

2021 Annual Priority Actions

Early Detection and Control (EDC)

- Create an invasive management plan template that can be used for project submission to the SUASCO CISMA small grants
- Conduct spring management training workshop on April 15 from 2 -4 pm, and provide follow-up support
- Conduct an early detection invasive plant species on-line training, with emphasis on invasive plant species that may be increasing in the SUASCO watershed.
- Conduct two management and invasive plant species ID walks, perhaps stemming from the spring workshop and early detection on-line training
- Make recommendations to update SUASCO CISMA website with EDC meeting discussion and action items and include ecological info on invasive plants that are new or perhaps increasing in the SUASCO watershed.

Aquatic Invasive Management (AIM)

- **Objective 1:** Establish a watershed-wide water chestnut task force. This committee serves in that role. Recruit interested members from other watershed towns--ongoing.
- **Objective 2:** Establish watershed-wide monitoring and reporting. Work with DCR to develop a simple database/ spreadsheet for the watershed, use this information to communicate with affected municipalities. In 2021, OARS (with CISMA small grant) will survey and report on the current extent of water chestnut in Assabet and Concord mainstem rivers.
- Recruit volunteers in each town to do basic (presence/absence) of water chestnut in ponds, lakes, and small streams July through August. Ask conservation agents to report areas being worked on and to suggest active volunteers.
- **Objective 3:** Outreach and local participation. Facilitate communication with towns and stakeholder groups. Organize meetings that focus on securing support for town-based monitoring, encourage direct assistance with transport and disposal of harvested plant materials, and discuss consistent permitting of control efforts. In 2021, AIM and OARS will continue to help coordinate efforts among municipalities. OARS will hold a volunteer pull in Concord with Concord Land Conservation Trust.
- **Objective 4:** Consistent wetlands permitting of control efforts. Work with the LAPS Subcommittee and DCR to push for a watershed-wide or generic permit. Presentations have been made to the MassDEP circuit rider regional meetings.
- **Objective 5:** Prevent and control new infestations. Information—aquatic hitchhiker signs are present at some boat ramps, but it is not clear that boats are the main culprit. More likely geese and other birds. It was felt that signs are usually ignored. IN 2021, OARS has obtained funding from several municipalities and CISMA to continue rapid response program. DCR is now actively managing the reservoir 1&2 of the Sudbury River in Framingham.

- **Objective 6:** Contribute to research on effective controls. Efforts to reach Dr. Bernd Blossey at Cornell have not been successful. In 2021, AIM and OARS will keep track of reports on the effectiveness and impacts of herbicide-based control efforts.
- **Objective 7:** Support ongoing water chestnut control efforts. Funds to manage water chestnut are sought from affected municipalities annually. In 2021, OARS will continue to provide technical support to local efforts in ponds and streams and deploy Rapid Response teams to hand-pull new infestations or satellite populations (those breaking off from large infestations). Share information, support reactivation of Hop Brook Protection Association efforts. Continued support to efforts to pass Invasive Species Management Bill in the state legislature.

Education and Outreach

- Keep website populated with events, CISMA content, case studies, partner projects, grant opportunities, etc
- Review and update website information
- Update invasive species specimen photographs on website
- Host speaker series, training event, etc

Legislation and Policy (LAP)

- Continue to develop and file a general Notice of Intent to permit landowners to conduct small-scale terrestrial invasive species control projects
- Continue to investigate a streamlined process for Towns and Land Trust staff to obtain a pesticide applicator's license
- Continue to follow and support state Coordinator legislation drafted by Senator Pat Jehlen

Administrative Duties of the Steering Committee

- Generate annual report for 2021 by January 31
- Refine metrics of evaluating the accomplishments of the CISMA
 - Require subcommittees to track number of events, attendees, acres treated/controlled?, volunteer events/trainings, volunteer hours (from partners and Weed Warriors), new CISMA members, repeat event tracking
- Schedule and coordinate twice annual meetings open to all members and the public
- Administer the small grant program
- Pursue additional funding through grants
- Coordinate the CISMA election