

## SuAsCo CISMA Annual Report: 2020

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the accomplishments of the SuAsCo CISMA for 2020.

- COVID-19
  - 2020 has been a unique year for the SuAsCo CISMA and the global community as a whole. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every aspect of society resulting in the continued disruption of the once normal routines of life. With disruption comes the necessity to adapt. The SuAsCo CISMA has met these new challenges and continues to provide valuable services to the communities within the watershed.
- Administrative Subcommittee Hiatus
  - The Steering Committee decided to disband the Administrative Subcommittee because of the redundancy of tasks and responsibilities shared between the Steering Committee and Administrative Subcommittee, as well as the time and logistical commitments associated with the subcommittee.
    - The pros and cons of this action should be considered at an upcoming Steering Committee meeting to determine whether or not to reinstate the Administrative Subcommittee or to continue without it.
- Small Grant Program 2020
  - For the 2020 Small Grant Program, the SuAsCo CISMA had \$4,921 available to fund projects within the watershed. The following four projects were awarded funding. Final Reports are attached in Appendix A: Small Grant Program 2020 Final Reports.
    - *Ashland Town Forest* - Awarded \$1,300 to hire high school interns to pull/cut invasive plants at the Ashland Town Forest. Due to COVID they hired a single college intern who pulled or dug up about 700 barberry plants.
    - *Town of Hopkinton* - Awarded \$500 to brush hog a field as an initial treatment to cut back bittersweet encroachment. An issue with an abutter halted the mowing about halfway through the project. They completed the mowing at the end of the season. They worked with Kristin and the EDC to develop a long-term management plan.
    - *Town of Natick* - Awarded \$2,000 to develop a management/restoration plan for Hunnewell Town Forest, including management of two species not identified in our watershed (sapphire-berry and Japanese angelica-tree).
    - *Stow Conservation Trust* – Initially awarded \$1,000 to develop a management plan for the Leggett parcel. Due to a change in their tasks and other issues funds were not awarded.
- Selling the Fleet

## SuAsCo CISMA Annual Report: 2020

- The CISMA Steering Committee decided to sell the underutilized trailers, kayaks, and canoes to Paddle Boston for the sum of \$10,400 (all associate gear was included). The Steering Committee is in the process of determining how to use these funds, but some possible uses include funding a presentation by Douglas Tallamy (author of *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature's Best Hope*), continued support of SVT's CISMA coordinator, and making funds available to the subcommittee projects and initiatives.
- Annual Priority Actions 2020
  - *Early Detection and Control (EDC), Bud Sechler Chair of the EDC:*

We held a CISMA EDC Workshop Webinar on April 14 and had 5 energetic registrants at the Invasive Project Planning Workshop. We focused on how to prioritize invasive plant management projects, picking your battles. We then presented case studies on a variety of invasive plant management projects, from mechanical control of invasives in a field, to control of an invasive plant in a rare plant habitat. We focused on challenges of seeing a project through to restoration, and planting challenges.

We also presented the three invasive plant projects funded by CISMA small grants, and provided updates, and next steps. Challenges for dealing with an invasive plant project during this pandemic. The goal of the workshop was to allow participants to think about developing a project on their own, and perhaps even applying for next year's CISMA small grants.

On October 3, 2020, we held an invasive plant walk along the Cochituate Rail Trail to a small group. Plant identification and habitat restoration efforts were highlighted along the trail. Earlier in the year plant id walks had been postponed due to COVID-19.

Due to COVID-19, many volunteer driven Invasive Plant Management projects were placed on hold, along with hosting early detection species ID trainings. We hope to make up for this in 2021.

Update on Herbicide research and advocacy from Laura. SVT hired Tim Simmons to prepare an updated summary of scientific studies and literature on glyphosate and triclopyr. This was completed in September, 2020 and is now posted on SVT's web site.

### EDC 2020 APAs

- Conduct spring management training workshop and provide follow-up support. **ACHIEVED**
- Host early detection species ID trainings. **Not achieved**

## SuAsCo CISMA Annual Report: 2020

- Host management and invasive species ID walks. **Hosted one event.**
- *Aquatic Invasive Management (AIM), Alison Field-Juma Chair of AIM:*
  - Continue to implement goals and objectives of the Water Chestnut Management Guidance and 5 Year Management Plan for the SuAsCo Watershed.
  - Provide a biannual forum for municipalities, non-profits/grassroots organizations, DCR and others to share experiences, knowledge, observations of conditions, management techniques, and management plans for the coming season
  - Continue to work on permitting issues for water chestnut, collaborating with the CISMA LAPS
  - Pursue citizen science-based mapping approaches to engage the public and be affordable
  - Look at shift from mechanical to chemical-based management techniques
- *Legislation and Policy (LAP) Delia Kaye Chair of 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, Ryan Brown Chair of the Steering Committee.*

The Steering Committee, with the exceptional help of the Coordinator, has achieved all of its stated APAs for 2020. The only APA that will need further refinement is the metrics for evaluating accomplishments. This APA should be formalized by the Steering Committee or used as guide when considering projects taken on by CISMA, such as identifying goals and deliverables. Metrics should then be posted to the website.

### Steering Committee APAs 2020

- Generate annual report for 2020. **ACHIEVED**
- Refine metrics of evaluating the accomplishments of the CISMA. **IN PROGRESS**

## SuAsCo CISMA Annual Report: 2020

- Schedule and coordinate twice annual meetings open to all members and the public. **ACHIEVED**
  - Administer the small grant program. **ACHIEVED**
  - Pursue additional funding through grants. **Received RSC Grant**
  - Coordinate the CISMA election. **ACHIEVED**
- *Education and Outreach Subcommittee, Ryan Brown Chair of the Education and Outreach Subcommittee:*

As CISMA content is generated, it is posted to the website. Brochure dispersal has taken place, members who need additional brochures are welcome to request them. Hosting an event, training, or speaker series has been hampered due to insufficient funds and COVID related disruption. Outreach initiatives have been delayed because of lack of refinement in APAs and general planning. For 2021, APAs will be less general and will include actionable aspects and progressive goals. Regular meetings will also be held in order to progress the new APAs.

- Regularly add CISMA generated content and other relevant information to the CISMA website. **ACHIEVED**
  - Meeting minutes, training opportunities, presentations, solicit CISMA member events to advertise, etc
- Disperse CISMA brochure to all CISMA members if they have not received it already. **ACHIEVED**
- Host at least one speaker series / training / educational event. **INCOMPLETE**
- Develop an active outreach network. **IN PROGRESS**
- Regularly check in with members to identify any needs they might have related to invasive species and the community. **IN PROGRESS**
- Reach out to groups that would benefit from CISMA information. **INCOMPLETE**
- Offer a public hotline for invasive species information. **IN PROGRESS**
  - Create a flyer to be advertised in public places (libraries, trailhead kiosks, town halls, etc)
  - Place flyers around watershed to solicit questions from the public
  - Possible method of recruiting volunteers