

**SUASCO Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area  
Fall Meeting – November, 8, 2011  
Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees**

Nancy Byrant, Matt Burne, M. John Dwyer, Joel Bottesini, Bettina Abe, Allan Fierce, Mary Andes, Whit Beals, Joan Ferguson, Gordon Shaw, Bryan Connolly, Freddie Gillespie, Jeff Collins, Anna Wilkins, Laura Mattei, Pam Sowizral, David Mckinnow, Eve Donahue, Jill Miller, Dick Miller, Ron Gemma, Dick Lawrence, Lisa Groves, Tom Largy, Brian Monahan, Tom Arnold, Dave Williams, Priscilla Ryder, Betsy Griffin, Ted Elliman, Rebecca Chizzo, Rick Findlay, Debbie Dineen, Delia Kaye, Thad Soule, Wendy Sisson, Libby Herland, Lynn Knight, Amber Carr

***Introduction***

Libby Herland, of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and SUASCO CISMA Chair, welcomed everyone and thanked them for their participation. She also encouraged those who might be interested in increasing their participation to attend any of the subcommittee meetings where there are opportunities to become more involved. There are now three subcommittees: Administrative; Control and ED/RR; and Outreach and Education. All members are encouraged to attend the Steering Committee meetings as well.

***New Members Recognition and other Announcements***

Amber Carr, of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and SUASCO CISMA Coordinator, welcomed and recognized member organizations that have joined since the Spring Meeting. She introduced representatives from the Stow Conservation Trust, Westborough Conservation Commission, Westborough Community Land Trust, and the Middlesex Conservation District.

***Profiles of Volunteer-Based Projects of CISMA Members***

Southborough Early Successional Field Restoration Project – Freddie Gillespie,  
Southborough Open Land Foundation (SOLF)

The Southborough Open Land Foundation embarked on a project to restore early successional habitat to a 6.4 acre section of a larger property co-owned by the Beals family and the SOLF. One of the goals of the project was to restore grassland bird habitat for woodcocks. The former field was overgrown with buckthorn, autumn olive, and bittersweet. Funding was obtained through a Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) grant to clear cut the trees and shrubs and treat the buckthorn and some of the other invasives with herbicide. Volunteers assisting with the project included high school National Honor Society students and the local Boy Scout troop. In the following growing season, a woodcock nest was spotted and quaking aspen seedlings were beginning to regenerate.

### Buckthorn Control in the Old Calf Pasture in Concord – Delia Kaye, Concord Natural Resources Commission

The Old Calf Pasture is a 20-acre meadow near the confluence of the Sudbury and Assabet Rivers. The major goal of the project was to improve habitat for a large population of Britton's violet (*Viola brittoniana*), which is a threatened species in the State of Massachusetts. The meadow was overgrown with dense infestations of buckthorn where annual mowing had created root masses that were too thick to hand pull. There was also a concern that hand pulling could disturb the root systems of the violets. The buckthorn in the field was manually treated by swiping the stems with an herbicide-soaked rag. With this method, there was no transfer of the herbicide to nearby violets. The buckthorn was treated in the Fall of 2009 and the Spring of 2010. By the Spring of 2011, the buckthorn infestation was greatly reduced. There are plans to continue monitoring and treating over the next several years.

Mile-A-Minute Control in Westford – Ron Gemma, Westford Conservation Trust  
Westford Eagle Scout, Aziz Rangwala, attended one of the ED/RR training sessions given by the New England Wild Flower Society under a CISMA program funded by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant during the summer of 2011. After the training, mile-a-minute was found in Westford at two 5-acre sites—a former plant nursery where yard clippings were recycled/composted; and on private property. Mr. Rangwala developed a control plan to address these infestations by training other scouts to be control team leaders. He taught them how to identify the plant, how to manually remove it, and how it should be properly disposed. He then scheduled bi-weekly events in which each newly trained team leader recruited and trained their own group of volunteers. This robust group of volunteers pulled all the visible plants at both sites. In addition, there was publicity about the project in the local media and at an information table at the local Garden Club annual plant sale.

### Sudbury Weed Education and Eradication Team – Rebecca Chizzo

SWEET has been mobilizing a dozen volunteers including 2 new members over the past 3 years by actively educating Sudbury residents and organizing frequent volunteer workdays. The group has focused on town properties and has collected 484 bags of plant and root material. Ms. Chizzo has used garden club events, school science fairs, high school displays, and the Sudbury Conservation Commission web site as venues to raise awareness of the problem. Volunteers have been of all ages, but in particular, middle school and high school students have been very active. For example, SWEET held a student work day at Feeley Park which targeted glossy buckthorn for management. SWEET has been making a significant impact controlling invasives on town land in Sudbury—at 99 sites, they have collected 222 bags of garlic mustard. In 2010, the SUASCO Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council had provided grant money to purchase equipment and supplies, which has provided great support to the group.

### Early Detection Surveys – Ted Elliman, New England Wild Flower Society

For a second season under a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, NEWFS conducted 4 training sessions around the watershed to teach volunteers to search

for and identify 11 early detection/rapid response species. This past season, one of the training sessions was at Concord-Carlisle High School. In total, this project has involved 139 volunteers who have put in over 1,600 hours surveying state parks, town and land trust conservation properties. A total of 25 towns accounting for 100 sites were covered. Several early detection species were discovered, including mile-a-minute, rusty willow, Japanese stiltgrass, and Brazillian waterweed, and several control projects were pursued.

#### Mass Audubon Invasive Species Mapping Project – Jeff Collins

Mapping invasive species infestations is an important tool, not only for setting priorities for control efforts, but also for tracking progress over time. Funding from the Sudbury Foundation and the Intel Corporation has made it possible for Mass Audubon to purchase mobile mapping units and develop a system for identifying, quantifying, and mapping alien species infestations. This past season, middle school and high school students were trained in the use of the Magellan mobile mappers and how to identify species of interest. The students surveyed the Drumlin Farm Sanctuary in Lincoln and mapped the invasive plant populations they found. Mr. Collins was able to add a photo-assist feature to the mapping units to help the users of the mapping units make a positive identification in the field.

#### ***Subcommittee Reports on 2011 Major Activities and Plans for 2012***

##### Administrative Subcommittee – Lynn Knight, Subcommittee Chair

This subcommittee planned and conducted the Steering Committee and Full Membership meetings. It also prepared and submitted a grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) as well as submitted a final report for the NFWF grant received in 2010. In the coming year, the Subcommittee will prepare an annual report of the 2011 CISMA activities; seek new grant opportunities; and continue to plan and conduct CISMA meetings as well as track progress and provide comment on the Nyanza natural resource damage assessment settlement.

##### Education and Outreach Subcommittee – John Dwyer, Subcommittee Chair

Over the past year, this subcommittee developed and launched the SUASCO CISMA Web site. ([www.cisma-suasco.org](http://www.cisma-suasco.org)) A brief presentation highlighting the major features of the site was given at today's meeting. In the upcoming year, the subcommittee plans to continue work on the Web site, adding content and enhancing certain features.

##### Early Detection and Control Subcommittee – Anna Wilkins, Subcommittee Chair

In 2011, this subcommittee conducted 2 roundtable discussions that focused on relevant topics including best practices with using herbicides for invasive control. They also hosted two aquatic plant identification trainings with the state of Massachusetts. In addition, they helped promote participation in a training session on preventing the spread of invasive species for town highway/public works personnel. The subcommittee prepared species identification fact sheets and video clips that are or will be on the SUASCO CISMA Web site. Subcommittee members ordered and distributed "Stop Aquatic Hitchhiker" signs, which are available to all CISMA members to post at boat/canoe launches. Finally, the subcommittee created sign templates for posting in

control area. This is a very useful public outreach tool for members to use when conducting their own control projects.

### ***Steering Committee Elections***

The Town of Concord, Sudbury Valley Trustees, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Carlisle Conservation Commission terms are ending in Dec 2011. Sudbury Valley Trustees, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Carlisle Conservation Commission, and the Middlesex Conservation District were elected to serve a 3 year term on the steering committee starting January 2012.

The next steering committee will January 10<sup>th</sup> at 73 Weir hill Rd Sudbury MA.

The minutes were prepared by Lynn Knight and edited by Amber Carr.