

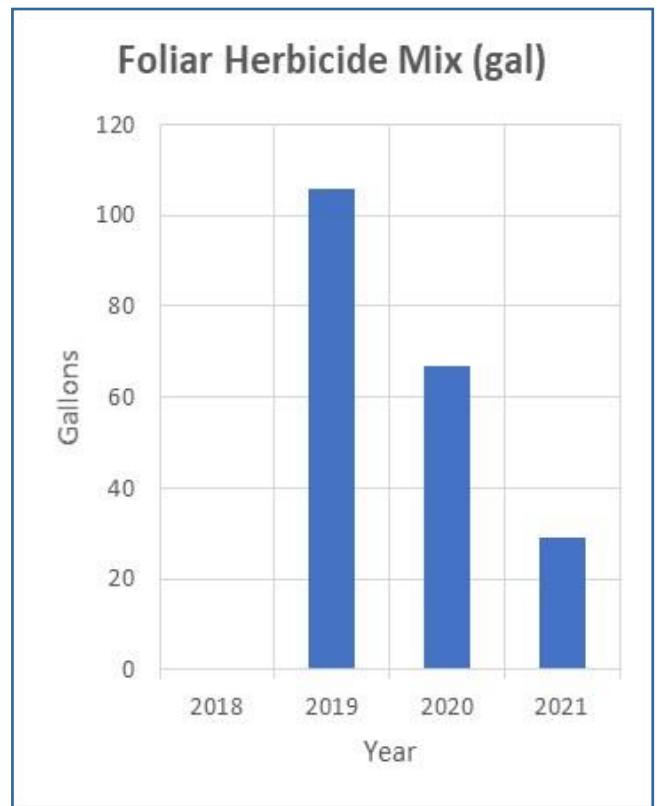
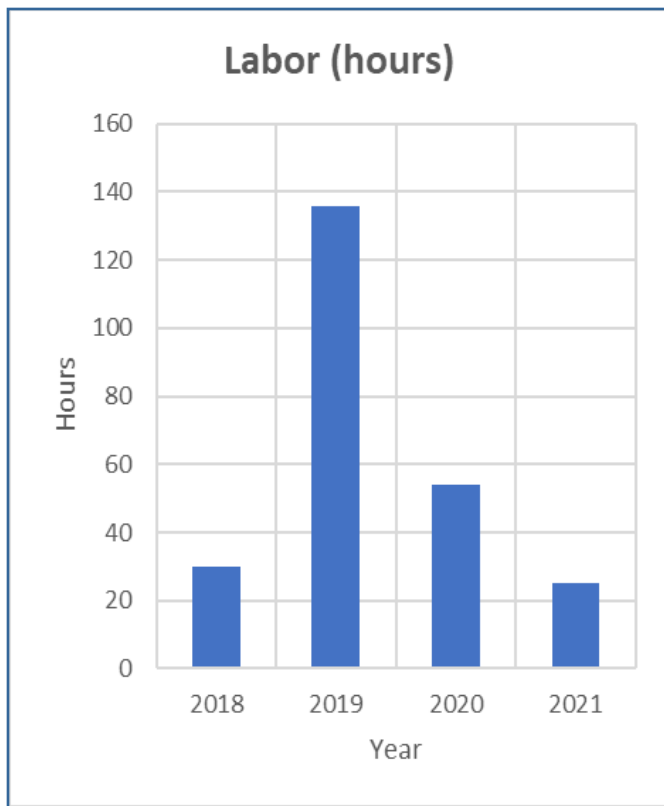
A COUPLE OF BAR GRAPHS ARE WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

By John Berry, Friends Board Member and Great Swamp Strike Team Volunteer Leader

Over the years, the Great Swamp Strike Team has recorded a number of successes. A recent example is a combined infestation of porcelain berry and Japanese wisteria at the north end of the Orange Trail. When Colin Osborn (then Great Swamp field biologist) and I first inspected the site in 2017, an 8-foot-tall sea of these invasive vines covered about half an acre of open field. The infestation extended another half-acre into surrounding woods, topping many trees. Both plants had had time to lay down abundant seed banks. In the winter of 2018–2019, the Strike Team started cutting and treating the vines growing up trees. The following spring, an ACE (American Conservation Experience) crew used bladed weed-

whackers to cut down much of the “sea,” thereby allowing the Strike Team to begin a major eradication campaign: foliar treatment of resprouts and seedlings. The team completed two passes that summer and returned to the site for two follow-up passes in 2020. This summer marks our third season of foliar treatment. We needed just two workdays to cover the site. Native flowers, bushes, and trees are reclaiming the area. Porcelain berry and wisteria have not been eradicated, but this once severe infestation has become an annual maintenance project. More importantly, it is no longer a source of seeds for further invasion of Great Swamp NWR.

Orange Trail: Porcelain Berry and Wisteria Infestation



The Strike Team uses an herbicide mix called FS1 to foliar treat woody plants such as porcelain berry and wisteria. To restore this particular habitat, the team has carried almost 1,700 pounds of FS1 from the Meyersville Road trailhead to the site, a distance of approximately half a mile.