

RESTORATION OF SHRUBLAND AND MARITIME SHURBLAND HABITATS AT OIORNE POINT STATE PARK

Rockingham County Conservation District Press Release April, 2021



In 2019, the Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD) took on another challenging task of tackling the invasive plants found on approximately 19+/- acres of heavily invaded coastal forest along the Frost Point Road entrance and bike-path at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye. This reclamation effort is part of a continued coastal habitat restoration project at Odiorno Point State Park that began over a decade ago. The project goals included the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

techniques, as supported by the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR), Division of Parks and Recreation, with additional funding support from the NH State Conservation Committee Conservation Moose Plate Program, the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, IPM Program, and the NH Coastal Program. These habitat areas are adjacent to, and provide important upland habitat for a freshwater pond that supports two rare damselflies. This area, of approximately 19+/- acres originally contained extremely dense invasions of Oriental bittersweet. This invasive plant provides is one of the most impenetrable plants found in this area at Odiorne literally engulfing and overrunning native trees and shrubs. The RCCD used a multi-tiered approach to reduce and remove invasive vegetate on, and to enhance native plant and animal communities. The approach included flagging native plants, and using an excavator with boom mounted mulching drum to mow down the invasive plants in over 6 acres where it was accessible, and deemed suitable for equipment. The RCCD also received assistance from the Student Conservation Association NH AmeriCorps program with students completing invaluable cutting paths through the historic McKim-Gage site, where no equipment was permitted. RCCD received assistance from the Plymouth High School in hand/mechanical control in one of the denser and non-mowed areas. RCCD followed up with cut-stump methods, applying herbicides to the remaining stumps, which significantly



reduced the amount of invasive seed source in this area. Other IPM methods included low-volume foliar (LVF) hand pumps, on the shorter and more accessible invasive plants, completed during the summer months of 2019 and 2020. RCCD uses low-impact herbicides, as permitted by a Special Permit, administered by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, Division of Pesticide Control. In addition, native planting efforts were completed with delineated planting circles using native bare root plant stock from the NH Nursery. The planting



effort took place by RCCD in 2020, due to the COVID-19 restrictions and lack of volunteer assistance that year. Reestablishment of native vegetation is important to reduce seed sources of invasive vegetation that threatens to reinvade nearly two-thirds of the park that has initiated restoration. It is important to promote the rapid regeneration of native species, and will assist to outcompete invasive seedlings.

Additional species will be planted, including future planting efforts that consist of tree species like shagbark hickory, red, and sugar maple to promote roosting sites for bats, and shrub species like Virginia rose, blackberry, and shadbush to promote diverse insect and bird populations.

Thanks to the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation and to the New Hampshire State Conservation Committee and our other partners for their continued partnership and funding for this project. For additional information contact Tracy Degnan at tracy@rockinghamccd.org or visit our website at www.rockinghamccd.org.

