

March 19, 2024

Barre City Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee

Invasive Species Advisory Group.

Background: The Cow Pasture property has many forms of invasive plant species growing on it. The Management Plan identifies thirteen non-native invasive plant species, their threat level, distribution on the property and adjacent properties and even provides some guidance on removal treatments and monitoring. Since the formation of the Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee there have been a number of volunteer efforts to contain the spread of and remove invasive plant species on the property. These include an annual Green Up Day event led by the Committee for community members, involvement with the Exploratory Technology program from Central Vermont Career Center, and engagement with other local volunteer groups. Recently, Committee interest in engaging volunteer groups has grown (as well as volunteer groups reaching out to the Committee) and the need for timely responses to these groups does not always mesh well with the Committee meeting schedule of every-other-month. Additionally, with more volunteer engagement comes the need for a stronger education effort to ensure the correct plant species are removed in an appropriate way. While it is recognized that there are many forms of invasive species, the priority is plant invasive species at this time.

Objectives:

1. Monitor invasive plant species throughout the Cow Pasture property to maintain knowledge of what species are present and identify problem-areas.
2. Prioritize removal of specific species and/or removal within specific areas based on monitoring, advice from the Management Plan and available resources.
3. Communicate with local groups (volunteer or otherwise) to facilitate the removal of invasive plant species from the property.
4. Be flexible in terms of advisory group goals and action items based on advisory group members, other Committee projects, etc. The amount of effort required for invasive plant species control on the property greatly exceeds the ability of a volunteer advisory group; flexibility will be key to maintain member's mental health and prevent burnout.

Initial Goals:

1. Create an invasive plant species guide for Committee and community reference - this will be an expansion of the information already provided in the Management Plan. It will include ways to identify species, location references of problem-areas on the property, and links to relevant online information and resources (like gallery entries on the Vermont Invasives website).
2. Host two community events each year focusing on education and removal of invasive plant species on the property.

The Advisory Group will meet on an as needed basis. The group will provide updates to the Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee at the Committee's scheduled meetings and consult with

the Committee regarding action items. While consensus making is important to the Cow Pasture Committee, it is recognized some decisions are time sensitive and do not lend themselves to consensus decision making. Therefore, permission is granted to the Advisory Work Group to make decisions that clearly align with the Committee's mission statement, the Cow Pasture Management Plan and Advisory Work Group's objectives. Any decisions that may exceed the focus of the Advisory Work Group or overlap with other advisory work groups or committee matters should be approved by the local leader.