

## **WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

### **UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

**08-14-2025**

#### **In attendance:**

- Commission Members: Perry Sawyer, Anson Burt, Jean Rudolph, Alisha Powell, Joy Fletcher
- Community Members: Harry Ackerman, Bill McGahie, Paul Steblein

**Meeting called to order by Perry Sawyer at 7:09 PM.**

**Pledge of allegiance was led by Perry.**

#### **Previous Meeting Minutes**

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

#### **Japanese Knotweed – Guest speaker Paul Steblein ([pfsteblein@gmail.com](mailto:pfsteblein@gmail.com))**

- Overview of briefing sent to WCC
  - Cutting party of knotweed approved by Select Board at Westmoreland Transfer Station to see what impact cutting will have. Created new space to sort recycling.
  - Working with Barbara Richter at NH Conservation Commission – working on gathering materials from her
  - Exploring control measures used by other municipalities in NH
  - Table of Knotweed actions, risk, and effects reviewed based on research by Paul Steblein
  - Reviewed potential knotweed strategy including Guiding Principles of Strategy:
    - A. Outreach/evaluation/reporting
    - B. Surveying/monitoring
    - C. Treatment
  - Q&A Session with Commission and community members
    - A. **Safety and liability concerning downslope wells near the project**
      - Previously used for phragmites control in New Jersey and it was being sprayed directly around water sources.
      - Paul will provide studies from EPA and 3rd party sources showing it is not significantly detrimental to human health.
      - GMO products that are consumed by humans are also approved for consumption in far higher quantities than would be in drinking water supplies as a result of spray in areas uphill from sources.

- Studies provided will include info on how long it stays active in the environment before it is broken down (half life).
- B. Will the contiguous property owners be notified of the spraying?**
- Municipalities have authority to treat along roadsides as needed, but there is obligation to notify of this and a process for notifications to go out to land owners. Similar to Eversource contractors cutting trees near power lines - notification goes out with opportunity to decline. Ultimately, the municipalities have the authority to manage the roadsides.
- C. We have requested a licensed spraying company come to one of our meetings to answer questions but this has not yet happened.**
- We can request that someone representing the spraying company attend a future meeting once the town gets to the point where they are looking at hiring.
- D. Who will do the spraying? Will the person(s) be licensed? If not, is the Town of Westmoreland responsible for any long term health issues?**
- Yes, the town would need to hire a licensed application technician. Glyphosate purchased by the public is ~2%, concentrated sources can be purchased that may go as high as 40%, but it is generally diluted before use.
- E. Has the State of NH used the methodology proposed for the project along its state highways? If not, why?**
- Best Management Practices for Invasive Species Control is available from the DOT - source of information for Paul's presentation and strategy.
  - DOT representative has indicated they would be willing to meet with WCC and Board of Selectmen to discuss strategy and previous work.
  - Paul is meeting with the regional transportation engineer on Monday (8/18)
- F. Have we discussed this project with the NHACC, to which we belong and, if so, do they endorse it?**
- Yes, Paul has been working with Barbara Richter from NHACC on best management strategies and has been compiling information based on what has been effective in other municipalities, and what resources may exist to fund this type of project.
- G. Does the Select Board fully support this endeavor and do they have liability concerns regarding the neighboring wells as well as of the persons doing the actual spraying should they have health issues in the future?**
- The Select Board is supportive further exploration into this topic.
  - The state-provided Best Management Practices for Invasives Species Control would be the approach used which has been approved by the state of NH.

- Would need to consult the town's attorney on liability and insurance around liability, including proper routes of communication of info.

**H. Is there an aquifer located in this area?**

- Yes - please see info related to studies that will be provided related to health and "half life" of the compounds in glyphosate.

**I. Is the NHDES onboard with this project?**

- Since this is a Best Management practice from NH DOT, it is approved by the State and therefore would include state agencies such as NHDES. The DES does not make specific comments related to the Best Management practices.

- Next Steps on knotweed:

- Poster will be available at Old Home Day booth – opportunity to gauge interest and questions or concerns. Record names and contact info for people who would like to follow up.
- Public forum to discuss topic in town.

**Update on conservation easement for Monadnock Conservancy**

- Peter Throop from Monadnock Conservancy hopes to close on easement in Westmoreland at the end of September.

**New Business**

- Wetland permit for fire station build requires a final inspection.

**Anson made a motion to adjourn at 8:28PM, second by Joy. All voted in affirmative.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Fletcher