Town of Groton
Invasive Species Committee
15 September 2026
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present:	Committee Members Not Present:
Jonathan Basch	Ann Carpenter
Olin Lathrop	Brian Bettencourt
Ron Strohsahl	
Adam Burnett	

Agenda:

1. Review minutes and action items from last meeting
2. Purple loosestrife management
3. Review of recent treatments
4. Upcoming events and treatments
5. Debrief from the Town Forest meeting
6. Update on Lanternfly trap and Ailanthus and other invasive species behind Olivia way
7. All other business

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 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. Olin Lathrop moved to approve the minutes as amended
            2. Adam Burnett seconded the motion
            3. The motion passed by unanimous vote

    b. Action Items:
        i. Assigned Previously:
            1. Jonathan Basch to reach out to Charlotte Weigel to coordinate Japanese stiltgrass removal at Town Forest - completed, spent about 1 hour pulling, removed one bag
            2. Jonathan Basch begin scheduling/coordinating Phragmites treatments - pending, will discuss this meeting
            3. Jonathan Basch to follow up with Nashua River Watershed Association regarding propagating loosestrife beetles by collecting plants or capturing beetles for assisting with breeding program - complete, Ryan from NRWA is here
            4. Ann Carpenter to contact Middle School teachers to schedule presentation date - complete, tentative date October 13, 2026
            5. Jonathan Basch to give Ann Carpenter and Brian Bettencourt invasive species brochures for display at the Prescott Center and at GrotonFest - Prescott Center has been restocked. Handoff to Brian is pending this weekend.

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to deliver brochures to NRWA for display inside their office

2. The second order of business was: Purple loosestrife management
    a. Ryan Hennrikus from Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA) is visiting to discuss loosestrife beetle breeding program

i. Evidence that purple loosestrife beetles are breeding in Broadmeadow
ii. NRWA purchased beetles from lab in Montana
    1. They tried breeding them at the office, but had limited success
    2. Scouted out locations of mature purple loosestrife source locations
        a. Dunstable, Pepperell, and Shirley are interested in assisting with providing mature loosestrife or attempting to raise beetles
iii. Beetle purchase and attempt to breed them is funded by grant from Wild and Scenic Committee
    1. May need to order additional beetles if the breeding program stalls
iv. Collect beetles in the spring and raise them to be released in the early summer
v. Groton Invasive Species Committee interested in assisting with the loosestrife beetle propagation
    1. Committee has experience in raising insects
    2. Have possible Boy Scout Troop volunteers to assist, if necessary
    3. Willing to house growing beetles at our houses
        a. Middle/High School may be a good location to attempt breeding, too
vi. Pepperell noticed that the purple loosestrife beetles lasted ~15 years before reducing impacts, but plant population is spreading at
    1. Birds are likely source of beetle loss
vii. Utilizing GIS/GPS to cue on purple loosestrife color to identify locations and their extent of proliferation

3. The third order of business was: Review of recent treatments
    a. No treatments completed after August meeting

4. The fourth order of business was: Upcoming Events and Treatments
    a. Olin Lathrop completing Japanese knotweed treatments:
        i. Farmers Row telephone poles, behind GELD building, Petapawag Nod Road, Nipmuc Meadow, end of Hayden Road, MBTA/Carol Wheeler Park, Groton Country Club
    b. Olin Lathrop completing *Phragmites* treatments:
        i. Eliades, Priest, Rail Trail

5. The fifth order of business was: Debrief from the Town Forest meeting
    a. Adam Burnett attended the meeting, Town Forest Committee says it has ~1 acre of diseased red pine creating a hazard near trails and to hikers
    b. The Town Forest Committee reviewed, voted, and approved cutting plan from forester
        i. Involves cutting and grinding 1 acre of red pine and trucking it out
    c. Town Forest Committee has its own funding from harvesting trees
    d. Does Invasive Species Committee want to assist with restoring the habitat?
        i. Invasive Species Committee is limited in time and efforts
        ii. If they have invasive problems in the future, they will need to hire commercial contractor to plan and treat it in the future. It is too large for this Committee to manage.
        iii. Adam Burnett: we can treat around the edge immediately after cutting to reduce immediate bittersweet growth, etc.

iv. Can recommend follow up plan, but is up to Town Forest and Conservation Restriction holders, who have approved the current plan

ACTION ITEM: Committee members should visit the area to review the cutting location and current vegetative cover type

6. The sixth order of business was: Update on Lanternfly trap and *Ailanthus* and other invasive species behind Olivia way
    a. Trap was not attached to the tree when it was retrieved
        i. Did have some bycatch (frog, beetles), Committee needs to take into consideration if deciding to place additional
        ii. Will needs more frequent monitoring if we deploy more to prevent them being knocked over or kill bycatch
        iii. Homeowner had a couple questions regarding the *Ailanthus*:
            1. Wanted to confirm that he can do mechanical invasive removal on Town Conservation land.
            2. The Groton Conservation Commission/Agent is authority and Olin will contact homeowner to ask appropriate Committee

ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to contact Charlotte Steeves regarding Olivia Way homeowner wishing to mechanically remove invasives on Conservation Commission lands.

            3. Wants to treat and remove *Ailanthus*
                a. Needs to be removed professionally or it would fall on fence
                b. Olin Lathrop: we need to kill it first. It won't fall immediately after death.
                    i. Adam Burnett: timing is correct to treat it now to bring herbicide to roots
7. Other business
    a. Ron Strohsahl and his company completed spraying of *Phragmites* and Japanese knotweed for the Town of Dunstable
    b. Committee received funding for Carol Wheeler Park for seed/plant propagation and restoration

8. Meeting Adjournment
    a. Olin Lathrop moved to adjourn
    b. Ron Strohsahl seconded
    c. The motion to adjourn approved by unanimous vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

OLD ACTION ITEMS + NEW:

1. Jonathan Basch to deliver brochures to NRWA for display inside their office
2. Committee members should visit the Town Forest to review the cutting location and current vegetative cover type
3. Olin Lathrop to contact Charlotte Steeves regarding Olivia Way homeowner wishing to mechanically remove invasives on Conservation Commission lands.