention.

FOR INPUT: Best Management Practices to Reduce The Spread of *Amyntas spp.*

- Watch for Jumping worms (*Amyntas spp.*) and signs of their presence.
- Educate yourself, and others to recognize Jumping worms
- Only use, sell, plant, purchase or trade landscape and gardening materials and plants that appear to be free of Jumping worms (*Amyntas spp.*)
- Only sell, purchase or trade compost that was heated to appropriate temperatures and duration following protocols for reduction in pathogens (PFRPs - detailed under NR 502.12)
- Arrive clean, leave clean. Clean soil and debris from vehicles, equipment and personal gear before moving to and from a work or recreational area.

The goals of the BMPs:

- ✓ Prevention
- ✓ Management & Control
- ✓ Monitoring
- ✓ Education & Outreach
- ✓ Disposal & Containment