



Restoration of the Reading Town Forest

Town Forest Committee

Restoration of Forest Health

- ▶ Dead pine tree removal
- ▶ Invasive plant control
- ▶ Replanting of trees
- ▶ Dog waste removal

Red pine trees in the Town Forest are dying due to climate change and invasive plants are widespread



Red Pine Trees:

- ▶ Red pine trees were planted starting in the 1930s as a resource to be periodically harvested
- ▶ Red pines are suited for more northern latitudes
- ▶ Climate change has stressed the red pines
- ▶ This stress makes the red pines vulnerable to fungus and insects such as pine scale
- ▶ Most of the dead red pine trees were removed before they could fall and injure users of the Town Forest or catch on fire



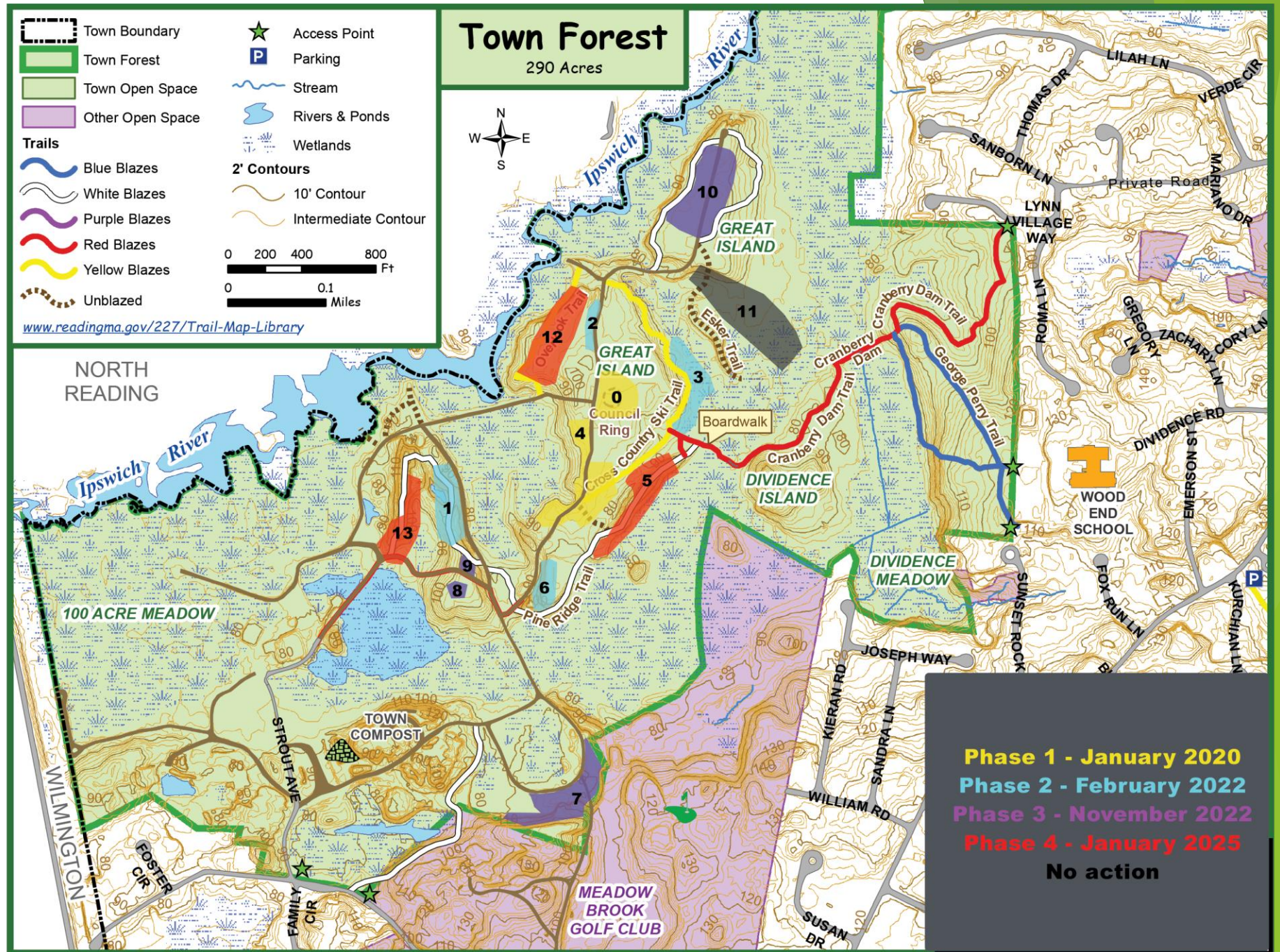
Work to Date:

- ▶ Phase 1 removed dead trees on 4.5 acres in January 2020 at a cost of \$28,400 (Town funds)
- ▶ Phase 2 another 4.5 acres at a cost of \$22,900 January 2022 (Town funds with a \$10,000 grant from DCR)
- ▶ Phase 3 another 4.8 acres at a cost of \$36,493 November 2022 (ARPA funds with a \$10,000 grant from DCR)
- ▶ Phase 4 another 5.1 acres at a cost of \$81,414 (Town funds with a \$10,000 DCR grant)
- ▶ Projects were bid and managed by Reading DPW



Dead Tree Removal Program areas by phase

The major effort is complete



Invasive Plants:

- ▶ Invasive plants such as buckthorn, Japanese knotweed, tree of heaven and black swallow-wort have become firmly established in the Town Forest
- ▶ The adjacent Compost Area is a reservoir of invasives that will spread into the Town Forest
- ▶ If not controlled now, native plants will be crowded out and the Town Forest will be a tangle of invasive plants



Buckthorn



Tree of Heaven



Black Swallow-wort



Japanese Knotweed

Invasive Plants Work to Date:

- ▶ Volunteer buckthorn pulling by Scouts, Town residents and others such as Amazon Robotics
- ▶ Phase 1 buckthorn treatment June 2022 at a cost of \$9,545 (Town funds)
- ▶ Phase 2 buckthorn treatment completed November 2023 at a cost of \$40,600 in ARPA funds
- ▶ Phase 3 in May 2024 with a \$6,930 DCR grant and \$2,310 in Town funds
- ▶ Phase 4 treatment August 2024 at a cost of \$9,800 (ARPA funds)
- ▶ Phase 5 in May 2025 with a \$18,750 DCR grant and \$34,458 in Town Funds



Replanting Trees

- ▶ Scouts tree replanting
- ▶ Scouts Trees for Reading Fund





TREES FOR READING

A TOWN FOREST REFORESTATION PROJECT



Scan QR Code to make a donation to Trees for Reading

Dog Waste

- ▶ Dog waste damages the environment and exposes people and dogs to disease
- ▶ Some people mistakenly believe dog waste decomposes quickly without consequence
- ▶ Viruses and parasites can be viable for years in the soil
- ▶ No one wants to step in it
- ▶ Picking up dog waste is required under Reading General Bylaw 8.8.3.3, violation of which may result in a fine of up to \$300



Summary

- ▶ Dead trees cut from 18.9 acres – the major cutting projects are complete, some isolated dead trees may need to be cut
- ▶ The process to control invasive plants is ongoing and will need to extend well into the future
- ▶ Trees have been replanted by the Scouts' Trees for Reading program, the Reading Public Library Arbor Day event and others
- ▶ Planting of trees, shrubs and pollinators will continue in areas from which dead trees were cut and invasive plants removed
- ▶ Improvement is required in removing dog waste to enhance the environment and health of the Town Forest

Reading Town Forest Committee

- ▶ Jeff Lamson, Chair
- ▶ Tim Kirwan, Vice Chair
- ▶ Brandy Hopkins, Secretary
- ▶ Nancy Docktor
- ▶ Bill Hughes
- ▶ Christine Lusk
- ▶ Bill Sullivan