

The Weekly Adirondack Thursday, August 30, 2007

Letter to the editor

Inlet residents join in eradication effort

Many thanks to the Inlet town officials and volunteers who worked on Friday, August 24 to start controlling further spread of the aggressively invasive Japanese Knotweed plant.

Previously, the Inlet Town Board discussed the Knotweed problem at their August 14th meeting, and signed consents for Knotweed control were obtained from many private property owners.

Project organizer Doug Johnson met around 8 am with The Nature Conservancy Expert Steve Flint, Inlet Town Supervisor J.R. Risley, Inlet Town Clerk Patty Wittmeyer, and retired Forest Ranger Gary Lee.

During the day, volunteers Mary and Dave Johnson staffed an information and registration table. From around 9 am to 12:30 pm volunteers Bill Houghton, Betsy Johnson, Lynn Johnson, and Debbie Taylor Martin helped Doug, Steve, Gary and Steve's assistant, Tessa Hopsicker, cut down thousands of the bamboo-like Knotweed canes.

Steve treated many of the remaining plant stems as well as other uncut plants with approved chemicals (herbicides), which are needed to kill the plant. Steve also treated many plants along the highway right of way.

Thanks to Town of Inlet employees Dayton Cleveland, Jerry Charboneau, and Rick Leclair, over 12 truck loads of Knotweed stalks were transported to the Inlet Transfer station for drying, then later disposal.

As an expression of appreciation, Doug and his family treated everyone to a pizza lunch in the picnic area of Arrowhead Park. During lunch, Steve Flint answered questions and emphasized that new Knotweed plants can grow from tiny root fragments or undried stem fragments, so proper disposal is essential to prevent further spread.

Further information is at <http://www.adkinvasives.com/terrestrial/PlantID/Knotweed.asp>. Steve encouraged the town of Inlet to apply for a grant to help finance future Knotweed control efforts.

Douglas C. Johnson, M.D.
Seventh Lake Summer Resident