

AIS Early Detection & Response Grant City of Madison Japanese Knotweed Grant Reflections

AIRR 25220, 2019 - 2023

In 2019, the City of Madison was awarded an Aquatic Invasive Species Early Detection and Response Grant to control Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*). The grant covered work at twelve sites covering approximately 1.2 acres of land. Over the course of the five year grant the size of each infestation was greatly reduced. One infestation, Olin Park woods, was seemingly eradicated. The largest and most difficult infestation along the Cannonball bike path was reduced in size from approximately 12,000 sf to approximately 2,000 sf. The large size of this infestation and the difficult terrain (steep, brushy) meant that small infestations were sometimes missed and year to year smaller stands of knotweed were discovered that ranged in size from 30 sf with 6' tall canes, to just a few stems.

The vast majority of other sites were reduced to a stage at which cutting stakes was no longer a necessary part of the treatment, and most of the treatment time spent at site was spent monitoring. The majority of plants left at these infestation sites were small, 6" or less in height and averaging only a few stems per stand.

By year three of the grant, infestations were enough reduced in size that an ecological restoration contractor was no longer necessary and City of Madison staff were able to perform treatments in-house. Without the aid of this grant, the City would not have hired the restoration contractors who initially managed these sites and reduced the size of infestations to a place where work could be done in-house. This is particularly true in the case of the infestation along the Cannonball bike path where ATV-mounted herbicide tanks were initially needed to control the infestation along steep slopes—equipment which City restoration staff do not have.

In the future City of Madison hopes to apply for EDR grants for Bohemian knotweed. The City has already been awarded a grant for the control of water celery. These grants will be instrumental to our ability to pursue control of these novel populations in the City.