

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), in collaboration with the Conway Open Space Committee (OSC), have identified areas on DCR Property in Conway Massachusetts where populations of non-native invasive species are compromising ecological integrity along the South River. Control of non-native invasive plant species in these areas will both enhance and restore the functionality of these habitats.

DCR and the Conway Open Space Committee have a partnership agreement to treat an area along South River that has a high-density patch of non-native invasive Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*). Lower densities of other non-native invasives are interspersed with the knotweed. The goals of non-native invasive species management in this area are to restore wildlife habitats, native plant communities and ecological functions in the Riverfront Area and associated wetland resource areas.

Area 1. This particular high-density patch of Japanese knotweed is located in South River State Forest along the banks of the South River above its confluence with the Deerfield River. This site was identified by DCR and the Conway OSC as a very high priority for management.

Area 2. This is also along the South River State Forest where the South River flows west to east before it meets the Deerfield River. Here gravel and sand bars, along with associated floodplains, have become overgrown with very high-density Japanese knotweed. Rare wildlife habitat and native plant regeneration have been compromised by this dense infestation (Photos 4). Although knotweed is the dominant invasive plant species at this site, oriental bittersweet, honeysuckle and multiflora rose also occur at this site in lower densities.

Area 3. The Conway State Forest: Due to limited resources, non-native invasives have not yet been mapped here. But it's been included in this NOI and Habitat Management Plan in the event that populations of invasives are identified in the future, and that resources become available to manage invasive populations on this property. DCR will assess and prioritize invasives on this site for management if and when it is determined that the invasives are becoming a threat to sensitive habitats or priority resources.

Invasive management will be conducted by pesticide applicators that hold Massachusetts pesticide applicators licenses, are experienced with invasive plant control and have excellent field botanical skills. The utmost care will be taken while conducting invasives management to protect native plants, wildlife, and resource areas. Hand pulling will be utilized where possible. A full description of application methods is included in Appendix A of the NOI. This is a 3-year program, commencing after all approvals in late spring/summer 2019.

The NOI is expected to be submitted on April 30, 2019 to the Conway Conservation Commission, PO Box 240, Conway, MA 01341. Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conway Town Office, 32 Main St. Conway, MA 01341. The public hearing will be at the Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Rd. It's date and time will be available from concomm@townofconway.com or the Open Space Committee jchayes1@comcast.net.