

Amherst Invasive Species and Herbicides Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/25/2022

Attendees: Rob Clemens (ACC), Lee Gilman (ACC), Jared Hardner (ACC), Jeanne Johnson, Matthew Seiler, Eric Slosek (DPW)

-Meeting began with a review of current DPW Practices (see attached), led by Mr. Slosek. He emphasized that DPW only controls invasives in small areas that may occur along Rights of Way and at the DPW facility. Mr. Slosek indicated that notification of abutters has been verbal to date, but that engaging abutters is important and could be improved.

-A discussion in the working group ensued concerning the differences between “inform,” “consult,” and “receive consent” as it relates to abutters. This led to a discussion of the effectiveness of various modes of communication for engaging abutters about invasive species control interventions by the town. Mr. Clemens proposed that better communication materials should be developed in order to inform future discussions regarding the necessity of, and control options for, invasives management.

-The group recognized that citizens of Amherst may hold a range of opinions/perceptions regarding the risk of herbicide use. The group discussed developing a matrix approach to managing this diversity of viewpoints.

-Mr. Gilman suggested that the members of the group read the current published best management practices for invasives control and the American National Standards for Vegetation Management, known as ANSI A300 (Part 7)-2018 Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM).

-Mr. Clemens reported on a conversation with Doug Cygan, the Invasive Species Coordinator at the NH Department of Agriculture. In this conversation, Cygan indicated there is a paucity of substitutes for glyphosate in invasive vegetation control.

-Mr. Seiler indicated that if glyphosate use is indeed necessary, a plan should be developed to minimize it. Mr. Hardner requested that the ACC and DPW present to the public where and how much glyphosate has actually been used on an annual basis to better inform the discussion.

-Mr. Hardner recommended that the town avoid attempting to, or give the appearance of, making its own analysis or interpretation of the science behind human health risks associated with herbicides. As it would with other public health or safety issues, the town should rely on trusted external experts.

-The Working Group agreed to meet again in late November to begin development of a policy that would guide future invasives control projects on Town lands including best management practices and communication requirements.

Invasive Spraying Procedures / Policies Questions For Japanese Knotweed

1. **How do we identify areas that need treatment?**
Encroachment of site distance of roads, and upcoming construction season where invasives may be impacted.
2. **Do we notify abutters directly or make any public notice available? If yes, how did we make the notifications?**
In person visit to the property owner.
3. **When do we typically schedule treatments?**
Treatment is usually done in the fall when plant is returning carbohydrates to the root system therefor intake of herbicide is better.
4. **What work is completed prior to treatments?**
Best course of action is to cut Knotweed in June and treat regrowth in the fall.
5. **How does training play into our operation?**
Operators of roadside mowers are trained to identify and not to mow Knotweed. If Knotweed is mowed or disturbed by construction equipment then mower and equipment is cleaned before leaving site.
6. **Do we use any other method of invasive mitigation other than spraying?**
Cutting and leaving on site.
7. **What is our process for applying for the state permit?**
Prior to being included on the townwide Special Permit application made by Amherst Conservation (Lee Gilman), I had made application in the spring to be able to treat in the fall.
8. **What kinds/types of chemicals do we use?**
Glyphosate, with brand name Roundup Pro, or Rodeo. Brand name and label needs to be listed in the Special Permit Application.
9. **What safety measures/precautions do we implement and take into consideration when applying chemicals?**
Follow all safety precautions listed on the product label and any restrictions in the Special Permit issued by the State.
10. **Generally, what areas have we been responsible for spraying?**
Right-of-Way, D.P.W. facility.