

# **Invasive Plant Management and Outreach Events at Island Cottage Woods Preserve**

## Project Leader

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## Collaborators

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Amount Requested: \$2,307.00

Authorized signature: *E. Gay Mills*  
E. Gay Mills, Executive Director  
Genesee Land Trust

## Project Summary:

In 2015 Genesee Land Trust and Genesee Valley Audubon Society partnered in an innovative project to strengthen the migratory bird habitat at Genesee Land Trust's Island Cottage Woods Preserve in Greece, NY. In preparation for the emerald ash borer's arrival, we have begun preparing for the decimation of ash trees that dominate the northern portion of Island Cottage Woods Preserve. Without management this now-healthy stopover woodland habitat, which is the premier woodlands within the Braddock Bay Important Bird Area, will be lost with little likelihood of forest regeneration.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) has been documented within eight miles of the site prompting Genesee Land Trust to take preemptive action. The tree canopy at Island Cottage Woods Preserve is nearly 80% ash. Once the ash trees become infected by EAB, the vast majority of the canopy will disappear within 2-3 years creating opportunities in the understory for invasive shrubs to outcompete native species. Combined with high levels of deer browse, native regeneration would likely be precluded at the site and it would transition into a thicket of undesirable invasive species.

In April of 2015 in partnership with Genesee Valley Audubon Society and with funding from Audubon New York, Genesee Land Trust began the restoration process with a pilot project of planting 80 native tree seedlings. To further this effort we were supported by Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (FL-PRISM) which provided funding to hire a contractor to carefully treat and cut invasive shrubs found throughout the 15 acre planting area, giving our native seedlings a greater chance to compete with the invasives. Controlling invasive shrubs as part of the initial stages of this project is a key element of the overall plan's success. By combining invasive species control with planting native trees, protecting new plantings from deer browse, and encouraging natural regeneration of trees and other woodland plants, we hope to retain the woodland character of this important property.

Building upon this pilot planting project of 80 trees, Genesee Land Trust was awarded funding through the US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to expand the project starting in April 2016. With this GLRI grant we will plant an additional 2,580 tree and shrub seedlings over the next two years throughout the property, with a focus on the northern section. Each tree species will be protected from deer browse with 5ft deer excluder tubes.

Planting is only one part of preparing the understory for when the ash trees die. Without management of invasive shrub species in the planting areas our efforts will be much less effective. Through the support of a 2015 FL-PRISM grant, significant progress has been made to reduce the population of invasive plants in the northern planting area. However, more work is needed to ensure the best growing conditions for the new trees. Non-native, invasive woody plants still make up the majority of the understory with bush honeysuckles, privet, multiflora rose, and buckthorn dominating. Honeysuckle and multiflora rose are the most prolific plants. Native plants, such as dogwood, nannyberry, and witch hazel are found throughout the understory, but are not nearly as abundant.

Genesee Land Trust respectfully requests \$2,307 from FL-PRISM to (1) expand our invasive shrub control efforts on the site and (2) to support three community service and outreach events on invasive species.

The primary goal of the 2016 FL-PRISM project will be to control non-native, invasive woody species in the immediate vicinity of planted tree seedlings. The secondary goal will be to support three service and outreach events on invasive species at Island Cottage Woods. These three events are scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup>, April 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 29<sup>th</sup> at Island Cottage Woods. These service and outreach events include a volunteer work party, Earth Day lecture and field trip for Genesee Land Trust's Urban Youth Conservationists.

We believe this project furthers FL-PRISM's mission by reducing the spread of non-native invasive plants through control, and reduces the impact of terrestrial working group priority invasive of concern, EAB, on our native communities. As the premier woodlands in the Braddock Bay Important Bird Area, this specific site is extremely important for migratory birds so we are fully committed to minimizing the impacts of EAB. By minimizing these impacts and treating current invasive shrubs we are protecting the site from a full invasive shrub invasion in the coming years.

In addition to the benefits the site provides for native species, it's an important area for runoff interception from adjacent mixed-use development. Additionally, Genesee Land Trust understands that controlling invasive species is not a solution on its own. Only by involving partners like Genesee Valley Audubon Society and Rochester Birding Association and educating other groups including SUNY Brockport, Nixon Peabody, Urban Youth Conservationists and the public can we really make progress on battling invasive threats.

With respect to the FL-PRISM 2016 Work Plan, this project aligns most directly with Work Elements 1, 3 and 8. Genesee Land Trust is thankful to have FL-PRISM and all the resources they provide to educate our own staff, help us teach others and help guide our overall land management objectives. By working with FL-PRISM we hope to manage the impacts of invasive species on the land we protect and in our community. We hope this project becomes a success story for minimizing impacts caused by emerald ash borer by preparing a site for a coming invasion and transition.

#### Scope of Work:

The primary goal of the project is to expand control of invasive plants in the northern portion of the preserve to support the planned plantings of 2,580 tree and shrub species over the next two years. We will build from the areas that were treated in 2015 and target new areas where plants will be put in the ground. Genesee Land Trust will contract with White Oak Nursery, a licensed herbicide applicator with whom we have worked in the past, to treat and cut invasive shrubs through cut stump application in compliance with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regulations. Since the project area is within a regulated freshwater wetland, a permit has been obtained and special care will be taken to protect the health of the wetland as well as minimize impacts on native flora and fauna. The contractor will focus on a 4.1 acre northern section of the property which he began to treat at the end of last year. This area, along

with the other 10.9 acres that were treated in 2015 will be the priority for invasive shrub treatment. If this area is covered successfully, we will use any remaining funds to target invasive shrubs in planting areas in central and southern sections of the property. Each treatment section will be visited after each application by the contractor, photographed and documented via GPS/GIS.

The secondary goal for this project is to host three successful service and outreach events this coming spring and summer out at the site. The first event is scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup> and is for Genesee Land Trust's Urban Youth Conservationists. The Urban Youth Conservationist program's mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and to inspire lifelong stewardship of the environment through education and engaging young people in hands-on service to the land. June Summers, Lorna Wright and Rodregus Tripp will lead this informational field trip to the site to learn about invasive species, migratory birds and green infrastructure. The second event is scheduled for Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup> and will be an evening lecture and walk on invasive species and reforestation, led by Kevin Farrell, Land Stewardship Director at Genesee Land Trust. The third event is scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup> and will be the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Nixon Peabody Earth Day Work Party at Island Cottage Woods. Tasks this year will include monitoring and removing invasive species, and preparing seedlings for planting. Before the work begins, a short lecture will be given by Genesee Land Trust staff on invasive species and reforestation and the FL-PRISM and GLRI projects.

Genesee Land Trust will provide accurate and timely reports documenting the acreage treated for invasive species and number of people reached through the three service and outreach events. Genesee Land Trust will present the results of this project in addition to the larger Island Cottage Woods Preserve restoration efforts at a full FL-PRISM stakeholder meeting so that lessons from this innovative approach may be incorporated into other organizations work.

Timeframe: Timing of the herbicide application will be in early summer after spring migration in order to minimize impacts to birds, other wildlife, and native vegetation. Events will occur on April 16<sup>th</sup>, April 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Personnel and collaboration: The project director will be Kevin Farrell, Land Stewardship Director at Genesee Land Trust. Kevin will work closely with Lorna Wright, Director of Conservation Programs and Gay Mills, Executive Director. June Summers, President of Genesee Valley Audubon Society, a partner organization, will provide advice, based on her in-depth knowledge of avian biology and behavior, regarding the timing of herbicide application and the prioritization of locations within planting areas. It is anticipated that Genesee Land Trust will contract with Jim Engel at White Oak Nursery, a pesticide applicator with extensive experience in managing invasive species and skill at the identification of native trees and shrubs.

Project Location: The project will take place at Genesee Land Trust's Island Cottage Woods Preserve located in Greece, NY. This site is owned by Genesee Land Trust. Island Cottage Woods is a premier migratory bird stopover habitat located within the Braddock Bay Wildlife Management Area adjacent to Lake Ontario.

## **Personnel and Partners**

Kevin Farrell, 46 Prince Street, Suite LL005, Rochester, NY 14607, (585) 256-2130, kfarrell@geneseelandtrust.org – Kevin is the Land Stewardship Director at Genesee Land Trust. As the Land Stewardship Director, Kevin is responsible for the management of Genesee Land Trust's preserves, ensuring all management activities meet the goals of the preserve management plans. He will provide the overall project management, working directly with the contractor, conducting the pre- and post-treatment assessments, and completing reports. Kevin has a B.S. in environmental conservation studies, knowledge of invasive plant ecology, and experience managing invasive plants.

Lorna Wright, 46 Prince Street, Suite LL005, Rochester, NY 14607, (585) 256-2130, lwright@geneseelandtrust.org – Lorna is the Director of Conservation Programs at Genesee Land Trust. Lorna has a master's of forestry and brings expertise forest ecology and management as well as in developing invasive species management plans, focusing on prioritization of efforts for the largest and most sustainable impact. Lorna will provide strategic direction of the larger restoration initiative.

Rodregus Tripp, 46 Prince Street, Suite LL005, Rochester, NY 14607, (585) 256-2130, rtripp@geneseelandtrust.org- Rodregus is Urban Stewardship Coordinator at Genesee Land Trust and Director of the Landscape Apprentice Program. He is certified in Turf Management and Landscape Planning. His expertise is introducing 14-15 year old city youth to their first summer jobs, working at Conkey Corner Park and El Camino Trail, plus field trips to "green" industry professionals linked to nature and outdoors -- landscaping, sustainability and forestry.

## **Timeline**

April: Genesee Land trust plants 645 trees and shrubs

April 15: Receive notice of FL-PRISM award

April 16: Event at Island Cottage Woods- Urban Youth Conservationists

April 22: Event at Island Cottage Woods- Earth Day Lecture

April 29: Event at Island Cottage Woods- 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Nixon Peabody Work Party

May: Contract with White Oak Nursery and schedule invasive species treatment work.

May: Genesee Land Trust submits initial report to FL-PRISM

October: Genesee Land Trust plants 645 trees and shrubs

February 28: Genesee Land Trust prepares and submits final report to FL-PRISM.

## Budget and Justification

Project Title:	Invasive Plant Management and Outreach Events at Island Cottage Woods Preserve
Sponsor/Institution:	Genesee Land Trust
PI:	Kevin Farrell
Period of Performance for Project:	May 13, 2016 – February 28, 2017
<b>BUDGET</b>	
Salary – Kevin Farrell (2 days, \$143/day)	\$286.00
Fringe Benefits – Kevin Farrell (per diem calculation)	\$33.42
Salary – Lorna Wright (0.5 day, \$170/day)	\$85.00
Fringe Benefits – Lorna Wright (per diem calculation)	\$11.95
Salary – Rodregus Trip (0.5 day, \$176/day)	\$88.00
Fringe Benefits – Rodregus Tripp (per diem calculation)	\$12.32
<b>Total Labor Costs</b>	<b>\$516.69</b>
Travel (6 trips, 25 miles, \$0.54/mile)	\$81.00
Contractor Services (3 days, \$500/day)	\$1,500.00
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>\$2,097.69</b>
Indirect Costs ( <i>de minimus</i> rate of 10%)	\$209.77
<b>Total Request (rounded to nearest dollar)</b>	<b>\$2,307</b>

Labor Costs: Kevin Farrell, as project director, will conduct the site assessment prior to and after herbicide treatment, will meet with the contractor and coordinate all aspects of the project. Kevin will lead the lecture at Island Cottage Woods on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and lead the Nixon Peabody Earth Day Work Party on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Kevin will also be responsible for writing reports to be submitted to FL-PRISM. The Land Stewardship Director position is a salaried position with a daily rate of \$143/day. It is anticipated that the activities will encompass approximately 2 full days of work. Lorna Wright will assist with developing the pre- and post-treatment protocols, and review reports. She will also co-lead the event on April 16<sup>th</sup> with the Urban Youth Conservationists. The Director of Conservation Programs position is a salaried position with a daily rate of \$170/day. It is anticipated that these support activities will encompass ½ a day. Rodregus Tripp will co-lead the event on April 16<sup>th</sup> with the Urban Youth Conservationists. The Urban Stewardship Coordinator position has a daily rate \$176/day. June Summers will provide her time consulting on the project as a volunteer. Therefore, there is no budget line for June's salary.

Fringe benefits: Fringe benefits include all mandatory coverages, health insurance, and retirement benefits.

Travel: Six (6) trips to Island Cottage Woods Preserve from the Genesee Land Trust office are anticipated. The round trip mileage is 25 miles. Travel to Island Cottage Woods will be required for the pre- and post-treatment assessments, meeting with the contractor and for each event.

Contractor services: Based upon initial conversations with Jim Engel at White Oak Nursery, a licensed herbicide applicator with knowledge of the preserve and the invasive species distribution there, it is estimated that 3 days of work will be required. The rate Genesee Land Trust has paid in the past \$500/day.

Indirect cost: Genesee Land Trust does not have a negotiated or documented indirect rate. Therefore, the *de minimus* rate of 10% is used.