

Bucktail Watershed Association Draft Policy for Invasive Plant (Japanese Knotweed) Program

Purpose:

The Bucktail Watershed Association is a nonprofit organization composed of volunteers united to protect and improve the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek and First Fork of the Sinnemahoning Creek Watersheds. During the past decade several species of non-native invasive plants have established themselves within the stream corridors of the Driftwood Branch and First Fork. This is of concern to the general health of the watersheds because the health of the stream corridor ecosystem directly affects the health of its stream.

Invasive plants grow and reproduce rapidly, crowding out native plant communities through their aggressive competition. In the process of destroying plant communities, the wildlife that relies on these habitats is also displaced, and the natural biological processes performed by these ecosystems are disrupted.

The most visible and perhaps most harmful of invasive plants to have cropped up in our watersheds has been Japanese knotweed. Japanese knotweed has formed large colonies within the stream corridor of the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek. It spreads aggressively through its roots, sending up shoots that form dense colonies that shade out other plants. It is spread primarily through moving dirt fill or by the scouring of its root fragment during times of flooding and re-depositing them downstream in the floodplain. These root fragments then grow to form new colonies of knotweed. Japanese knotweed quickly transforms a healthy, naturally functioning stream corridor into an alien monoculture habitat with little wildlife value.

In the near future grant money will be made available for conducting projects to eradicate invasive plants such as Japanese knotweed that are growing within the stream corridors of the Driftwood Branch and First Fork Watersheds. The Bucktail Watershed is seeking to build awareness about this problem, engage local landowners, and implement projects to eradicate invasive plants and establish native vegetation with available funding. By having landowners “on board” before applying for funding, the Bucktail Watershed Association hopes to demonstrate to those who would potentially fund such projects that there is a need for invasive plant control projects and that landowners are anxious to cooperate with the removal of these invasive plants.

Bucktail Watershed Association
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**Bucktail Watershed Association
Invasive Plant Program Letter of Interest**

Japanese knotweed and other invasive plants harm healthy stream corridors and their habitats by reproducing rapidly and crowding out the native plants found in these biological communities. By displacing the plant communities located in our stream corridors, invasive plants like Japanese knotweed also disrupt the natural processes and cycles that these communities perform to filter pollution and protect our streams.

As a landowner, I would be interested in partnering with the Bucktail Watershed Association to eradicate invasive plants like Japanese knotweed on my property if the Bucktail Watershed Association were able to secure funding to implement such an invasive plant program.

By signing this letter I am supporting the Bucktail Watershed Association in this endeavor and showing an interest in allowing them to work on my property. It is understood that I as the landowner will not be held liable for these activities nor will I be required to contribute financially to the removal of these invasive plants. If such an invasive plant program would be implemented, the Bucktail Watershed Association would still need to obtain a signed permission form before conducting any work on my property.

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ Email Address _____

Nearest Stream _____

Directions to site _____

Signature of landowner _____ Date _____

Send Forms To:

Bucktail Watershed Association
c/o Jim Zoschg, Jr.
3155 Cameron Rd
Emporium, PA 15834

Or Fax To: 814-486-9392—c/o Cameron County Conservation District