NEW START FOR DYING RED PINE STANDS AT AMHERST COLLEGE

The College has begun a several-year project that will result in the replacement of about 35 acres of red pines with a mix of native trees and shrubs.

Red pines are not native to this part of the country but were planted at the College and many other New England sites in the late 1930’s following the Great New England Hurricane. After nearly 80 years of growth their growth has stagnated and they are now highly susceptible to disease and insect attack. Consequently, they now face a triple threat – a root rot, a red pine blight, and a new insect arrival, the Red Pine Scale. They are beginning to die in large numbers, presenting an unsightly safety hazard to those on campus. Trees that do appear healthy are expected to succumb to these problems within only a few years.

The College’s plan, beginning with the red pines near the tennis courts, is to harvest and chip the pines and then to plant hundreds of native trees. The new trees will start as 4-foot tall “whips” that will eventually fill the growing space. The new species will include red and white oak, sugar maple, shagbark hickory, tuliptree, American beech, white pine, and white cedar. Instead of plantation-like rows of doomed, non-native trees, the new tree mix will be more reflective of a natural forest.

To accomplish the project, the College Facilities Department has worked closely with the biology and environmental studies faculty, the Sanctuary Stewardship Committee, and consultant conservation and forestry experts.
- MAP OF COLLEGE RED PINE STANDS -

Project Overseen by:
Amherst College Sanctuary Committee
Supervising Contractor – Conservation Works, LLC
Consultant Forester – Lincoln Fish, Bay State Forestry Services

For more information: College Facilities Service Center,
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