

WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

06-05-2025

In attendance: Perry Sawyer, April Ferguson, Anson Burt, Nancy Zeller, Joy Fletcher, Paul Steblein

Meeting called to order by Perry Sawyer at 7:06 PM.

Pledge of allegiance was led by Perry.

Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion made to approve June meeting minutes by April, second by Anson. All in favor.

Japanese Knotweed – Guest speaker Paul Steblein (pfsteblein@gmail.com)

- Presentation on Japanese Knotweed and Best Management Practices (BMPs) was led by Paul
- Recommendation: Treat small clumps fast, treat high risk areas, monitor & follow-up treatment, combine cutting and chemical use, time chemical use accordingly.
- Paul is looking for a level of commitment from Conservation Commission to manage knotweed
 - Discussed creating a 1-page, 2-sided FAQ sheet for BMPs and info on mitigation
 - Discussed looking for a licensed chemical applicator to join Conservation Commission meeting
 - Discussed reaching out to DOT
 - Discussed hosting a town forum for Q&A on the topic
- Discussion on partnership with state and local agencies to provide comprehensive strategy

Update on land easements for Monadnock Conservancy

- Perry has connected with Peter Throop from Monadnock Conservancy for update on Westmoreland property easements – should have more detailed updates in August.

Old Home Day (Aug 16th – 17th)

- Visual with updates from WCC on Japanese Knotweed – Paul Steblein to take the lead on creating this visual.
- Fliers available for info on conservation easements

WCC Communication Preferences

- Email with agenda week-of
- Group text ahead of time as reminder of meeting

New Business

- Settlement fund from build of new fire station – follow up with State permit representative - Sydney Gendreau.

April made a motion to adjourn at 8:30PM, second by Anson. All voted in affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Fletcher

Frequently Asked Questions

Japanese Knotweed as an Invasive Species

Draft, not for distribution (P. Steblein, July 2025)

What is an invasive species?

Invasive species are non-native plant or animal species that cause or are likely to cause harm to the environment, economy, or human health. Organisms like emerald ash borer, purple loosestrife, European starling, and shiny buckthorn are invasive species to this area.

Japanese knotweed is not native, it came from southeast Asia in the mid-1800s and classed as a noxious invasive species in the U.S., Europe, and other regions around the world.

Japanese knotweed is a listed prohibited invasive species in the State of New Hampshire, and as such: “no person shall collect, transport, import, export, move, buy, sell, distribute, propagate or transplant any living and viable portion of any plant species, which includes all of their cultivars and varieties” (Agr 3802.01(b)).

Why should we try to control it?

Knotweed has major impacts, displacing all native plants by forming dense clumps. It is frequently seen along roads and riparian areas. It easily spreads with root or stem fragments, starting new clumps. It can also germinate from seeds. For example, knotweed can be transported by seed or stem pieces stuck in tire tread or other parts of vehicles. Storms may also dislodge plant fragments to wash new areas. The bigger the clump, the harder it is to control. The more clumps there are, the more likely it can spread as new clumps.

It is considered one of the top 10 most aggressive, destructive and invasive plants in the world. Because of these traits and capabilities, it poses many risks, including:

- Small patches of knotweed can quickly grow to infest large areas of land in and along waterways (measured in acres) and is known to encroach upon neighbors' yards.
- It grows through street pavement, concrete, and other hardscapes, including sidewalks, streets, home foundations, septic systems, and a variety of driveway hardscapes, thus negatively affecting property values.
- Creek banks become more vulnerable to erosion over time.
- Knotweed is an aggressive colonizer that outcompetes native vegetation by emerging early, growing fast, and preventing seedling regeneration. It also produces chemicals that negatively affect other plants
- Infested areas become unsuitable habitat for native wildlife.

How do I control it?

In short, it can be controlled, but takes persistence and employing the right technique. New Hampshire provides a “Best Management Practices” handout at:

<https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/japanese-knotweed-bmps.pdf>

Here are some tips:

- Mowing is not recommended - it will not eradicate it and in all likelihood will help spread the weed.
- Digging it out is expensive, usually requires additional herbicide treatment, and you still have a challenge of disposal of the rhizomes (underground stems) and above ground stems.
- The most effective treatment involves cutting the stems off at the base in late June and July, then treating with glyphosate (herbicide) after the plant has flowered and before the stems have died back in September. It can be a foliar application or applied to freshly cut bases of the clump.
- Commercial pesticides application must be licensed through the state of New Hampshire.
- Early detection and rapid response will ensure the clumps are found and treated while they are smaller and easier to control.

If herbicide is used, how do I minimize impact to nontarget organisms?

While the use of herbicides may have side effects on nontarget organisms, following the label directions and use of best management practices will improve effectiveness and minimize negative consequences. Not controlling knotweed patches will increase their spread, their damage, and cost for any future control.

Here is an example of a practice that would minimize impact to pollinators:

- Cut the knotweed stems at the base in late June or July - this will reduce the number of stems needed to treat. Dry the remove stems before composting or burning (prevent stems from starting new clumps).
- Wait until after knotweed flowers (August), then cut off stems at base and treat cut-off area at base of plant with spray or painting glyphosate. This will minimize the amount of herbicide needed and when pollinators are not visiting the plant.