

Town of Randolph
Conservation Commission
Minutes of February 16, 2026

Members Present: Gary Newfield, Nathan Peters, Philip Guiser, and Meica Magnani

Members Excused: Walter Graff

Public: Shelli Fortin, Minutes Taker

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Gary Newfield

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Nathan Peters, seconded by Philip Guiser, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 26, 2026, as presented.

Review Pros and Cons of Glyphosate

Meica Magnani advised that she reached out to a wildlife biologist concerning the pros and cons of the use of glyphosate, which she found is standard practice. If used, they should try to use the smallest concentration they can, which is usually between 2% and 5%. Magnani advised that hardwater can reduce the effectiveness. Magnani advised that many of the articles that she found stated that more research is needed, and articles went back and forth concerning the impact on soil health, microorganisms, fungal communities, diversity, and the ability of native species to re-establish in the area. Gary Newfield noted that Japanese Knotweed itself releases chemicals that reduce biodiversity, and that the removal of plants disrupts soil balance as well. It was noted that glyphosate quickly degrades in northern climate conditions.

The effect on earthworms was discussed, and it was noted that earthworms are not native to the Americas. Jumping worms are also an invasive species.

Magnani noted that she was especially concerned about the effect of glyphosate on frogs and amphibians. Newfield noted that there are special regulations when spraying near water and they would have to be very careful. The use of stem injections can also be used near water. Phil Guiser noted that there are many locations of Japanese Knotweed in Randolph, and they could begin the process by choosing sites away from water. Nathan Peters noted that almost every spot along Durand Road is near water, as it is growing near the culverts that were replaced.

Magnani noted that in her research, she found that the surfactant used may have just as much of an impact as the glyphosate itself. They will need to be careful what they choose to use for a surfactant, as this can have a big impact on frogs and amphibians, as well as people.

Newfield advised that Knotweed seeds are easily transported, however the root system seems to be the main way in which it spreads. Newfield noted that 2/3 of the plant's biomass is underground, and the roots can be up to 10 feet deep and travel up to 20 feet. Rhizomes can stay dormant for up to 20 years. Prevention and early detection are key.

Newfield noted that to reduce the amount of spraying, the Knotweed can be cut back early in the season. Although you cannot eradicate the Knotweed, it can be controlled. Nathan Peters noted that it will need

repeated applications. Peters shared concerns that repeated applications could be especially damaging to the soil.

Next Steps Regarding Japanese Knotweed on Durand Road

After discussion, the Commission decided to hold another meeting to address unanswered questions concerning the eradication process. Paul Eaton, of Keep It Native, will be contacted to see if he could attend a Zoom meeting to discuss the concerns. In the meantime, they could work on identifying locations of Knotweed to get baseline data, and educate the public on how to recognize it. Newfield advised that Joel White was invited by the Forest Commission to speak about invasive species at the Community Forest Day, along with Elise Lawson concerning iNaturalist.

Newfield noted he was in favor of controlling the Knotweed problem, and referenced to issues on the Baker River in Plymouth, stating he would not want to see this outcome for the Moose River. It was suggested that they have Mr. Eaton take a look at Durand Road and give a quote as to what the cost would be.

When asked if the Commission would like to put the project out to bid, Philip Guiser noted that they would need a specific plan in order for companies to provide estimates. The Committee agreed that this was a learning process and getting a low price was not as important as getting someone responsible.

When asked about notifying landowners, it was noted that owners will receive a letter, however the Town does not need permission from landowners to spray within the right of way. An article in the weekly was suggested. Phil Guiser stated that a public hearing should be held so that residents can be informed of the project. A hearing in June was suggested, so that summer residents could also attend.

The Committee again suggested that they speak with the Selectboard concerning mowing, as Knotweed can be spread this way. The Commission will also contact the Campton Conservation Commission to see how they handle mowing, as well as the eradication of Japanese Knotweed. Members liked the idea of contacting other Conservation Commissions in the state to see how they handle this issue.

Gary Newfield advised that he did speak with Kelly Eggleston about the use of glyphosate, and she advised that effects vary depending on soil type and that ongoing research is needed.

Other

A tentative date of March 23 was chosen for the next meeting. Gary Newfield will check with Walter Graff and Paul Eaton to see if this date works.

Adjournment

On a motion from Nathan Peters, seconded by Meica Magnani, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelli Fortin
February 17, 2026