

Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows Annual Report for 2013

This report recaps the accomplishments of the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) in 2013 and an update of happenings during the year. We wish to thank everyone who has helped in one way or another with these efforts.

Stewardship Activities

Education and Outreach

This year we finished and distributed our first decade report reviewing our activities since 2002. We also produced a new guide map for AGM which is posted on the kiosks and available on our website: www.foagm.org

Mowing of upland meadows

Three years ago, we undertook a project to restore the upland "entry meadow" at the northwest corner of AGM, which had been rapidly reverting to woodland, to its historical open condition. The goals of the project, guided by a study performed for AGM by Mass Audubon and approved by the Lexington Conservation Commission, were to preserve the meadow's scenic beauty and to promote diversity of habitat, including that of the American Woodcock.

In the fall of 2010, with the assistance of a large group of volunteers, we cleared the area of trees and dense shrubbery. In the spring of 2011, we planted a mix of native wildflowers in the southwestern corner of the meadow. Since that time, with the help of volunteers, we have worked to control invasives and the re-growth of woody vegetation by hand trimming.

To maintain this lovely meadow, we commenced this year what we anticipate will be an annual or biannual mowing program. The work was scheduled in the early fall to avoid interference with nesting birds and to minimize the impact on wildflowers.

Invasive plant control

We continue our efforts to clear and maintain an approximately 100-yard stretch of AGM along the Minutemen Bikeway that had become densely overgrown with the invasive plant Japanese Knotweed. Permanent eradication of this invasive is extremely difficult, particularly without the use of herbicides. However, over the last ten years, with volunteer labor and purely mechanical means, we have succeeded in keeping this area mostly knotweed-free, preserving a stunning view of the Meadows from the bikeway.

Financial

Donations to AGM in 2013 were about the same as in 2012. However income exceeded expenses and we continue to hold healthy cash balances. It is satisfying to note that all of our income is from individual donations and employer matches, so we are fully supported by the generosity of our dedicated members and not dependent on municipal budgets, grants, corporate funding, or fundraising events. FoAGM also continues its successful partnership with the Arlington Land Trust (ALT) as fiscal agent.

Summary of activity in FoAGM's fund balances as of the end of 2013:

2013 Income

\$ 1,490.00 in 25 donations

2013 Expenses

\$ 250.00 Meadow mowing

\$ 237.49 Printing of first decade report

\$ 76.63 Workday expenses

\$ 564.12 Total Expenses

Fund Balance as of December 31, 2013

\$ 12,018.99 FoAGM fund balance at beginning of the year

+\$ 925.88 Net change

\$ 12,944.87 FoAGM fund balance at year-end

We thank our new and trustworthy regular donors who have contributed to the preservation of one of the largest natural open spaces in the Arlington/Lexington region. Those wishing to make a tax-deductible donation can make a check out to "ALT FoAGM Fund" and mail it to FoAGM, Box 492, Arlington, MA 02476, or use a credit card online at www.networkforgood.org (Enter "arlington land" in the search field and select state of MA. Select Arlington Land Trust and enter "FoAGM" as a designation.)

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