

Pasture Hill Road Association
Pox 1210
West Tisbury, MA 02575

To: Board of Selectmen
Town of Chilmark
P.O. Box 119
401 Middle Road, Beetlebung Corners
Chilmark, MA 02535

August 24, 2016

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of the Pasture Hill Road Association, we are writing to request that the town implement a regular program to control the spread of the invasive plants including Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) proliferating on the Chilmark town-owned land off Pasture Road which encompasses the baseball field and storage area for road materials.

Autumn olive is on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs:
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/farm-products/plants/massachusetts-prohibited-plant-list.html>

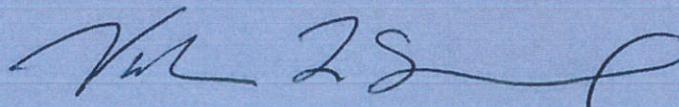
Since, Jan. 1, 2009, these plants have been banned from importation, propagation or sale within the state of Massachusetts:
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/farm-products/plants/prohibited-plant-background.html>

According to the Massachusetts Audubon Society, Autumn Olive out-competes and displaces native species. The Audubon Society website describes how to remove Autumn Olive. For a start, the simplest way to prevent the spread is to keep the field mown while they are still seedlings. For larger plants, as these seem to be, herbicide is recommended by Audubon. See:
<http://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/invasive-plants/autumn-olive>.

In the autumn, Autumn Olive plants produce a profusion of berries, which are spread by birds and which consequently threaten to invade our fields along Pasture Road and those of other landowners to the north and south, as well as the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Peaked Hill reservation. Consequently, it would be best to remove the bushes now before the appearance and spread of the berries in the fall. We would like to ask the town to maintain its property by, at the very least, keeping the fields mowed to prevent the spread of this very invasive plant.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Valerie Sonnenthal, President
Pasture Hill Road Association