

Project Plan **RIP - Removing Invasive Plants**

January 10, 2005

This Plan sets out the general concepts, roles and responsibilities for the RIP- Removing Invasive Plants Project over the next few years. An Implementation Plan will be developed for implementation of this Project Plan.

The goal of the RIP Project, Removing Invasive Plants, is to control non-native invasive plants so as to allow the full natural growth of native plants in Sligo Creek Park (Sligo). Non-native invasives will be removed or contained so they can no longer spread significantly. Four entities will be responsible for implementing the RIP Plan: the RIP Coordinator (Coordinator); the RIP Steering Committee (Committee); RIP Section Teams (Section Teams); and, the *Friends of Sligo Creek* Board (Board). Their respective roles are described below. All work in Sligo will be carried out only with the approval and guidance of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) staff and documents from the Sligo Management Plan.

It is possible that as the Project develops there may be a need to revise the RIP Plan (Plan). Once the Plan is adopted, changes will be made with the approval of the Board and the Committee.

RIP Coordinator Responsibilities

The Coordinator is a contracted position paid for through grants to FoSC. The Coordinator will manage the RIP Project under the direction of the Steering Committee with approval from the Board of Directors. The Coordinator will address the specific needs of Sligo and will develop and implement a program to reach the Project goals. The Coordinator will work with the Committee to develop an Implementation Plan and will report to the Committee on activities and outcomes of the Plan. The Coordinator will receive support from the Committee as needed and requested, to undertake project activities. Coordinator activities may include the following:

- Attend RIP Steering Committee meetings and keep in regular contact with the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Develop working relationships with members of the Section Teams.
- Develop a working relationship with M-NCPPC personnel, particularly Forest Ecologist Carole Bergmann, and Director of Volunteers Jayne Hench. Coordinate with the Forest Ecologist on plant removal events and progress, and on appropriate places and species for replanting.
- Use digital photography to document the current situation and needs in the Park.
- Develop and coordinate, with help from the Committee and Section Teams, events and activities for community outreach, volunteer recruitment and plant removal. These may include general and event-specific publicity, press releases, and public presentations. Provide copy to the FoSC webmaster for upkeep of RIP web page.
- Coordinate volunteer trainings, develop training and plant identification materials, and oversee programs to recognize and support volunteers.

- Assess the results of events: seek feedback from the Section Teams; evaluate the success of the event in terms of community outreach and in terms of progress in invasive removal; determine if replanting is needed.
- Prepare mid and year-end reports.
 - In August, work with the Committee to develop a budget of projected needs, for submission to the Board and M-NCPPC.
 - Participate in regular a year-end Project and Coordinator review and other reviews as needed.
 - Work with the Committee to produce a progress report to be submitted to the Board.
 - Prepare or oversee the development of a photo presentation describing RIP first year activities and progress.

RIP Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will be responsible for the overall progress and results of the RIP Project. The Committee will provide oversight of and support to the Coordinator. The Committee will maintain communications with the Board about Project progress and needs. Activities the Committee may undertake include:

- Regularly review the Implementation Plan with the Coordinator, prioritizing and adjusting plans to match resources.
- Report to the Board on issues regarding the Project Plan and the Coordinator.
- Build and maintain Section Teams.
- Develop a program to expand volunteer training in native and non-native plants. Work with the Coordinator, M-NCPPC and other groups to facilitate ongoing publicity and recruitment of volunteers for RIP.
- Design and oversee a “Guardian” program in which specific volunteers (individual, family or groups) take responsibility for monitoring and keeping abreast of invasives re-entering cleared segments of the Park.
- Identify and explore activities and products to complement the program plan. For example, a commemorative plaque to acknowledge the work of RIP volunteers, a letter to property owners who live near the park, and methods to respond to the deer situation in the Park.
- Identify and coordinate policy and budgeting campaigns and solicit public involvement. For example, encourage write-in letters concerning the M-NCPPC budget. Coordinate with the *Friends of Sligo Creek* Advocacy Subcommittee to influence the M-NCPPC budget and submit responses to relevant state and federal legislation. Develop materials to send to M-NCPPC and the County Council, pointing out specific needs within their budgets for money for all parks, including Sligo.
- Maintain a list and keep in contact with current and potential partners, volunteers, homeowner and other associations, and civic groups.

- Work with the Coordinator on a year-end summary of the Project to submit to the Board and M-NCPPC, and on a version for funders.

RIP Section Team Responsibilities

The Section Team will consist of a RIP Team Leader, Plant Identifier and Event Planner. The Leader, who may also be the section Steward, will coordinate the Team and be the contact with the Coordinator and Committee. The Team Leader will be responsible for the progress in invasive removal in his or her section. Specific activities the Section Teams will undertake may include the following:

- Keep track of volunteer activity, including use of sign-up sheets at all events. Keep a running list of individuals and their volunteer hours.
- Report to the Coordinator, or designated Committee member, after each section event, provide feedback on successes and problems, numbers of volunteers, questions or errors in plant removal, future events, and tool needs.
- Coordinate publicity for events, including making flyers (templates provided), posting and removing flyers, contacting groups to bring in volunteers. Develop publicity to show successes in the section.
- Identify, with the help of the Coordinator and Committee, those areas in most need of invasives removal, and areas where replantation, especially of trees, are needed.
- Help identify Guardians to monitor segments of the section and keep them free of returning invasive plants.

Friends of Sligo Creek Board Responsibilities

The Board has ultimate authority and responsibility for the RIP Project. It will work with the Committee to select the Coordinator; periodically review the Project Plan; decide if grants should be sought and give final approval of grant applications. The Board will keep in regular contact with the Committee. Board activities will include the following:

- Work with the Committee to select the Coordinator and approve and sign the contract between FoSC and the Coordinator.
- Undertake a review of the RIP Project at least twice a year to ensure that the Committee and Coordinator are successfully carrying out their responsibilities.
- Work with the Committee and *Friends of Sligo Creek* members who have expertise in grant making, to address the financial needs of new RIP activities as they emerge.
- Request and review a year-end report of the RIP Project. Identify any problems or issues and work with the Committee chair to address them.
- Integrate RIP with all aspects of FoSC program activities.