



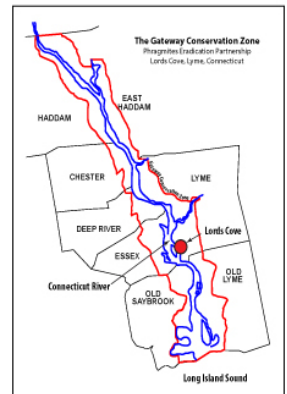
Lords Cove Phragmites Eradication Partnership

A National, State, Regional, Local and Private Initiative, Lords Cove, Lyme,



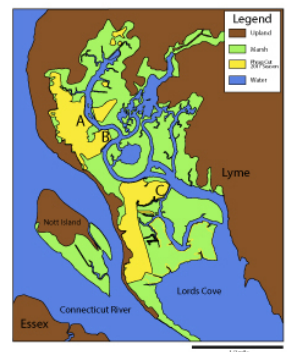
Lyme's Lords Cove is a 400 acre brackish marsh system in the crown of the Connecticut River Estuary and Tidal Wetlands Complex, a 40-mile stretch of the Lower Connecticut River from Old Saybrook and Old Lyme north to Portland, Connecticut. The lower estuary marshes have been designated by the International Ramsar Convention as "Wetlands of International Significance". The Nature Conservancy identified the Lower Connecticut River as "One of Forty Last Great Places in the Western Hemisphere". The accolades go on and on.

In 2016, Richard Snarski, wetlands biologist and Lords Cove landowner, put together a coalition with the goal of sustainably managing the phragmites infestation in Lords Cove. The partnership consists of the Connecticut Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Connecticut River Gateway Commission and private landowners whose properties border Lords Cove. The partnership embarked in 2017 on a three-year project to rid Lords Cove of the Phragmites. Phragmites, a non-native invasive reed, is notorious for becoming a monoculture, pushing out the native plants that provide supportive habitats and food sources.



The Nature Conservancy has committed to provide \$16,000 towards eradicating the Phragmites in the northern portion of the marsh with the CT River Gateway Commission contributing \$30,000 in matching funds for that purpose. Funds to match the Gateway Commission contribution are being raised privately from property owners and foundations with the Lyme Land Conservation Trust opening an account for those wishing to contribute.

The project entails cutting of the Phragmites using the "Marsh Master", owned by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. In addition to the equipment, USF&WS donates the time of biologist Dave Sagan, who operates the "Marsh Master". The cutting is followed in June and August by the application of the EPA-approved herbicide Imazapyr, the least environmentally impactful herbicide in use.



Cutting of the Phragmites first makes the herbicide application much more effective and allows for the application of less of the herbicide than if the marsh weren't cut first. DEEP, for its part, has agreed to spray the Phragmites in the south half of Lords Cove where the most densely packed stands are located.

Contributions are being accepted by the Lyme Land Conservation Trust.



Photo: Sean D. Elliot, New London Day



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Photo: J. H. Torrance Downes