

## Weston Conservation Field Assessment 2020

### Current Field Management (for the last 20+ years):

- Mow most fields once per year (Cat Rock/80-ac field and Ash Street Reservoir mowed 2x/yr.)

### Conservation Field Goals

- Create open vistas
- Manage for passive recreation
- Manage for pollinator habitat & wildlife
- Manage for farming and agriculture

### Meadow Management Challenges

1. Invasive Plants
2. Field Edge – jungle of invasive plants
3. mowing around tree Islands
4. Rock walls covered in invasive plants
5. Intense storms = downed trees!
6. Field boulders (aka: New England potatoes)

### Field Assessment 2020 Criteria

- **Ecological assessment**
  - Invasive spp. present?
  - Flowering plant diversity
- **Management Assessment**
  - Overgrown tree islands
  - Edge shrubs taking over
  - Field Size
- **Important public qualities**
  - Field trail
  - Scenic viewshed
  - Recreational area (dog walking)

### 2020 Weston Field Survey Result Options

- Fall mow - select ecologically rich fields to mow later in the season for pollinator & wildlife habitat enhancement
- Summer mow – control the spread of swallow-wort & other invasive plants by mowing certain fields before plants go to seed.
- Manage certain fields for people/dog access (twice a summer mow)
- Abandon certain fields that are less than 1 acre in size, have low ecological quality, are covered in invasive plants, and are difficult to mow due to access, adjacent trees/shrubs, or other reasons.

### Meadow management Outcomes

1. **Select ecologically rich fields to mow later in the Fall** for pollinator & wildlife habitat enhancement (> Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>)
  - a. Old Brush Dump field
  - b. Blaney aquifer field
  - c. Glen Road field
  - d. Blaney Field
  - e. Coburn meadows
  - f. Case Estates (partial)
  - g. Paine & Burnes Field
  - h. Clancey Gift
2. **Control the spread of swallow-wort and other invasive plants** by mowing impacted fields early July (while leaving patches of milkweed)
  - a. 153 Church Street
  - b. Miller's Field
  - c. South Field
  - d. Sears Driveway
  - e. Melone House Lower Field
  - f. Jennings Field
  - g. Sunset Corner
  - h. Nolte Fields
  - i. Town Line Field
  - j. French Field
  - k. Field North of College Pond
  - l. Case Estates (partial)
3. **Ensure agricultural fields remain in agriculture**
  - a. Green Power Farm
  - b. Wellington Farm (500 Wellesley St)
  - c. Potato Field/Onion Field
  - d. 40-acre field
  - e. Community Gardens

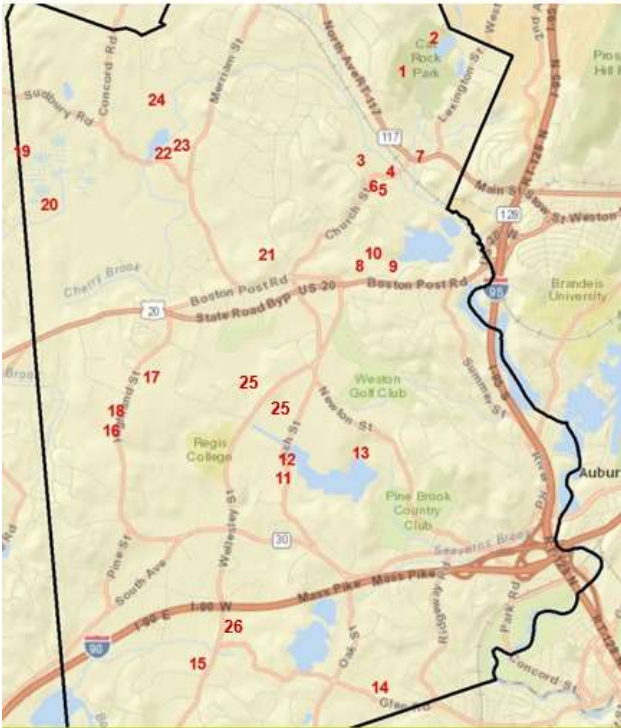
4. Continue to **manage certain fields for passive recreation/dog walking** (mow 2x/summer)
  - a. 80-acre field
  - b. Ash street reservoir
  - c. Apple Orchard (depending on harvest dates and Volunteers ability to manage)
5. Ensure previous field restoration projects **continue to be managed**
  - a. Coburn Meadows (2017-2019): \$25,000
  - b. Case Estates (2016-2020): \$60,000
  - c. Apple Orchard (2016-2020): volunteers (Rees!!)
6. Continue to control **invasive vegetation growing on select rock walls**
  - a. Case Estates Rock Wall: \$10,000 (2020)
  - b. Coburn Meadows: \$5,000 (2019)
  - c. Potato Field: volunteers (2015-2020)
  - d. Wellington Farm (500 Wellesley St): \$10,000 (2020)
7. Actively **manage select patches of knotweed** in fields (3 years then monitor)
  - a. Sunset Corner
  - b. Case Estates (b/w Wellesley & Ash St)
  - c. 40-acre Field
8. Continue to push back invasive plants along **field edges & tree Islands** where previous management has occurred
  - a. Field North of College Pond (2015, 2020): \$7,500
  - b. Green Power (2016, 2020): \$10,000
  - c. Community Gardens (2015): \$15,000
  - d. Case Estates (2016-2020): (already described)
  - e. Ash Street Reservoir (2020): \$5,000
  - f. Glen Road (2012): \$15,000
9. **Abandon** management of 3 small low ecological quality fields (due to budget constraints)
  - a. 171 Church Street – field covered in invasive plants, numerous storm trees fell in field
  - b. Webster Rd – behind 11 Webster Rd; field covered in invasive plants, hard to access
  - c. Small field east of 102 Wellesley; covered in invasive, not connected to other case estates fields
10. Consider new priority field restoration project – Millers Field (funding dependent)

**Proposed FY21 Meadow spending for current funding year (Number reflects outcome described above)**

**Total FY21 Field Management Budget: \$49,500 (needed): Allocations to use: \$32,000 - field mowing account (M); \$10,000 - Case Estates Account (CE); \$2,500 Community Gardens Account (CG); (Land Management \$5,000)**

- #1-3 Annual field mowing): **\$22,000 (completed) (M)**
- #5: Coburn Meadows Restoration – clear near Church Street, tree islands; rock wall (Outcome 5): **\$1,500 (M)**
- #5-6 Case Estates: **\$10,000** (Outcome 5 & 6) – (1) Remove storm damage branches in nose: \$2,000; (2) Clear Rock Wall: \$3,000; (3) Clear away invasive plants and downed trees in Parcel 9: \$5,000 **(CE)**
- #6: Wellington Farm: **\$2,000** (already completed) **(M)**
- #7: Actively manage select patches of knotweed in fields: **\$3,500** (FY21 already completed) **(LM)**
- #8: Field North of College Pond (eastern edge and tree island clearing): **\$1,500 (M)**
- #8 Green Power western field edge and tree island clearing **\$1,500 (M)**
- #8: Community Gardens clearing eastern access road **\$2,500 (CG)**
- #9 **NEW** Restoration and preservation of Millers Field (Rt 117 Field)– **(2 days: \$5,000) (LM and M)**

# Conservation Land Fields at a Glance



| #  | FIELD NAME                |
|----|---------------------------|
| 1  | Cat Rock                  |
| 2  | 80 Acres                  |
| 3  | Webster Road              |
| 4  | The Coburn Meadow         |
| 5  | 171 Church Street         |
| 6  | 153 Church Street         |
| 7  | Miller's Field            |
| 8  | South Field               |
| 9  | Sears Driveway            |
| 10 | Melone House Lower Fields |
| 11 | Ash Street—West Side      |
| 12 | Ash Street—East Side      |
| 13 | Cooper's Cove             |

|    |                             |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 14 | Jenning's Field             |
| 15 | Blaney Field                |
| 16 | Sunset Corner               |
| 17 | Paine & Burnes Fields       |
| 18 | Nolte Field                 |
| 19 | Town Line Field             |
| 20 | French Field                |
| 21 | Clancey Gift                |
| 22 | Concord Road Orchard        |
| 23 | Old Brush Dump              |
| 24 | Field North of College Pond |
| 25 | Case Estates                |
| 26 | 500 Wellesley Street        |

**Total Field Acreage: 90 acres**