

SuAsCo Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area Selected 2010 Season Activities

Early Detection/Rapid Response Program

With a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the SUASCO CISMA developed a watershed-wide program for early detection and rapid response addressing 11 priority species that are known or suspected threats to our area. The New England Wild Flower Society (NEWFS), a CISMA member, recruited volunteers from towns throughout the watershed to participate in this program. NEWFS experts, along with CISMA Coordinator Amber Carr, developed and delivered a training program to teach volunteers how to identify and map the specific invasive species of concern. In four training sessions, held in Southborough, Bedford, Sudbury, and Bolton, NEWFS staff instructed over 100 volunteers in invasive identification and documentation methods, as well as the use of GPS tools for mapping infestations that were found. To supplement the training, NEWFS scientists conducted five field trips for volunteers.



*Japanese stiltgrass control in Framingham.
Photo by Lara Ariori*

After completing the training, volunteers surveyed properties in their own towns for the 11 early detection invasive plant species. The surveys covered 23 of the 35 towns in the watershed. In total, 92 different sites were surveyed with volunteers logging 1,300 hours of time in the field. Infestations of Japanese stiltgrass, Brazilian waterweed, and mile-a-minute were found. NEWFS was able to coordinate volunteers to participate in four management days to control Japanese stiltgrass and mile-a-minute infestations that had been identified in Framingham and Westford.

Early detection species:

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|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Flowering Rush (<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>) | 6) Japanese Stiltgrass (<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>) |
| 2) Brazilian Waterweed (<i>Egeria densa</i>) | 7) Parrot Feather (<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>) |
| 3) Reed Mannagrass (<i>Glyceria maxima</i>) | 8) Mile-a-Minute (<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i>) |
| 4) Giant Hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>) | 9) Kudzu (<i>Pueraria montana ssp. lobata</i>) |
| 5) Hydrilla (<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>) | 10) Great yellowcress (<i>Rorippa amphibia</i>) |
| | 11) Tansy ragwort (<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>) |

Supporting Grass Roots Local Organization in Sudbury

With funding from the SUASCO Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council, the CISMA was able to support a citizen's group in Sudbury—Sudbury Weed Education and Eradication Team (SWEET). This group of dedicated and energetic residents, both adults and youths, have conducted numerous control projects at the high school and other town properties. The funding was used to purchase equipment and supplies.

Raising Beetles for Purple Loosestrife Control

The Sudbury Valley Trustees took the lead in coordinating the raising and release of beetles as a control measure for purple loosestrife, a well-known, widespread invasive in the watershed. Funding for this project was provided by a grant from the SUASCO Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council.



Volunteers conducting field monitoring, that will occur twice per year to assess progress. Photo by Laura Mattei

Forty volunteers, including 27 youths, raised beetles that were released to five sites. Volunteers obtained and carefully tended 76 loosestrife plants. Beetle ranchers included high school students at Marlborough and Fay High Schools, as well as SVT and other volunteers. Starting with 1,300 beetles, they successfully raised an estimated 36,500 beetles on the plants they collected. The beetles were released in French's Meadow, in Concord; Codman North in Lincoln; Hop Brook Marsh in Sudbury; US Fish and Wildlife Service's Great Meadows in Sudbury and Wayland; and Jericho Hill in Marlborough.

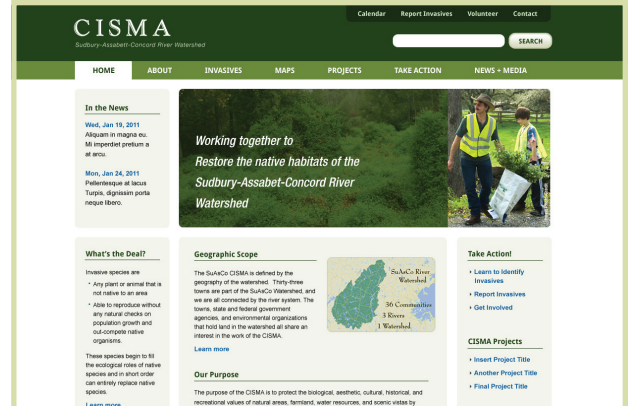


Marlborough High School students attending plants at the school greenhouse. Photo by Laura Mattei

Developing a Public Web Site for the Cisma

The Education and Outreach Subcommittee of the Cisma has been busy developing a Web site for Cisma members to facilitate the sharing of information. The Web site will have identification and management information on selected invasive species, as well as maps, useful reference documents and educational materials. Guides and other tools developed by the Cisma for members use will be made available on the site. Information about Cisma activities and links to other key organizations and resources also will be included.

To date, the basic outline and design of the site has largely been completed. The subcommittee is currently working on developing the content for the individual sections of the site, which is expected to debut this spring. The longer-term intention is to expand the target audience for the site to include the general public, private landowners, and schools. This effort has been made possible through the generous support from the SUASCO Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council.



General support for the SUASCO Cisma comes from:

- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation who has supplied partial funding for the Cisma Coordinator, who is key to keeping the Cisma operating.
- The Sudbury Foundation, who gave support that was critical to the formation of the Cisma and continues to support projects, such as the GIS mapping project that is ongoing.
- Mass Audubon, who is our fiscal agent and donates administrative support.
- National Fish and Wildlife Service, who hosts the Cisma Coordinator and also provides administrative support.