



Policy on the Release of Biological Control Agents

The Trustees prohibits the release of non-native biological control agents on its reservations except where research and best management practices (BMPs) demonstrate a biological control agent is both “safe” and prudent to release. Specific biological control agents will be evaluated on a case by case basis and guidelines developed as necessary.

Exotic invasive species are present at many of The Trustees’ reservations and primarily threaten ecological features and systems, but also impact scenic and cultural resources (e.g., historic landscapes) and in some cases result in financial impacts. Due to the scale of the threat and/or the efficacy of control options, biological controls may represent the most prudent approach and in some cases the only viable option for the control of exotic invasive species.

The Trustees will consider the release of biological agents where the agent:

- has been approved for release by the federal¹ and state governments²
- has been adequately tested and demonstrated to be both an effective control on the target species and not a threat to native species and ecosystems
- and it has been previously released into a natural setting, preferably within Massachusetts or adjacent state

¹ *USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection Quarantine unit (APHIS PPQ) controls the importation approval process and release of biological control agents. (The Plant Protection Act of 2000 gives APHIS the authority to regulate "any enemy, antagonist or competitor used to control a plant pest or noxious weed.")*

² *While no formal regulatory review exists, coordination with the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation is desirable for tracking.*

Proposal to release a biological control agent at The Trustees

This form will be used to guide decision making at The Trustees where a threat from an exotic invasive plant or animal has been identified on a Trustees' property and a biological control agent is being considered. Prior to the release of any control agent, the Regional Ecologist will complete the following information.

Property: _____

Species to be released: _____

Rationale:

Has the agent been approved by state and federal governments for release?

Has agent been released in MA? If yes where?

Potential concerns / risk assessment?

Source of agent to be released?

Cost? How will agent be paid for?

What monitoring will occur?

Approved by:	Regional Ecologist	_____	Date: _____
	Regional Director	_____	Date: _____
	Property manager	_____	Date: _____