

Hanover Biodiversity Committee

Minutes: Thursday, January 23, 4:30 pm

Present: Helene Hickey, Jim Kennedy, Michael Lunter, Barbara McIlroy, Adair Mulligan, Vicki Smith

Minutes and 2014 Garlic Mustard Report #1: approval of November 13, 2013 as circulated.

January Garlic Mustard Strategy session for 2014:

Under 'Lessons' entry for the Lebanon Rail Trail: Michael offered a correction: *The infestation goes about can spread up to 100 feet....* Michael felt that most plant colonies were within 20' of the trail's edge.

Under 'Education / Outreach to Schools' Helene made two corrections:

Ray School Principal, Matt Laramie, prepared the ground work for building school-wide capacity for learning on the Biodiversity Committee's 2013 Garlic Mustard Initiative.

He arranged for the Garlic Mustard display in a public space, and met with the faculty and school-wide curriculum committee for discussion and input. AND

Lebanon High School teacher, Eysia Dutton, participated in the Garlic Mustard Initiative with her AP Environmental Science class, and facilitated student work on posters that were displayed in the libraries and City Hall. Debbie Groveman, a Lebanon Middle School science teacher and Susan Desrosiers, an elementary school teacher, also participated in the school outreach effort.

Announcements:

- The New England (NH for now) Stewardship Network, has a website up and now posting training sessions, conferences, etc. By the end of March, they should be able to post work parties. See the site here: <http://extension.unh.edu/Volunteer/Stewardship-Network-New-England>
- Michael reported that a U Mass grad student was interested in doing research on current areas infested with invasives in NH – we are not a good representative for the entire state, and it was recommended that he be told about the EDDmaps (though these are very incomplete – only seem to be down to county level).
- Jim Kennedy announced that the Xerces Society will be giving a short course on native pollinator conservation in Jaffrey NH on Tuesday, March 25 from 9am-4pm. For more information, <http://www.xerces.org/2014/01/10/pollinator-conservation-short-course-jaffrey-new-hampshire/>

PLANNING for 2014:

Garlic Mustard update

Several garlic mustard items were shared: the Rivercrest Experiment Summary, a final report on GM work for 2013 and notes from first planning session for 2014.

From 2013, here is summary of where we stand:

Total number of hot spots (KNOWN) in Hanover: 47

Total Bags removed: > 145 bags removed, some counts not submitted. Some had herbicide used, making count difficult.

Volunteers: > 99 (some were not counted, some counted twice)

NEW sites discovered this year: 14 [thanks to the displays around town!]

Number sites with all removed: 22

Number of sites with part removed (work on outliers): 11

Number of sites with NO removal: 10

Number of sites with less GM than in previous years: 8

Sizes of populations (some are scattered) 7 tiny, 4 small, 5 medium, 9 large, 15 huge

The Biodiversity Committee is now aware of several concerns for control of this one plant:

Volunteers: We can recruit volunteers for some jobs, but some locations are too dangerous (very steep, surrounded by Poison Ivy or whatever) or so large that volunteers will be turned off. We can't expect them to appear for long hours or many days of effort.

Plan of action: Somehow we need to have a plan for the larger infestations including those on land owned by other institutions than Dartmouth and Hanover. Most landowners who are aware of the problem will deal with it themselves. See how GM committee deals with this.

Disposal: The garlic mustard effort has a big problem with getting the large bags to the landfill. Can we possibly get help from DPW? *This question was not answered at the meeting.*

Mapping and GIS: Barbara reported some problems with hand-held GPS system -- don't work well in woods, for one thing. Jim noted that you can get an extra antenna for this problem. The state of NH is using the EDDmaps database for entering data. Michael, Helene and Barbara will investigate, to see how it works using a smart phone to get coordinates and enter photos and other data into the EDDmaps system. We wondered if this sort of training is something the new Stewardship Network could enable.

Institutions – A subcommittee is needed to discuss the threat of invasives on institutional land, and to especially address the urgency in the case of both Dartmouth and Hanover about the large festering garlic mustard colonies on their lands. Mowing practices are a large part of the problem. While we have had cooperation with mowing practices in Hanover ROW (more than 10 roads last year), that alone won't do it for the largest of the populations. Barbara will explore the possibility of a meeting with Sustainability person at Dartmouth, and a few others who are concerned about invasives. She will ask Gail McPeck to help with this.

Other restoration plans for 2014 Adair noted that the Conservancy will support any PR efforts to reach volunteers for restoration efforts on town lands. We discussed Hayes and Rinker Tract, but didn't come to conclusion. We tabled further discussion on specific parcels until the February meeting. Vicki noted that burning bush removal at Steel is a possible followup to the cutting done there last year.

Herbicide The Cons Comm has \$400 to use for hiring a person licensed in herbicide use, with the expectation the work will be done before the end of June. Not all procedures will work in the spring (such as cut stem work) but perhaps there are some things that can be done with aerial spray? It might work on certain garlic mustard populations (if done in early April), or on barberry resprouts at Hayes.

A note for the future: we should be thinking about when to recruit volunteers for this sort of work, to avoid the highest-risk part of tick season.

In-House Herbicide Capacity: It was observed that the town has recently hired a person to help William Desch with pest control for town landscaping work. This person's license would **not** cover the use of herbicide in roadsides and other places on town lands – a 'B' (for BRUSH) license is needed. We're told by David Rosseau, head of the NH Dept of Ag Pesticide Division, that it is a fairly simple matter to add another category once an individual has a license in one category, the cost for non-profit (like the town) is an extra \$5 in fee, and he noted that this category is probably covered by a town's comprehensive liability insurance. Vicki was concerned about encouraging individuals (who work for the town or volunteer for

the town) to obtain such a license, but others felt that if the work is done correctly, there should be little or no risk for the usual relatively benign herbicides typically used for invasives work. We felt that it is probably only a few days a year that we could roundup volunteers to help with this work (mainly cutting and hauling plant material). Jim Kennedy thought this wasn't a big deal, but it wasn't clear that he was volunteering for this task.

Barbara offered to draft a trial-balloon letter about this addressed to the Conservation Commission, and will circulate this to BioD members in advance of the next Biodiversity meeting. The topic will be on the February Biodiversity agenda. We noted that Dartmouth has at least two individuals with this license and Lebanon has at least three; one of them is a volunteer who works on invasives for the city's lands.

Educational Projects

Other Projects?: Besides the big focus this spring on garlic mustard, are there other specific issues that need attention? What about the schools? Tabled for lack of time.

Website – what beyond deer ticks and garlic mustard information? It is expected that the Lyme Disease site will be up and running soon, as it is getting cut into smaller blocks, easier to read, more illustrations added. There was no time to discuss other ideas for the website.

Newsletter A sample copy of the Hartford Conservation news letter was circulated. The letter often has a single focus, such as managing stormwater, native pollinators, insects, etc.

Karen Douville of the Hartford Cons Comm shared the facts: The letter came out once a year, with information generated by the Commission, the Energy Committee and the Tree Board. Printed by Valley News, it went as an insert to Hartford subscribers to the Valley News and in the Hartford Recreation flyer; extras were sent home with all school kids, were available in other locations in town. The letter piggy-backed with a similar newsletter for Hartford Parks and Recreation program, however that link has been broken. Karen indicated that the full newspaper page (two folds) cost for 6000 sheets was just \$500; newer options are estimated to cost much more. They are reviewing what to do next.

Next Meetings: February 20, 4:30
 March 20, 4:30?