



OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

OSCT26-08
July 16, 2026
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Annual Herbicide Application Report 2026	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive report.	

STAFF:	Lizzy Stone, Natural Resources Program Manager
EXHIBITS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2025 Herbicide Application Map 2. 2026 Monitoring and Herbicide Treatment Map

SUMMARY

In May 2010, the Open Space Conservancy Trust adopted the Herbicide Use Protocol which prescribes the situations in which herbicide may be used on Trust properties. The protocol is updated periodically to reflect changes to best practices, which are driven by research on treatment effectiveness, environmental impact, and other factors. The protocol requires City staff to report to the Trust annually on the recent use and planned uses of herbicides for the year.

2025 REPORT

In 2025, Mercer Island’s Natural Resources team conducted monitoring for yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), knotweed (*Polygonum* spp.), yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), spotted jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), and shiny geranium (*Geranium lucidum*) in Pioneer Park or Engstrom Open Space. Yellow archangel was the only one of those species found on Trust property.

Yellow archangel was first identified and treated in Pioneer Park in 2010. This initial treatment was largely successful and eradicated approximately 90-95% of the infestation. Regular monitoring of the area has resulted in subsequent treatments to manage remaining infestations. In 2025, lingering patches of yellow archangel were identified along the north edge of the NW quadrant, as well as in the south edge of the SE quadrant. Both populations were treated in September with a formulation of 1.5% triclopyr, 2.5% glyphosate, and 2% adjuvant. All products used were aquatic-approved formulations. Adjacent neighbors were contacted, and resources were shared about the weed, to develop a collaborative approach to eliminating the populations.

While conducting Comprehensive Weed Removal and Invasive Removal Maintenance on over 27.3 acres of Trust property, contractors removed or treated any invasive trees that were found throughout these areas. Where invasive trees were found, seedlings were manually removed, smaller trees were cut and the cut stem was painted with glyphosate or triclopyr, and larger trees were injected using EZ-Ject lance Copperhead shells containing the herbicide imazapyr. Trees that were included in these treatments are: English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), English laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*).

Additionally, contractors removed all herbaceous weeds from areas receiving Comprehensive Weed Removal and Invasive Removal Maintenance work. The vast majority of this work was manual removal of English ivy and non-native blackberry. In select patches of non-native blackberry where the roots could not be manually removed without disturbing an adjacent native plant, contractors painted cut stems with the herbicide glyphosate or triclopyr. This was needed in situations where blackberry is growing through, or directly next to, a native plant. A cut-paint herbicide application involves cutting stems to approximately 6-inches tall and immediately applying herbicide to the cut stem using a paint brush or dropper. This approach allows for targeted control of a species, without risking off-target spray to nearby desirable species.

Invasive trees and select blackberry stems were treated throughout 23.5 acres of Pioneer Park Northeast, 10.2 acres of Pioneer Park SE, and 4.9 acres of Engstrom Open Space.

Exhibit 1 shows the areas where yellow archangel was found and treated, as well as contractor zones where surveys found at least some invasive trees or non-native blackberry populations that required herbicide treatment. This map does not represent a full survey of all non-native trees and blackberry on Trust properties.

2026 PLAN

In 2026, the Natural Resources team will again be monitoring noxious weed populations in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. The crew will survey yellow archangel, knotweed, yellow flag iris, spotted jewelweed, and shiny geranium.

Contracted crews will be conducting Comprehensive Weed Removal or invasive tree treatment work throughout 40.6 acres of Trust property. As described previously, this work will involve a thorough survey for the presence of any invasive trees or blackberry that cannot be removed manually. Additionally, contractors may encounter ivy on steep slopes that cannot be safely removed without risk of destabilizing the slope. In this case, the English ivy may be sprayed with an aquatic-approved herbicide, taking special care to avoid any nearby native plants. This comprehensive weed removal work will take place across 24.1 acres of Pioneer Park NE, 10.1 acres of Pioneer Park NW, and 6.4 acres of Pioneer Park SE. No such work will be taking place in Engstrom Open Space in 2026.

Exhibit 2 shows areas where yellow archangel has been found in recent surveys, as well as contractor zones where comprehensive weed removal work will be taking place. These contractor zones are areas where invasive tree, blackberry, or steep slope ivy treatment may occur.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report.