

SECTION 3: PILOT PROJECT

FINAL REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE
PLAN COMMISSION

Sustainability Working Group: Pilot Project Summary

The Sustainability Working Group (“SWG”) proposes to host an event intended to both raise funds and awareness for a local volunteer organization, Friends of the Green Bay Trail. Led by Glencoe resident, Betsy Leibson, Friends of the Green Bay Trail is dedicated to the eradication of European buckthorn and other invasive species along a ¾-of a mile section of the Green Bay Trail between Harbor Street and the Scott Street overpass. (A description of the Green Bay Trail is below.) In addition to cutting the buckthorn and treating the roots with herbicide, Ms. Leibson, along with over 55 volunteers, nine businesses and six educational organizations, has planted new native grasses and wildflowers grown from seeds in local commercial greenhouses.

What is Buckthorn?

Buckthorn is a shrub with elliptical, toothed leaves and sharp spines; it creates dense thickets that crowd native vegetation. Buckthorn was introduced in North America from Europe and Asia in the early-1800s. It is a tough, durable tree for certain areas where few other trees will survive. Buckthorn spreads quickly thanks to its black fruits that are dispersed by birds into open lands and woodlands. Along with garlic mustard, purple loosestrife, and Japanese and bush honeysuckles, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has recognized buckthorn as an “invasive plant”.

Invasive Plants

An invasive plant has the ability to thrive and spread aggressively outside its natural range. A naturally aggressive plant may be especially invasive when it is introduced to a new habitat. An invasive species that colonizes a new area may gain an ecological edge since the insects, diseases, and foraging animals that naturally keep its growth in check in its native range are not present in its new habitat.

Some invasive plants are worse than others. Many invasive plants continue to be admired by gardeners who may not be aware of their weedy nature. Others are recognized as weeds but property owners fail to do their part in preventing their spread. Some do not even become invasive until they are neglected for a long time. Invasive plants are not all equally invasive. Some only colonize small areas and do not do so aggressively. Others may spread and come to dominate large areas in just a few years. Below are some categories to illustrate degree of invasiveness.

Invasive species damage the lands and waters that native plants and animals need to survive. They hurt economies and threaten human well-being. The estimated damage from invasive species worldwide totals more than \$1.4 trillion – five percent of the global economy.

Why is controlling the growth of Invasive Species a Sustainable Practice?

Specifically, buckthorn's elimination in certain contained areas is consistent with sustainable practices because it:

- out-competes native plants for nutrients, light, and moisture replacing native vegetation;
- degrades wildlife habitat;
- threatens the future of forests, wetlands, and other natural habitats;
- contributes to erosion by shading out plants that grow on the forest floor;

- forms an impenetrable layer of vegetation;
- causes long-term decline of a forest by preventing the growth of native tree seedlings;
- creates messy berries that attract birds, stain sidewalks and driveways; and
- lacks 'natural controls' like insects or disease that would curb its growth.

How can the SWG support Invasive Plant Control in Glencoe?

The SWG would like to support the sustainability efforts of this local organization by:

1. hosting a dinner to raise funds to cover the expense of planting native trees and shrubs to replace the screening lost by the removal of the buckthorn;
2. raising community awareness of the landscape detriments of buckthorn and other non-native, invasive species; and
3. endorsing the adoption of a buckthorn removal policy by the Village, Park District and School District.

The Green Bay Trail

The 9-mile Green Bay Trail runs parallel to Chicago's Metra commuter rail line north of the Chicago city limits. Stretching through North Shore towns such as Kenilworth, Winnetka, Highland Park and Lake Bluff, the corridor is flanked by restaurants, shops, community parks and beautiful homes. Because the trail stays generally within a mile of Lake Michigan, you can take any number of on-road side trips for beachfront views of the lake.

The Green Bay Trail runs along the east side of Chicago's Metra Union Pacific North line (UP-N commuter rail) almost entirely along the route of the former Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee (CNS&M) interurban electric railroad, from Greenleaf Avenue in downtown Wilmette to the junction of Saint Johns Avenue & Sheridan Road at the southern edge of downtown Highland Park. Here it turns into the Robert McClory Bike Path.

The trail is suitable for even the youngest of riders, although the route does use some sidewalks and even a very small portion of residential road in Kenilworth. In addition, the surface alternates between asphalt and crushed limestone. Inexperienced cyclists and those with young children should use particular caution at road crossings and with any road riding.

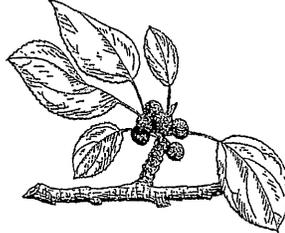
This is a true multi-purpose trail. Commuters take the trail to train stations along the way, bikes are allowed on the Metra in limited numbers; children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult when bringing a bicycle, and residents and tourists alike use the trail for exercise and car-free travel between communities.

Nearing Highland Park you may find people flocking to Ravinia, one of Chicagoland's best music venues. An open-air, covered pavilion is used for symphony concerts, dance and pop concerts, while smaller indoor theaters showcase chamber music performances and dance recitals.

By the time you reach the St. John's Avenue trailhead, and northern end of the trail, you will appreciate the many restrooms, public telephones, playgrounds and parks afforded by the proximity of the commuter line. Another bonus of the adjacent rail line: if you are tired after your one-way trip, just hop a Metra train for the return trip.

The Village of Glencoe
Sustainability Working Group
Invites you to join us for

GLENCOE'S BUCKTHORN BARBECUE



Benefitting the Restoration Efforts of
Betsy Leibson and Friends of the Green Bay Trail

Cocktails, Dinner & Presentations by
Betsy Leibson, Friends of the Green Bay Trail
Charlotte Adelman, author, The Midwestern Native Garden
Dr. Robert J. Kirschner, Chicago Botanic Garden
Stella Nanos, General Manager, Glencoe Golf Club

Thursday, October 18, 2012
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Glencoe Golf Club, 621 Westley Road, Glencoe
Casual Attire

Ticket Required - \$75/person
Payable by check only to "Village of Glencoe"
Send check to Village Hall - 675 Village Court
Please RSVP to Nathan Parch by Friday October 12
nathanp@villageofglencoe.org 847-835-4111

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:
www.villageofglencoe.org/about/sustainability/news_events.aspx
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cpzdajydq8>



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 8, 2012

Contact: Nathan Parch, Community Development Analyst
847-461-1118 (Direct)

Sustainability Group to Host October 18 Benefit Event for Friends of the Green Bay Trail Organization

Glencoe, IL – The Village of Glencoe Sustainability Working Group (“SWG”) is hosting a benefit event on Thursday, October 18th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Glencoe Golf Club, 621 Westley Road, to raise funds and awareness for local volunteer organization, Friends of the Green Bay Trail. Tickets are \$75.00 per person and include cocktails, dinner, and presentations by Charlotte Adelman, author of [The Midwestern Native Garden](#), and Robert Kirschner, Director of Restoration Ecology at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Tickets must be purchased in advance with checks made payable to “Village of Glencoe”. Please contact Nathan Parch at Village Hall to RSVP and purchase tickets – (847) 461-1118.

The Friends of the Green Bay Trail, led by Glencoe resident Betsy Leibson, is dedicated to the eradication of European buckthorn and other invasive species along a ¾-of a mile section of the Green Bay Trail between Harbor Street and the Scott Street overpass. In addition to cutting the buckthorn along the trail and treating the roots with herbicide, Ms. Leibson, along with a team of volunteers, businesses, and educational organizations, is working toward replanting the area with new native grasses and wildflowers. Funds raised at the Buckthorn Barbeque will be used to purchase additional native plantings for the Green Bay Trail.

Buckthorn is a shrub first introduced in North America from Europe and Asia in the early-1800s. Its elliptical, toothed leaves and sharp spines create dense thickets that spread quickly due to its

black fruits that are dispersed by birds into open lands and woodlands. Along with garlic mustard, purple loosestrife, and Japanese and bush honeysuckles, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has recognized buckthorn as an “invasive plant”. An invasive plant has the ability to thrive and spread aggressively outside its natural range, damaging the lands and waters that native plants and animals need to survive.

The Sustainability Working Group supports the removal of buckthorn as a sustainable practice because it:

- Out-competes native plants for nutrients, light, and moisture replacing native vegetation;
- Degrades wildlife habitat;
- Threatens the future of forests, wetlands, and other natural habitats;
- Contributes to erosion by shading out plants that grow on the forest floor;
- Forms an impenetrable layer of vegetation;
- Causes long-term decline of a forest by preventing the growth of native tree seedlings;
- Creates messy berries that attract birds, stain sidewalks and driveways; and
- Lacks 'natural controls' like insects or disease that would curb its growth.

For further information regarding this event please contact Nathan Parch at Village Hall at (847) 461-1118 / nathanp@villageofglencoe.org.

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