

BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE, Hanover Conservation Commission
MINUTES: September 18, 2012 at the Fire Station

Attendance: Susan Edwards, Helene Hickey, Barbara McIlroy (scribe), Elizabeth Tobiasson, Vicki Smith (temp chair, staff).

Minutes Motion by Suasn, second by Helene, minutes of June 19, 2012 approved as circulated. Vicki will post on town's website.

RESTORATION WORK

Stocken work at Rinker/Steele - Vicki has not yet heard from scout Davey Stocken about timing of workday [UPDATE: this work was scheduled for Oct 7 and 8]

Passow work at Hayes Farm Park: The group noted the excellent coverage in the Valley News on page 2, on July 18. The work happened adjacent to the King Sanctuary, and exposed some lovely stone walls that had been engulfed by barberry, burning bush, common buckthorn and multiflora rose. Fletcher has shared a report describing the three days of work done in July. In short, he had help from 39 volunteers, about 200 hours of work, and roughly 1/5 acre cleared of most invasive plants. A few trees were too difficult even for Jeep & chain or muscle, so cut stem seems like the right approach, this fall if possible. There are some very large seed bearing plants outside the work area.

There is a need to plan followup work (Fletcher can't help us next time). Some of these activities include:

- possibly chip/burn the brush piles that were stacked adjacent to the stone walls,
- make use of the before/after photos that would make for good poster at the site.
- Mark the shrubs / trees to be removed using cut stump treatment this winter.
- Plan for more push-back next spring.
- Plan on any needed replacement plants.

Vicki will confirm that a proper thankyou letter went out from the Conservation Commission.

Notes from Hanover Conservancy: Gail McPeck sent a report that in May, 2000 native trees and shrubs were installed in the Mink Brook floodplain; a NRCS grant will be stretched into 2013 for a final foliar herbicide application for knotweed and buckthorn. National Grid did cut stump treatment on buckthorn under powerlines on southwest boundary. *Vicki will talk to Adair to see if the Conservancy requested this treatment;* if so, then Hanover could do the same on its power corridor at Mink Brook. (and elsewhere). Garlic mustard was pulled in three distinct areas near the brook (two large and one tiny).

On Balch Hill, volunteers cut invasives early in the spring, in preparation for foliar spray of resprouts later in the summer for invasives along edge of summit, part of longstanding efforts (> 12 years), that are finally seeing some progress. Also, Dartmouth Ecology Class will study effects of deer browse on Balch Hill, and have defined (and done preliminary inventory) of 24 5x5 m plots. Half the plots will exclude deer, and students will compare effects over several years on the diversity, abundance and regeneration of the natural plant community.

OTHER REPORTS

Weed machine use at the Hanover Water Company lands- Peter Kulbacki has reported that he and John Dumas met with Gary Hawkes (Forest Savers, Woodstock VT) to set up some test plots this fall on Water Company lands for work with a new multipurpose tractor for invasives control, to see which conditions work best for buckthorn, especially that which has appeared in blow down areas. Currently, the blowdown areas have some native regeneration, but growth of these trees is suppressed by buckthorn. Peter will provide reports for us, as work progresses. For details about the Forest Saver machines: See YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMXXhCDRZtY&feature=youtu.be>

Right of way Workshop, Hanover Road Crew Training

Helene reported on the workshop held on , attended by two Hanover DPW people (Chris Berry and Bruce Sanborn who were registered for Hanover). Lebanon had seven attendees, including one from Conservation Commission. She found the workshop excellent, but wondered if the proper maintenance for equipment sounded too cumbersome. It was noted that recent culvert work done near the Ray School removed soil contaminated by knotweed and that this soil was then re-applied as fill at the end of the work. The group felt that there should be a formal town policy adopted for work done by town staff, so proper precautions are used for mowing and maintenance, so as to avoid further problems (down stream, so to speak). Further, the town needs a person who is properly certified in herbicide work to do invasives control if needed. This matter should probably be discussed with Julia Griffin.

Helene had obtained a USDA video, titled '*Dangerous Travelers*' that illustrates the issues, the reasons for proper care, and summary of good road ROW 'hygiene' best management practices, and she has donated copies to the DPW and the Conservation Commission. She would like to have other town officials view this video.

Her notes:

- There must be a focus in training town personnel on education and the ID of invasive plants.
- The cost of invasive plant control must be a part of the town's budget.
- Costs will be greater as plants grow in magnitude, so prevention is essential
- Public Works is encouraged to delegate a position for local Weed Control Specialist
- Cutting needs to take place before Aug 1
- Herbicide: Timing factors are important; License and permit require.
- Persistence is needed.

Helene asked about what happens in DOT right of way. She was told that the town must discuss the control effort with the appropriate NHDOT maintenance district (Hanover is District 2), to ensure they have no concerns. There is no formal process for permission; however you need a permit and licensed applicator if use of herbicide is proposed.

Education and Outreach

Efforts at Valley News were partially successful, as we arranged for a great story in July for the work at Hayes land. That story featured common buckthorn as the enemy. There is a new

person in charge of 'special features' who needs to be reached for advice. Work on draft stories has languished due to summer. *Barbara will investigate before next meeting.*

Posters: barberry posters at town hall have disappeared. *Barbara and Elizabeth will work later in October on poster for Tanzi Tract workday (focus on barberry)*

Website: our website needs further work and a new photo feature – possible focus on native alternatives to burning bush or Norway maple as feature. Have had technical difficulty in transferring large PDF files.

Schools: Gail McPeck reported that the Conservancy is in correspondence with Ray School teacher to start addressing invasives on school land. Barbara reported that Jeannie Kornfeld at HHS will probably have her AP Environmental Studies students begin work on invasive control at the high school, to build on the inventory done this spring by some AP students. *Barbara will approach her to set up a meeting this fall with Jeannie to discuss a few of the details for this, to determine how the broader community can help out. We observed that there is terrific PR angle here too.*

Herbicide work for the fall

Barbara reported a very large infestation of Garlic Mustard behind the Lyme Road Fire Station and adjoining the Hanover Golf Course. It is more than 6000 sf. Again, it was noted that the town needs to have a qualified person to apply herbicides. It could help with Poison Ivy control on public trails where users could be affected, such as Mink Brook Preserve.

If herbicide work is planned, assuming the Cons Comm has funds for this, then there could be followup work at Hayes and Rinker on plants too large to pull. This should be on a Cons Comm agenda. Maybe some sort of mechanical effort could be tried behind Fire House. *Vicki will help with this, as permit is required at Rinker.*

Lebanon Conservation Commission has approved the creation of an ad-hoc committee to plan for invasives work. One member of the Commission will serve on this committee. The group has invasive - mapping assistance from town planner Mark Goodwin.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 23, 4:00 pm at the Howe Rotary Room. We hope most members can be present.

Possible Agenda Items for October:

Followup work this fall at Rinker and Hayes

Education effort – newspaper, website.

School efforts - Ray School and HHS

Plan for 2013 efforts- especially those that need coordination like garlic mustard.

Garlic mustard: winter regional meeting, plan for better neighborhood coordination.

Roadside weed policy –

New plants that are spreading too fast (mugwort, chervil, wild parship, etc).

NEWS:

Stewardship Network Meeting: Sept 27 – The UNH extension folks who train volunteers organized a meeting to determine the need for a state-wide structure, similar to the Stewardship Network in Michigan, where an umbrella group helps to support regional subgroups, with coordinating, infrastructure, other expertise on all manner of conservation projects – water,

biodiversity, stewardship training – all sorts of measures to protect natural areas. If you've not seen the Stewardshipnetwork.org website, check it out. Folks from MI were present and the NH folks are seeking a grant to adapt the MI model to NH. Barbara attended this meeting, and has asked our Conservation Commission to write a letter of support for this project. The Upper Valley could benefit from coordinated regional effort.

Research **on efficacy of cut-stump treatment**, from the August VTinvasives newsletter:
see this:

<http://invasiveplantnews.com/2012/07/> and this

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1526-100X.2012.00866.x/abstract>

Basically, cut-stem treatment is the most effective way to treat shrub honeysuckle (only plant in experiment, for some reason), that late in the year is much better than fall or summer; even winter (warmish day > 30) works well, since sap is heading to roots at this time. Much better results are achieved than than '*cut early -- then spray the resprouts*' approach.