

Forest Hero! Network

Spreading the word, not the plant!

How we present messages about invasive plants is crucial in making our work successful. Here are some philosophies and phrases that we've found often resonate with Vermonters, but remember to meet people where they are (e.g. there is a time and place for certain parts of these messages, and it's important to know your audience):

Philosophies

- *Keep a positive attitude, and spin on a given situation.
 - e.g. instead of focusing on trying to manage every non-native invasive plant, set priorities and achievable goals --turn a big problem into smaller, doable solutions
- *Eradication is not the goal.
 - i.e. many non-native invasive plants are well established in the landscape, but we can effect change on smaller scales to protect priority sites, and establish long-term control and containment
- *Recognize. Remove. Replant.
 - i.e. identification is an important first step. Removing non-native invasive plants is a good second step, but not the final one. Replanting or encouraging the reestablishment of existing native plant populations is critical in ensuring successful control and containment. And monitoring is part of continued stewardship of a site.
- *Non-native invasive plants are a symptom of historic poor land use and information.
 - This does not imply intent.
- *Non-native invasive plants are not "evil" and they are not going away.
 - i.e. prescribing intent to a species that is just doing what it does, can lead to compassion fatigue. With complete eradication not always possible, it's important to consider that having native plants present may be more important than having all non-native invasive plants absent.

Phrases

- *Spread the Word, Not the Plant.
- *You Can Make a Difference
- *Learn. Get Involved. Make a Difference.