

Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes

20Sep2021

Committee Members Present:

Jonathan Basch

Olin Lathrop

Adam Burnett

Charlotte Weigel

Richard Hewitt

Ron Strohsahl

Agenda:

- 1) Review of minutes from last meeting
- 2) Action Items review
- 3) Phragmites in Carmichael Swamp --- plans for treatment
- 4) Update on Priest Hill
- 5) Review of recent treatments around town and plans for followup (Country Club, Farmers/Mechanics, Campbell Well site, Hayden Rd)
- 6) Updates from mapping/prioritization subcommittee (Parcel and Species prioritization, app training)
- 7) RDA status - Petapawag boat launch
- 8) Discussion on the Asian Jumping Worm
- 9) Participation on the Stewardship Committee
- 10) Open Discussion

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

The first order of business was Review of Minutes from the last meeting.

- There were some challenges accessing the minutes at the google docs link.
 - **Action item: Jonathan Basch to send the meeting minutes as a draft in word and view at the next meeting.**

The second order of business was Action Items Review:

1. Brian Bettencourt to draft a letter of support for state legislation for review by the invasive species committee
 - a. pending
2. Champney rd alley agenda topic - contact from public and discussion of treatment
 - a. pending
3. Jonathan Basch to send list of sites to Ron Strohsahl to add to the GIS data
 - a. complete
4. Ron Strohsahl to take the list of sites and evaluate against the layers. Assign a prioritization as test and bring to committee
 - a. Reviewed within the meeting
5. Update from subcommittee at next meeting
 - a. see below
6. Adam Burnett to send email to Nik to request permission for treatment of invasives on Farmers and mechanics site
 - a. complete
7. Ben Wolfe to check on another potential Ailanthus in town
 - a. pending
8. Olin Lathrop to file an RDA for treatment of Petapawag boat launch
 - a. completed

The third order of business was Phragmites in Carmichael Swamp --- plans for treatment

- Charlotte Weigel: Has been too wet to treat
- Adam Burnett: Still wet, might need mudders
- Olin Lathrop: Not too late to treat
- Olin Lathrop: Propose to treat this weekend, good to have at least one other person. Propose Sunday morning at 10 am
- Adam Burnett: Check the weather and adjust as needed
- **Action item: Olin Lathrop to send email to confirm date/time for treatment of Phragmites in Carmichael swamp**

The fourth order of business was Update on Priest Hill

- Olin Lathrop: Conservation Commission has filed a habitat grant from Mass Wildlife. If approved, a forester would cut and treat invasives. In winter cut all trees in the field and some trees in the woods. One more treatment of invasives in the spring
- Richard Hewitt: What is the final outcome desired?
- Olin Lathrop: Vision is a field with small shrubs. Will take years to achieve the target
- Richard Hewitt: If grant is not approved, CPC request may be needed
- Olin Lathrop: CPC request proceeding in parallel

- Richard Hewitt: Need to have a trail for the purpose of recreation [or other recreational purpose]
- Charlotte Weigel: Will there be an ongoing monitoring program?
- Olin Lathrop: Will be monitoring several times a year. Active management will be required

The fifth order of business was Review of recent treatments around town and plans for follow up (Country Club, Farmers/Mechanics, Campbell Well site, Hayden Rd

- Charlotte Weigel shared an excel spreadsheet of projects
- Olin Lathrop: At Shattuck homestead and Hayden rd Knotweed mostly under control, Spot treat as needed
- Charlotte Weigel: Treated knotweed at Groton Country club effectively except at the bottom of the slope. Will try to address rest of the slope in the spring
- Adam Burnett: Surveyed Farmers/Mechanics site again. Effectively treated the interior of the site. Hand pulled buckthorn and treated the bittersweet with glyphosate. Will need monitoring, should follow-up next year. Ailanthus treatment looks effective, will have to check for sprouts next year.
- Charlotte Weigel: Campbell well site. More extensive than was initially thought. Olin Lathrop treated everything between the trail and the river, but not along the river. Lots of Knotweed remaining untreated.
- Olin Lathrop: Used a foliar spray, but could not treat next to river because the glyphosate mix was not prepared for wetland use
- Charlotte Weigel: Remaining sites, Can we get back to the Campbell site, Carmichael and Priest?
- Olin Lathrop: Will prepare wetland herbicide mix for treatment for this Sunday (September 26th). Will treat Priest and then Eliades. Carmichael will have to push to next year

The sixth order of business was Updates from mapping/prioritization subcommittee (Parcel and Species prioritization, app training)

- Charlotte Weigel: Reviewed the parcel and prioritization map
- Ron Strohsal: Shared the map prepared with all of the open space and the prioritization scoring based on environmental criticality (See below)
- Charlotte Weigel: Can we add a column for visible or areas of recreation?
- Olin Lathrop: Very impressed with the outcome
- Ron Strohsal: Will likely have more invasive sites than we can treat, this will help us prioritize
- Richard Hewitt: Should we prioritize by species?
- Charlotte Weigel: Shared the list of prioritization of species for mapping and those species that are not yet present, but are threatening. Spreadsheet aggregates information from multiple sources; Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG) Pepperell committee list and Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (SuAsCo - CiSMA) list
- Charlotte Weigel: Propose to categorize as map, watch and neither (e.g. aquatic species)
- Olin Lathrop: Recommend subcommittee continue to work on the list. Consider adding insects e.g., Emerald Ash Borer in the longer term
- Ron Strohsal: can expand on this spreadsheet
- Richard Hewitt: Opportunity for outreach and education

- Olin Lathrop: plan to continue the outreach once CoVid subsides
- Charlotte Weigel: Should we continue within the subcommittee?
- Ron Strohsal: Should go back to subcommittee finish work and come back to the main committee
- Charlotte Weigel: Should go back to subcommittee and refine
- Jonathan Basch: Subcommittee should continue to develop the list as a resource, bring back to committee to decide on actions
- Olin Lathrop: let subcommittee continue working on the list

The seventh order of business was RDA status - Petapawag boat launch

- Olin Lathrop: Scheduled but not yet reviewed. On the docket for Sept 28th
- Charlotte Weigel: Could we treat in mid-October?
- Adam Burnett: It might be too late to treat in October

The eighth order of business was discussion on the Asian Jumping Worm

- Ron Strohsal: Recent invasive seen in state. Spread by use as bait. Rapidly decompose leaf litter, enable the growth of other invasives
- Adam Burnett: Also increase erosion because of decomposition of leaf litter. Huge problem in Connecticut
- Olin Lathrop: Is there any treatment available? Not to the awareness of the committee

The ninth order of business was Participation on the Stewardship Committee

- Adam Burnett: Would like to treat more like the trails committee to provide the committee with more latitude for actions
- Adam Burnett: Will present on behalf on the invasive species committee.
- Richard Hewitt: Should keep the trails committee informed of projects- source of lots of free labor

The tenth order of business was open discussion

- Jonathan Basch: Groton traverse coming up the weekend of October 16th and 17th, opportunity to see some of the open areas in town and potentially map invasives during the walk. sponsored by the GCT

Richard Hewitt Moved to adjourn.

Ron Strohsal Seconded.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

