**Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes**

**21Aug2023**

Committee Members Present:

Brian Bettencourt

Jonathan Basch

Olin Lathrop

Ron Strohsahl

Ben Wolfe (remote)

Adam Burnett

Ann Carpenter

Agenda:

1. Review of minutes and action items from July 17th meeting
2. Update on any progress on landscaping design standards
3. Confirm schedule for treatment of knotweed re-growth at Campbell Well/Surrenden and any actions needed for planned restoration work
4. Review recent work:

* Town Forest
* Campbell Well/Surrenden/Nod Rd - Committee work and UMass Lowell student work

1. Plan for upcoming work - all ongoing projects
2. Update from Brian on Hoary Alyssum
3. Review signage to use for upcoming work
4. Update on Phragmites genetic testing

The Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

The first order of business was review of minutes and action items from July meeting

* The minutes were reviewed
* Brian Bettencourt moved to accept.
  + Olin Lathrop seconded.
  + The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously

Action Items:

**New:**

* Charlotte Weigel to contact GELD and offer to treat Tree of Heaven- Done
  + Charlotte Weigel via email: Tammi Lemire (GELD Business Manager) is all for us treating the Tree of Heaven in front of GELD when appropriate. We just need to tell them when we plan to do it.
  + Olin Lathrop: Shared some pictures in the meeting
  + Ann Carpenter: Took some additional pictures - may be some other Tree of Heaven plants on the property
  + Ron Strohsahl: Think the other plants are Sumac
  + Adam Burnett: Bud termini and smell are distinctive for Tree of Heaven
  + No RDA needed as it is not within 100 feet of wetland
  + Ann Carpenter: shared a video of the site
  + **Action for Adam visit the site and confirm the ID of the additional plants**
  + **Action to schedule the treatment, we will need to contact Tammi when we plan to treat. Olin Lathrop and Adam Burnett to coordinate on treatment plan**
  + Ron Strohsahl: 5 shoots in the primary plant
* Ann Carpenter to email Alison Hamilton to plan for student project on Town of Groton planting guidelines for new development
  + Sent email on July 28th have not heard back yet
* Olin Lathrop to bring the topic of town planting guidelines to the Conservation Committee
  + Olin Lathrop: discussed, whenever there is a plan filed, we will have an opportunity to review - better option is to update the wetland protections bylaw but that is a lot of work
  + Olin Lathrop: Need someone who would take it on. Would be a big project
  + Jonathan Basch: Would be a good topic for the annual conservation summit
  + **Action for Olin Lathrop to put on the agenda for the next conservation summit**
* Adam to send email to confirm time for treatment of knotweed at Campbell well
  + Done
* Charlotte Weigel to update at the next meeting on treatment at the police station
  + Charlotte Weigel via email: At the police station, we can treat from Farmers Row towards the police station parking lot up to a certain point, but eventually we WILL hit the 100 ft barrier where the water is next to the police parking lot. Much of the troublesome vines are outside of the 100 ft barrier, but there are also invasives within that barrier. I vote we just tell the Garden Club if they want us to meet them out there sometime to stump treat when they cut vines, we will just be limited with how far back from Farmers Row we can go, unless the rest of the group wants to vote to file an RDA to work closer to the parking lot.
  + **Action item for Brian to possibly coordinate RDA with Olin Lathrop and definitely talk to president of Garden Club regarding this undertaking**

**Standing:**

* Brian to visit the site of last year’s treatment at Carmichael swamp
  + still too wet
* Ben Wolfe to go back to visit the site at Campbell well
  + no longer required -site visited and treated
* Charlotte to send an email to coordinate July treatments of knotweed - Done
* Adam to visit the Farmers and Mechanics site for treatment - foliar spray. Will email Nic Gualco and cc committee. Will obtain signs from Ron
  + Pending, will target this coming weekend- send an email to administrator
* All: Action to review wording for sign and respond back to Ann
  + Ongoing
* Ann to determine the cost for the printing/laminating of the signs
  + Ongoing
* Brian Bettencourt to send an update to the committee on the hoary alyssum via email
  + See update on the agenda below
* Charlotte to schedule a site visit to Town Forest with Mass Wildlife
  + Charlotte Weigel via email: Dan Bove from Mass Fish and Wildlife is available 13,14,15th of Sep to meet us at Town Forest and talk about treatment plan for glossy buckthorn and we can show him what we have been doing with stiltgrass and barberry. I am not free the 13th, but could meet the 14th or 15th. Anyone want to join one of those days if they are available? I will pick whichever day works for someone who wants to join us
  + Will check calendars - Brian Bettencourt could do 14th meeting
  + All - respond to Charlotte Weigel on availability
* All: Send Brian material for a Tree of Heaven brochure
  + Review old brochures for content. Adam Burnett to provide tip and tricks - section on ID, descriptors

* Adam Burnett to become a EDDmapS verifier
  + Completed all requirements - will follow-up

The second order of business was Update on any progress on landscaping design standards

* Ann Carpenter: Shared Somerville's plan. Very general questions to think about. Are they required to do a soil test? Recommended plants by shade and sun? Do we want to start with trees and then plan based on the trees? Resistance to invasive species. Are there any target species that we want to encourage?
* Brian Bettencourt: Some species are keystones to diversity e.g., Oaks, goldenrod. The good news is if you plant natives, it will support something else. Certain plants are critical to certain organisms
* Adam Burnett: recommendations could be developed based upon site type e.g., Shady and sunny/wet and dry/ soil rocky/sandy
* Brian Bettencourt to assist Ann

The third order of business was Confirm schedule for treatment of knotweed re-growth at Campbell Well/Surrenden and any actions needed for planned restoration work

* Olin Lathrop: Should perform one pass with Triclopyr by end of September- should not impact deer tongue grass
* **Action for Jonathan to plan visit to Campbell site by mid-September**
* Ben Wolfe: Maybe we could disturb the sites of planting a bit to stimulate grass growth

The fourth order of business was Review recent work

* Town Forest
  + Charlotte Weigel via email: A new volunteer who we reached through the Trail Committee email, Ted, worked with me [Charlotte] for 2 hours on Saturday pulling the stiltgrass around Town Forest parking lot. Olin showed up and worked for an hour as well. I think we did a very thorough job, although I am sure we will need to go back and pull whatever grows from the seedbank next year. The material we pulled is in a labeled bag out of the way next to the parking lot. I will dump next month.
* Campbell Well/Surrenden/Nod Rd - Committee work and UMass Lowell student work
  + Adam spot treated knotweed ~ 2.5 hours/ 4 gallons of glyphosate. Significant regrowth

The fifth order of business was Plan for upcoming work - all ongoing projects

* **Phragmites treatments after Labor Day**
* **Action for Olin Lathrop to look at Priest and survey Phragmites**
* **Brian Bettencourt to check Phragmites at Eliades**
* Olin Lathrop treated Hayden and Shattuck about a month ago - continuing to monitor
* Ann Carpenter: Is there anything we can do about Loosestrife?
* Brian Bettencourt: not really, it is naturalized, but introduced beetle [*Galerucella calmariensis*] keeps it in balance

The sixth order of business was Update from Brian on Hoary Alyssum

* Brian Bettencourt: Visited Anna Eliot’s property several months ago. Very innocuous small plant, does not stand out. She is working on clearing it from the field and is trying to get the Ag commission to take on the issue.

The seventh order of business was Review signage to use for upcoming work

* Ann Carpenter: Recommend 8.5 and 11 size - will send out again to the committee

The eighth order of business was Update on Phragmites genetic testing

* Ben Wolfe: pending but should be able to complete soon

Open discussion topics:

* Adam Burnett: Interesting research on spotted lantern fly to share. Spotted lantern fly is reliant on Ailanthus for part of their lifecycle
* Olin Lathrop: All the more important to control Ailanthus
* Adam Burnett: at the nymph stage they eat grape leaves

Adam Burnett moved to adjourn.

Ann Carpenter seconded.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.