

SuAsCo CISMA Grant – Final Report
Hunnewell Town Forest Invasive Species Management Plan – Town of Natick

The Town of Natick was awarded a \$2,000 grant from SuAsCo CISMA to develop an invasive species management plan for the Hunnewell Town Forest. The goal of the management plan includes assessment, implementation recommendations, and monitoring to control invasive species for *symplocos paniculata* (sapphire-berry) and *frangula alnus* (glossy buckthorn). *Symplocos paniculata* is an early detection species and its presence is little known in New England, so its assessment and steps toward eradication are a priority in the community and region.

Project Status:

In February 2020, Marianne Iarossi (Town of Natick Open Space Planner/Conservation Agent), Bud Sechler (Native Plant Trust Ecological Program Coordinator), Ted Elliman (Native Plant Trust Botanist), and Jill Miller (local resident, Botanist, and member of the Natick Garden Club) held a kick-off meeting to discuss grant logistics, schedule, and next steps.

In March 2020, Marianne, Bud, and Jill conducted a site visit at the Hunnewell Town Forest to collect preliminary data on the presence of *symplocos paniculata* and *frangula alnus*. GPS technology was utilized to demarcate an assessment area boundary for the densest growth of the aforementioned species.

Over the following couple months Chris Polatin and Jessica Applin from Land Stewardship, Inc. were engaged with to develop the invasive species management plan. Due to COVID-19 and government mandated social distancing protocols, Land Stewardship, Inc. conducted solo site assessments. Team meetings were held via the online Zoom platform.

Land Stewardship, Inc. digitally mapped both the sapphire-berry and the glossy buckthorn infestations within Hunnewell Town Forest, to present costs for controlling those species separately, and for costs for a combined species control plan. This plan includes specific management strategies and timeline for controlling both the sapphire-berry and glossy buckthorn over the next two years, and follow-up management and monitoring strategies. The overall success of this executed management plan is about 90% control of both sapphire-berry and glossy buckthorn within the next three years and beyond. As with any management plan for invasive control, follow-up and monitoring is critical, and the management plan addresses follow-up management and monitoring in the next few years.

The management plan is in a final draft format. Minor editing is expected to occur over the next month. The management plan should be finalized in August.

Budget:

The project is anticipated to be completed on budget. A final invoice will be provided to the Town of Natick.