

Policy: Plants of Concern on MAI Land

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This policy acknowledges that the Monhegan Associates by-laws are the governing document for all Monhegan Associates activities. With that in mind, this policy supersedes all prior policies or statements specifically related to the contents of this document.

Purpose

This policy describes procedures to be employed when a plant is proposed as potentially harming the Monhegan Wildlands ecosystem or presenting undo risk to the health or safety of visitors to the Monhegan Wildlands. Such a plant will be referred to as a "Proposed Plant of Concern" (PPoC). This policy ensures that any plant proposed as a PoC is given informed consideration before any form of management is enacted in the Monhegan Wildlands.

Scope

The scope of this policy includes the nomination of a *PoC*, deliberation on its impacts (including assembly of a study committee and resources and expertise they may consult), any recommendation for management actions, decisions concerning recommendations, follow up monitoring, and reporting. Note that Poison Ivy is addressed with its own policy (see [Policy for management of Poison Ivy](#)). Any recommended management actions emerging from the implementation of this policy shall respect the policy on herbicide use (see [Policy on Herbicides in the Monhegan wildlands](#)).

This policy applies only to land owned and governed by MAI.

Policy

Monhegan Associates seeks to preserve the Monhegan Wildlands for posterity with a stewardship ethos that allows natural processes to unfold with minimal human intervention. This policy sets forth a set of processes governing reflection, decision making, action, monitoring, and reporting on those rare instances where active management may be required to control the impacts of a plant of concern.

Implementation

Definitions:

- **Plant of Concern (PoC)** - a plant species that has been determined to harm the Monhegan Wildlands ecosystem or presents an undo risk to the health or safety of visitors to the Monhegan Wildlands.

- **MAI** - Monhegan Associates Incorporated
- **The Wildlands** - those areas of Monhegan, Manana, and other nearby islands owned by Monhegan Associates and not currently leased to another entity.
- **The Village** - The portion of Monhegan Island that is not owned by Monhegan Associates

1. Any individual may submit a written request to the Wildlands Coordinator, info@monheganassociates.org, that a plant species be considered a *PoC*. Such a request will include:
 - a. Location of plant. Example: "I saw this plant (name) on this trail on this date"
 - b. Reason for concern. Example: "X plant triggers skin rashes to humans" the nature of their concern.

2. The Ecology Committee will review the written request and decide if the plant warrants study. If the request is accepted it will trigger the following actions:
 - a. The Wildlands Committee will be informed that a new request has been made and has been approved to be studied.

 - b. A *PoC* Study Group will be formed composed of no fewer than three members of the Ecology Committee and a member of the MAI Science Advisory Group. Note: if there is not a Science Advisory Group, then 3 members of the Ecology Committee will be adequate.

 - c. The *PoC* Study Group will develop a plan to study the plant species in question. This plan should consider a range of scientific input and note additional resources and expertise the Study Group will consider.

 - d. The *PoC* Study Group will complete its study and prepare a report. The report will include the following:
 - i. Full description of the proposed *PoC*

 - ii. Present distribution in the Wildlands

 - iii. Reasonable estimate of its long-term future distribution in the absence of human intervention

 - iv. A balanced appraisal including its possible benefits to the Monhegan Wildlands and a summary of points of view of whether it poses a threat to the Monhegan Wildlands ecosystem and/or to the health or safety of visitors to the Monhegan Wildlands. In addition, if an action is suggested then the risks and benefits of that action should be described. [This description should note the role of expert consultants and outside resources.]

 - v. If the committee recommends human intervention, the recommendation should include specific treatment options and recommended actions, a timeline of when and where intervention will take place in consultation with the Wildlands Committee, a budget, and plans for monitoring and assessing actions.

 - vi. Completed reports as described above will be kept by the Ecology Committee. Will be available for review by request.

3. The Ecology Committee will review the report and decide whether to approve recommendations in the report.
4. If the report is approved, the findings will be shared with the Trustees.
5. Trustees budget approval only if the cost of activity will cost more than \$2000. If the implementation is less than \$2000, the cost will fall under the Wildlands Committee budget.
6. Once *PoC* is approved, the Wildlands Committee will be informed by the Chair of the Ecology Committee. Implementation will be the responsibility of the Wildlands Committee.
7. If interventions are approved, to measure the effectiveness of the interventions, The Wildlands Coordinator will map each of the *PoC*'s every two years on the trails and in the Wildlands. A summary report of mapping will be created that will provide information to see if mitigation is effective and submitted to the Ecology Committee. For mapping purposes poison ivy is a *PoC*
8. A list of *PoC*'s and grandfathered *PoC*'s, will be kept in Appendix A.

No human intervention intended to control the occurrence or distribution of plants should be undertaken in the Wildlands outside of the strictures of this policy (or other related policies [i.e., the Poison Ivy Policy]).

Internal References

Internal references - Referenced internal to MAI - other policies, bylaws, etc

[Policy for management of Poison Ivy](#)

[Policy on Herbicides in the Monhegan wildlands](#)

[Policy for the Evaluation of Requests to conduct Scientific Research on Monhegan Associates' Wildlands](#)

External References

External references - articles,

Rationale

As the MAI has matured as an organization and with growing awareness of the complexity of ecosystem function and the potential unintended deleterious effects that can result from human intervention, there is a need for a reflective policy to guide stewardship of the Monhegan Wildlands, as it relates to Plants of Concern. This policy sets forth a prevailing philosophy (that is, to allow natural processes to direct the function and evolution of the Wildlands whenever possible) and a policy allowing members to raise concerns and to have those concerns examined deliberately so that any human intervention intended to control a *PoC* in the Wildlands is arrived at by consensus and with the fullest possible consideration of the relevant conservation and scientific understanding.

Appendix A

Approved Plants of Concern and legacy Plants of Concern

note: Completed reports are kept by the Ecology Committee and will be available for review by request.

1. Poison Ivy (legacy *PoC* no report available) see Poison Ivy Policy