



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

ASHLAND TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE

2020 SuAsCo CISMA Invasive Specie Control Grant Final Report - July 8, 2020

Though there are several invasive species that have gained footholds in the ATF, the enormity of the mitigation task demands that we work in a focused manner limited by time and funding. CISMA awarded the Ashland Town Forest Committee the sum of \$1,300 to begin this program. The ATFC chose to focus on a Japanese Barberry infestation in a new section of the forest off Oak Street.

Our original plan to hire a team of high school students was thwarted by the pandemic which made it too risky for people to work in teams. We were able to redefine our approach and hire a single college student with whom we had some prior experience. (As an Eagle Scout candidate he built a substantial bridge in the ATF in 2018.) This individual, Garrett Perry, is being paid at the Massachusetts minimum wage rate of \$12.75 per hour. This provided 102 hours of labor to work on this infestation.

ATFC members did project preparation work by tying over 200 barberry plants during the late winter months. We marked the location of plants with orange flags. Once the plants foliated, they were cut above the ties. In addition, we discovered that we could cut barberry more efficiently using a hedge cutter with an extended reach. ATFC members removed nearly 100 plants to gain experience prior to instructing our student worker. In addition, we cut over 600 additional barberry plants.

Garrett began work at the end of May and has been working an average of 10 hours per week. He has been able to remove plants at a faster rate than was anticipated. As of the week ending July 4, he had removed nearly 500 plants. Garrett will complete his work by August 1, 2020. We anticipate he will have removed 700+ plants by this time. Most of the plant locations have been marked with Yellow flags. The flags will permit examination for possible re-generation during the next growing season.

As of 8/1/2020 the grant amount will be fully expended. We have attached an invoice in the grant amount \$1,300 with this report.

Thank you for assisting us in this work. Though there is much work remaining, this grant permitted us to make significant progress on our Barberry infestation and will hopefully reduce the number of wood ticks in this area. We will be happy to present the results of this effort at the November CISMA meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob St.Germain, For the ATFC