

## WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Westover Air Reserve Base (ARB) has prepared a Draft Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) as a revision to their long term vegetation management process. The VMP provides neighboring landowners, conservation commissions, other regulatory agencies, and the public with a description of the Base, its surrounding environment, and various vegetation management practices designed to comply with the regulations listed below. These recommendations have been based on site analyses of vegetation resources conducted on Westover ARB and literature reviews.

The VMP is a guide for the management of vegetation communities present on Westover ARB, while ensuring the successful accomplishment of the Base's mission. Westover ARB is required to maintain navigable airspace free from obstructions to enhance public safety and comply with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act regulations (310 CMR 10.00), Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7064, Integrated Natural Resources Management, Unified Facilities Criteria 3-260-01, Airfield and Heliport Planning and Design, Air Force Pamphlet 91-212, Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH) Management Techniques, and Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 77 (14 CFR 77), Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace AFI 31-101 Air Force Installation Security Program.

Obstructions, including tall vegetation, have been or are in the process of being removed from three of the four Clear Zones and other safety areas on Westover ARB. As a continuation of the removal process, this revised VMP has been developed to assist in compliance with the safety standards set for the Base while effectively managing the sensitive vegetation communities consisting of wetland and grassland habitats.

The transition of wooded areas to grassland communities and acceptable containment of noxious weeds can be programmed over a 5-year period. Thus, the objectives of this VMP are to 1) present and evaluate options to manage vegetation on the airfield and transitional surfaces for Westover ARB to comply with mission requirements and U.S. Air Force/Federal Aviation Administration standards and 2) reduce the BASH threat and protect migratory/state-listed species consistent with military operational readiness.

### Plan Available for Public Review:

Copies of the proposed VMP are available for review at the Reference Desk of the following public libraries:

Chicopee Public Library  
449 Front Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013-3106  
Tel: (413) 594-1800

Hubbard Memorial Library  
24 Center Street  
Ludlow, MA 01056  
Tel: (413) 583-3408

Granby Public Library  
Library Lane  
Granby, MA 01033  
Tel: (413) 467-3320

### Written Comments Requested

Please address all comments and inquiries to either [439Patriot.Editor@westover.af.mil](mailto:439Patriot.Editor@westover.af.mil) or

439<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office  
Westover Air Reserve Base  
100 Lloyd Street, Suite 103  
Chicopee, MA 01022

Westover ARB anticipates filing a Notice of Intent for the Draft VMP with the Chicopee Conservation Commission in mid-March or early April.