

**Town of Groton  
Invasive Species Committee  
22 September 2025  
Meeting Minutes**



**Committee Members Present:**

Charlotte Weigel  
Jonathan Basch  
Olin Lathrop  
Adam Burnett  
Ron Strohsahl  
Ann Carpenter

**Committee Members Not Present:**

Ben Wolfe  
Brian Bettencourt

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**Agenda:**

1. Review minutes and action items from August meeting
  2. Wild and Scenic Committee Regional invasive Species Coordinator – Marisa Browning-Kamins
  3. Invasive plants at Florence Roche Elementary and Boutwell
  4. Debrief on recent treatments
  5. Schedule for upcoming treatments/ Middle School visit
  6. Vegetative management plan for RoWs
  7. Proposal for porcelain-berry brochure
  8. All other business
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The Meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

1. The first order of business was: Review minutes and action items from the August meeting
  - a. Minutes:
    - i. Minutes amended for accuracy
      1. Adam Burnett moved to approve the minutes as amended
      2. Charlotte Weigel seconded the motion
      3. The motion passed by roll call vote (5-0-1)
        - a. Abstains: Olin Lathrop
  - b. Action Items:
    - i. Assigned Previously:
      1. **Charlotte Weigel** to find latitude/longitude of Japanese barberry stand in Sawtell Conservation Area (Parcel 232-9)
        - a. completed
      2. and Torrey Woods (Parcel 231-94)
        - a. pending
      3. **Jonathan Basch** to create 20 laminated color copies of native and invasive plant information to be used during educational events
        - a. completed
      4. **Ann Carpenter and Jonathan Basch** to meet to finalize version and laminate copies
        - a. Completed

**ACTION ITEM: Ann Carpenter to contact middle school to coordinate scheduling invasive presentation**

5. **Jonathan Basch** to let GELD know we have completed additional work in 2025

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- a. completed

**ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to confirm payment from GELD**

6. **Jonathan Basch** to coordinate treatment of Surrenden Farms
    - a. pending
  7. **Adam Burnett** will attempt creating extended applicator for backpack sprayer to reach over knotweed
    - a. pending
  8. **Jonathan Basch** to contact Olivia Way homeowner and schedule treatment
    - a. completed
  9. **Olin Lathrop** to send the Olivia Way homeowner's contact information to Jonathan Basch
    - a. completed
  10. **Charlotte Weigel** to schedule Japanese stiltgrass removal event at Groton Town Forest
    - a. completed
  11. **Ron Strohsahl** to send MA DEP website with VMP and Regulations
    - a. **All members** review VMP examples for future review
  12. **Ben Wolfe** to write article for the Groton Herald to educate the public while porcelain-berry berries are visible
    - a. pending
  13. **Ron Strohsahl** to contact Marisa to ask if she would be willing to attend Sept. 22 meeting and discuss updates to the position
    - a. completed
2. The second order of business was: Discussion regarding the Wild and Scenic (W&S) Stewardship Committee Regional Invasive Species Coordinator position – Marisa Browning-Kamins
- a. Creating the Coordinator position was discussed W&S kickoff meeting May with the goal of increasing communication, pooling resources, and supporting local committees with permitting, treatment, etc., when dealing with invasive species
  - b. Brainstorming ideas for Coordinator role to implement:
    - i. Creation of online regional map
      1. Pin showing location of work and where projects are ongoing, and notes for possible collaboration
    - ii. Two in-person and two virtual meetings with various subjects to increase communication
    - iii. Case-study somewhere in the 11 communities to show collaboration efforts
    - iv. Weed-warriors program like SuAsCo Cisma (Sudbury, Assabet, Concord, Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area)
      1. pool of volunteers for local committees to request assistance from
    - v. Updates to W&S website with grant opportunities and available contractors for Committees
    - vi. W&S also considering funding a licensed applicator
      1. Olin Lathrop: Biggest issue is getting insurance. If W&S could get floating insurance policy to cover applicators for other towns in community, then all applicators could rotate
      2. Crossing state lines wouldn't work, so NH towns would need their own applicators

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- c. Official position title is “Land Stewardship Coordinator” and role is being conducted by Marisa Browning-Kamins
- d. W&S guidance would focus primarily around main rivers and tributaries, but not defined or limited to floodplain

**ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to forward email address of MBTA steward to Marisa Browning-Kamins**

- e. Permitting for proposed work would fall to the local community and once approved an applicator could be notified to complete foliar spraying

**ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to email Marisa the Japanese knotweed homeowner handout**

- 3. The third order of business was: Invasive plants at Florence Roche Elementary and Boutwell
  - a. Richard Hewitt (former member) observed Japanese knotweed near road entrance, and Brian Bettencourt also discussed invasives with someone at the school
  - b. Discussion tabled until next meeting
- 4. The fourth order of business was: Debrief on recent treatments
  - a. Olin Lathrop completed *Phragmites* treatments
    - i. Priest Hill - very promising results, was able to access formerly wetter areas and treat sprouts in wetland
    - ii. Rail Trail - way less than two years ago, treatments ongoing for couple more years
    - iii. Eliades - *Phragmites* has shifted to the north end of the ditch, but cattails filling in southern end in previously treated areas
    - iv. Did not treatment end of Hayden Road
    - v. Knotweed at Nipmuc meadows - minor stragglers to treat
      - 1. Black swallowwort also within field
  - b. Olivia Way
    - i. Homeowner assisted with removal of bittersweet but Committee members also noticed large *Ailanthus* trees in subject area
      - 1. Homeowner has been granted permission from Conservation Commission to do work behind his house
    - ii. Proposed treatment is to spray smaller trees to contain *Ailanthus* spread, and to observe whether the root systems are connected
    - iii. Coordinate timing with homeowner if he wants to remove the trees
      - 1. Committee should consider requiring liability forms
  - c. Stiltgrass at Town Forest parking lot
    - i. Population near yellow gate has been reduced, but it has spread in other areas around parking lot
    - ii. Largest area of stiltgrass is along north edge of parking area, beneath raspberry/blackberry
    - iii. Bags with pulled stiltgrass were left to dry
- 5. The fifth order of business was: Schedule for upcoming treatments/Middle School visit
  - a. Stiltgrass on Rail Trail
    - i. Parking lot at Sand hill towards Pepperell
    - ii. Some areas recently mowed by others
  - b. Highest priority is knotweed treatment at Surrenden Farms

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- i. Plan for September 27-28 while knotweed is in bloom

**ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to check pin for knotweed on Nashua River to determine whether it is within Groton and public land**

- c. Country Club knotweed treatment - complete areas at the top of the hill
- i. Aim for first week of October

- 6. The sixth order of business was: Vegetative Management Plan (VMP) for RoWs
  - a. Winter project to write and research
  - b. Work with DPW to enable them to complete tasks, not restrict them
    - i. DPW doesn't have the resources to create a VMP, nor the ability to monitor the Town for invasives, and does not have a prioritization list of invasive species, or areas to protect, and Invasive Species Committee can fulfil those duties

**ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to present example VMPs to Committee**

- 7. The seventh order of business was: Proposal for porcelain-berry brochure
  - a. Discussion tabled until next meeting
- 8. The eighth order of business was: All other business
  - a. Olin Lathrop made jam from ~13,000 autumn olive berries
  - b. We have additional signs to place at treatment locations
    - i. Ask the Town Forest Committee for placement at parking area
  - c. Jonathan Basch traveled to Halifax Nova Scotia, and observed 40-foot tall chestnut tree
    - i. Descendent trees were isolated enough to escape the initial blight
    - ii. 40-50 year old chestnuts have sprouted
- 9. Meeting Adjournment
  - a. Olin Lathrop moved to adjourn
  - b. Charlotte Weigel seconded
  - c. The motion to adjourn approved by unanimous roll call vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

**OLD ACTION ITEMS + NEW:**

- 1. **Charlotte Weigel** to find latitude/longitude of Japanese barberry stand in Torrey Woods (Parcel 231-94)
- 2. **Ann Carpenter** to contact middle school to coordinate scheduling invasive presentation
- 3. **Jonathan Basch** to confirm payment from GELD
- 4. **Jonathan Basch** to coordinate treatment of Surrenden Farms
- 5. **Adam Burnett** will attempt creating extended applicator for backpack sprayer to reach over knotweed
- 6. **Ben Wolfe** to write article for the Groton Herald to educate the public while porcelain-berry berries are visible
- 7. **Ron Strohsahl** to forward email address of MBTA steward to Marisa Browning-Kamin
- 8. **Olin Lathrop** to email Marisa the Japanese knotweed homeowner handout
- 9. **Ron Strohsahl** to check pin of Japanese knotweed on Nashua River to determine whether it is within Groton and on public land

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10. **Ron Strohsahl** to present example VMPs to Committee