



# Knot in Hyde Park

Season 5

Notes from the Field

November 10, 2025

## Message from the 5<sup>th</sup> Season: We're still at it; it's making a big difference!

**The Season kicked-off in May.** On May 2 KiHP joined the Gihon Valley Hall crew for their Green-up Day gathering in North Hyde Park Village. KiHP: "Is there anyone here who wants to help look after the goats we're bringing to our site up the road this summer?" We'd never met Nicole before but she put up her hand: "Yes! I love goats!"

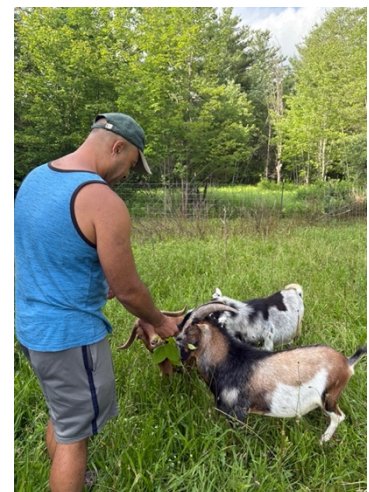
On May 8 Brice re-installed about 50 site signs around Town and did some site clean-up work, all sponsored by his employer who gave him paid time off to volunteer in his community.

On May 9 KiHP spoke – along with Mad River Knotweed and the Missisquoi River Basin Association – at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual State-wide Invasive Species Event in Montpelier. Knotweed was the featured species because, well, it's an increasing issue for everyone.

May 17 was the first day of work for Chase, our seasonal KW Field Technician. We introduced him to KW-cutting at our "Site No. 45", a road-side culvert patch of KW that we started managing last year. It's a vigorous stand and Chase worked on it 7 times during the season.

On May 26 Wendy, a founding KiHP committee member, went out to do the first cut on all the sites she's been managing since the get-go. She spent just under 2 hours working on 8 sites. The most time-consuming thing was picking through the other vegetative abundance to find the isolated stalks of KW.

And finally on May 31 Shirley and her grandson delivered three old goats to the site in North Hyde Park Village where they would spend the season chewing on KW and rugosa rose. As promised, Nicole and her partner David (supported by Chase) showed up every day to make sure the goats were happily grazing. (Thank you N&D!)

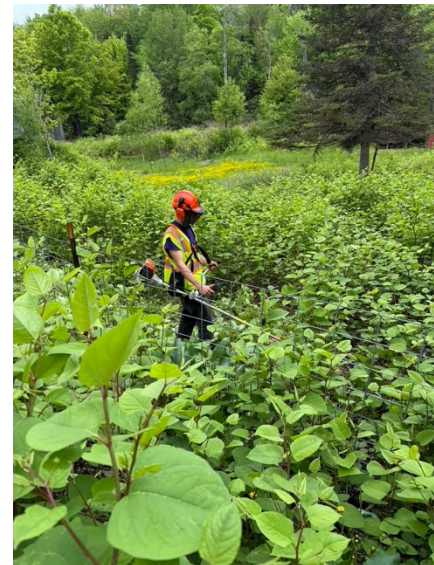


**Mechanical Control Works; and (to quote Chase) “the Brush Cutter is Your Friend”.**

We are still coming across naysayers who will tell you that mechanical (i.e., non-chemical) control of KW doesn't work. It's important to keep making the point – that's just not true. No question, there are plenty of sites where – because of their massive size or difficult topography – mechanical control is not feasible. But we continue to collect direct evidence that repeat cutting of KW absolutely works to deplete the plant's energy. You have to be realistic about the work required: it takes time and persistence over many years. So, act early!

We have now concluded that “three cuts a season” – which was suggested to us as an effective protocol – isn't sufficient. We've adopted a different guideline: whenever the KW re-growth reaches 18 – 24 inches, cut it. You will have allowed the plant to grow enough to use up some of its stored energy but not enough to start to get excited about the party. We don't have any real science behind that but it's what we're practicing and it seems to be working.

And, yes, this year we've made a lot more use of the hand-held bladed brush cutter (a tri-blade is best) and in most cases we leave the cuttings to dry on the ground. Where there's a risk that the cuttings could migrate before they die we'll hand-cut and stack. Each site is a little different. Presence – repeatedly showing up – is risk control in KW management: as long as you keep returning to a site you'll know what's going on and you can respond to what you see.



**Experimenting with Chemical Control.** This season we wrapped up the pilot program begun two years ago in which we hired licensed professionals to treat 10 different sites around Town with annual late-season applications of herbicide (an initial treatment and a follow-up a year later). The 3 Early Detection/Rapid Response (EDRR) sites – smaller and less well established – are so-far entirely free of KW. Where the KW has shown signs of still being present it has come back in a much-diminished form (very short, multi-stemmed). We'll be brush- and hand-cutting at those sites next year.

Separately, a herbicide application done last September on Garfield Road as part of the “Green River KW Project”, **funded by a Watershed Grant from Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department**, was extremely effective. There was a follow-up treatment this September and we'll be doing native plantings next spring.

Thanks to this Watershed Grant anchor project, there's a very real possibility – if we keep at it – that this section of Garfield, which was on track to become over-run by KW, could eventually become KW-free. Of the known patches of KW in the area, all except one are now under management. KiHP is managing two sites on nearby Garfield Cross and a smattering of EDRR patches. A nearby private land-owner has had great success managing KW on his land. And Friends of Green River Reservoir continue managing the KW on the Dam Road.

**Building Community.** There are just so many great connections that have been made out on the KW trail. This season Doug showed up at our Wednesday Evening KW Cut at the Black Farm Road site on the LVRT with his (quiet electric) brush-cutter. Next thing you know, he's Adopted a Spot of Knot and is looking after a new site on Centerville Road. Laura who is managing KW on her own land comes out and volunteers at some of our road-side sites. Zayda put her hand up and wants to help in Garfield. A big wind blows one of our vinyl smothering tarps onto the road and Melissa calls to let us know. Tim and Craig and Beth ... all working to help stop the spread. Not to mention great conversations at the Hyde Park Home Day table and all the people we have met who have taken the time to be interested in this work or given us permission to work on their property. And just when you think the season is over, a professor at VTSU's Johnson campus brings her field conservation class to HP to talk KW and tour our sites.

**Season 6, 2026.** After a short break, we'll begin thinking about next season. We know what's required to deal with the sites that are under management – 99 of them. The question is whether we can now tackle some of the more challenging sites around Town. Is there a collective will? What needs to happen? Are there other plants that we need to turn our attention to before they "do a Knotweed"?

**If you want to be part of the discussion please be in touch**  
**[knotinhydepark@gmail.com](mailto:knotinhydepark@gmail.com)**.

BIG THANKS to everyone who has helped and supported and otherwise shown any interest, which keeps the effort moving along. Special thanks to HP Selectboard, Employees, Taxpayers and Road Crew.

The KiHP Committee: Tom Breese, Francis Landrey, Wendy Lane, Rich Pearson, Brice Rader, Mary Walz.



The Knot Mobile at HP Home Day

**Follow us on Instagram: @knotinhydepark**

**Our Website: [hydeparkvt.com/knot-in-hyde-park](http://hydeparkvt.com/knot-in-hyde-park)**



Season 5 Lamoille Union Crew just finished work at the Cricket Hill Site.



Chase in a sea of KW at the Brook Road Culvert Site. Year 2 of managing this site. Both KW sites on Brook Road are now under management, on our way to making Brook Road, KW-Free!



Getting ready to take on a new site at the corner of Cricket Hill and Battle Row. One of those great experiences where the land-owner was delighted to see us come along just when he was recognising the problem. This will be a great team effort. All of the other known sites of KW on Battle Row (there are three) are now all under management.

### Why are we intent on stopping the spread of KW?

1. If left alone KW will create a solid mono-culture in an area and crowd out all other plants.
2. A single patch of KW is the birthplace of more patches – any part of the plant can be moved along through road works, mowing, flooding events, or any kind of excavation activity; those pieces will take root and create a new mono-culture.
3. KW does not hold the soil like plants with more complex root systems and therefore allows soil to erode more easily (and spreading the plant with the erosion).
4. It is an extremely aggressive grower, able to penetrate through paved roads and house foundations.
5. It is extremely difficult to eradicate once it takes hold.

**EDRR (early detection, rapid response) matters! It doesn't just stop a small patch of KW from becoming a LARGE one; it stops it from becoming MANY patches.  
Act Early and Persist.**