

Land Restoration/Habitat Enhancement Project for the Jamaica Bay Unit

or

Groundwork for the Establishment of an Invasive Species Control Program for the Jamaica Bay Unit

In keeping with GNRA's Objectives for Protection, Enhancement and Use of the Jamaica Bay Ecosystem, (and/or Annual Work Plan Ref # 1a.1B.01JB Exotic Vegetation program) the Unit hopes to enhance habitat within the Jamaica Bay Ecosystem that is currently facing threats and restore several areas that have already been degraded. One threat that has been identified is the progression of several invasive exotic species such as oriental bittersweet, Japanese knotweed and European buckthorn. Additionally, areas adjacent to Jamaica Bay that were once healthy marshes, were subsequently filled to support infrastructure for New York City. These areas still show signs of disturbance, indicated by acres of phragmites and Ailanthus altissima trees. Native plants, animals and their habitats (ex. FBF Grassland Management Area) are being invaded by one or more of these species and efforts to at least control if not eradicate must start immediately.

As park staff continues to research control and eradication methods, it is believed that many of the invasive species can be controlled to some degree by mechanical means. An aggressive mowing, cutting and removal campaign in several designated areas will aid the park in its' effort to establish an effective invasive species control program for the Jamaica Bay Unit. Additionally, it will enable staff to enhance these areas with native vegetation that is being grown in the park's greenhouse, thus improving the quality of habitat within the Unit.

The park sees this as an educational opportunity to increase awareness on the ecological damage associated with invasive species. Working together with the Jamaica Bay Institute, Friends of Gateway (park partner operating the Gateway Greenhouse Education Center), the Youth Conservation Corp and park volunteers, the park hopes to increase awareness and stewardship through the establishment of an invasive species control program. A coordinated effort is necessary to protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Jamaica Bay Unit.

Materials needed:

1 tractor with the following attachments:

- sickle bar mower
- brush cutter
- landscape rake

2 chainsaws

2 sets of chainsaw PPE

2 power pruners

2 hedgetrimmers

1 stump grinder

20 pruners

5 weed pullers
25 pairs of leather work gloves
25 pairs of safety glasses
1 GPS data logger

1 seasonal maintenance worker (NTE 1 year),
1 seasonal biological technician (NTE 1 year) to map invasive species and coordinate the field control efforts