



# Municipal & Institutional Pilot Grazing Program

**Raptor Ridge Farm**

*Professional Goat-Powered Vegetation Management*

## **Serving:**

Municipalities • Universities • Parks & Recreation  
Land Trusts • Conservation Groups • Public Works

## **Credentials:**

Fully Insured • CT-Based • Safety-Compliant  
DEEP / NRCS Aligned Practices • Professional Electric Netting  
Daily Herd Checks • Public-Friendly Operations

Raptor Ridge Farm LLC • Lebanon,  
[www.raptorridge.farm](http://www.raptorridge.farm) • [bridgette@raptorridge.farm](mailto:bridgette@raptorridge.farm)

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# **1. Introduction to Raptor Ridge Municipal Programs**

## **1.1 Raptor Ridge Farm provides safe, insured, chemical-free vegetation management for public lands across Connecticut.**

Our municipal grazing program is built for invasive plant suppression, slope stabilization, woodland edge reclamation, and public-space maintenance.

### **1.2 Our grazing programs are designed with:**

- Strict safety protocols
- Professional electric net fencing
- Daily herd monitoring and check logs
- Public-friendly signage
- Low-impact operation (no machinery, no herbicides)
- CT DEEP & NRCS-aligned practices
- Detailed closeout reporting and recommended re-browse cycle
- Optional mechanical follow-up (weed-whacking, debris removal)

### **1.3 Ideal municipal use cases include:**

- Parks, trails & green ways
- Roadside buffers and medians
- Storm water facilities
- Riparian corridors
- Municipal campuses
- Open spaces and conservation lands
- Steep slopes and hard-to-reach areas

## **2. Why Municipalities Choose Raptor Ridge**

Municipal land managers choose goat-powered vegetation management because it is cost-effective, safe, flexible, and ideal for environmentally sensitive or difficult-to-access areas. Our programs are structured specifically for public properties and community expectations.

### **2.1 Key Advantages for Municipalities**

#### **2.1.1 Chemical-Free & Environmentally Safe**

- No herbicides, sprays, or chemical drift
- Safe around waterways, wetlands, and sensitive habitats
- Protects pollinators and beneficial native vegetation

#### **2.1.2 Public-Space Friendly**

- Quiet operation with minimal disturbance
- Temporary electric netting with clear signage
- Ideal for parks, trails, campuses, public events, and high-visibility areas

#### **2.1.3 Cost-Effective for Difficult Terrain**

- Goats reach areas unsafe or inefficient for machines
- Reduce labor costs for steep slopes, rocky edges, dense understory
- Lower ongoing maintenance costs with multi-cycle suppression

#### **2.1.4 Proven Invasive Species Control**

- Strong suppression of bittersweet, multiflora rose, knotweed, poison ivy, and dense thickets
- Multi-cycle approach reduces regrowth and long-term vegetation pressure
- Works especially well when mechanical follow-up or tarping is added

#### **2.1.5 Transparent Reporting & Oversight**

- Daily herd check logs
- Site photos and close-out report
- Municipal-ready documentation (insurance, safety plan, maps)

#### **2.1.6 Community Engagement Benefits**

- Residents and visitors love seeing goats at work
- Boosts municipal sustainability and green-initiative visibility
- Great for press releases, education programs, and community outreach

### **3. Municipal Pilot Program Overview**

A short-term pilot grazing project allows municipalities to evaluate results, safety, and public response before establishing a long-term vegetation management program. Raptor Ridge Farm provides all materials, documentation, and day-to-day management to ensure a smooth, professional experience on public land.

#### **3.1 Purpose of the Pilot Program**

- Demonstrate effectiveness of goat-powered invasive plant suppression
- Provide a safe, chemical-free alternative for public properties
- Evaluate site-specific needs such as fencing layout, herd size, and regrowth patterns
- Offer a small-scale preview before budgeting for multi-acre or recurring seasonal work

#### **3.2 What the Pilot Includes**

##### **3.2.1 Grazing Operations**

- 1–2 controlled grazing cycles depending on acreage and density
- Temporary electrified net fencing installed and maintained by Raptor Ridge
- Daily herd checks for safety, welfare, and progress
- Water and shelter arrangements as required

##### **3.2.2 Safety & Public-Space Compliance**

- Public safety signage posted at all access points
- Temporary fencing is low-profile and visually unobtrusive
- Goats monitored closely in high-visibility areas
- Risk assessment for hazards (dogs, chemicals, foot traffic, drainage, trees)

##### **3.2.3 Documentation & Reporting**

- Before-and-after photo documentation
- Daily check logs (available upon request)
- Final closeout report summarizing results and recommended re-browse timing
- Optional recommendations for mechanical finish, tarping, or long-term restoration

#### **3.3 Expected Outcomes**

- Noticeable reduction of invasive vines, brush, and understory vegetation

- Improved visibility along trails, road edges, and wooded boundaries
- Reduced regrowth vigor in the following weeks
- A clear baseline for future multi-cycle or multi-acre projects

### **3.4 Benefits of Running a Pilot First**

- Low-commitment introduction to targeted grazing
- Helps departments communicate outcomes to boards, councils, or budget committees
- Builds community engagement and public support
- Provides practical data for long-term land stewardship planning

## 4. Municipal Grazing Process

Raptor Ridge Farm follows a clear, standardized four-step workflow designed specifically for public land, safety requirements, and municipal expectations. This process ensures transparency, compliance, and consistent results—no matter the size of the project.

### 4.1 Step 1 — Site Review

We begin by conducting a detailed review of your property using a combination of photos, maps, and on-site walkthroughs where needed. During this stage we:

- Identify target invasive species and vegetation density
- Assess access points, parking, and equipment entry routes
- Document hazards such as dogs, chemicals, terrain, or public foot traffic
- Determine fencing layout and water needs
- Verify site suitability for grazing on public land

#### **Deliverables:**

- Site Review Summary
- Proposed fencing layout
- Safety considerations noted for staff

### 4.2 Step 2 — Municipal Grazing Plan

Using CT DEEP, NRCS, and CIPWG guidance, we create a site-specific plan outlining all operational details. The plan includes:

- Recommended herd size
- Duration of grazing cycles
- Fencing layout + signage placement
- Safety protocols for public visibility areas
- Monitoring and reporting schedule
- Public communication needs (if requested)
- Optional mechanical or restoration add-ons

#### **Deliverables:**

- Written Municipal Grazing Plan (PDF)
- Schedule of grazing cycles

- Safety signage plan

### **4.3 Step 3 — Deployment & Monitoring**

Raptor Ridge Farm installs and manages the complete grazing system. Municipal staff are **not** required to handle animals, fencing, or daily operations.

#### **During deployment, we:**

- Install temporary electric fencing
- Place safety signage around all public access points
- Set up water, mineral, and shelter depending on site needs
- Introduce and acclimate the herd to the environment

#### **Daily monitoring includes:**

- Welfare checks
- Fence integrity checks
- Vegetation progress assessments
- Clean-up and hazard reporting

#### **Deliverables:**

- Optional daily log reports
- Real-time progress photos (if requested)

### **4.4 Step 4 — Closeout & Reporting**

Upon completion of the grazing cycle(s), we:

- Remove all fencing, signage, and materials
- Conduct a final site sweep
- Document vegetation changes and goat impact
- Provide written recommendations for next steps

#### **Your closeout report may include:**

- Before/after photos
- Observed invasive species reduction
- Regrowth timelines and suppression forecasts
- Recommended re-browse schedule (typically 6–8 weeks in-season)

- Optional long-term solutions like tarping, over seeding, or mechanical finish

**Deliverables:**

- Final Closeout Report (PDF)
- Re-browse schedule
- Long-term site strategy options

## 5. Safety Protocols & Public-Space Compliance

Public safety is the foundation of every Raptor Ridge municipal project. Our protocols exceed typical grazing standards and follow best practices recommended by **CT DEEP, NRCS, CIPWG,** and municipal land-use guidelines. Every site is managed with full visibility, documentation, and predictable procedures tailored to public environments.

### 5.1 Safety Overview

Raptor Ridge Farm operates with a strict “safety-first” framework that protects the public, the animals, and municipal property. Our system includes redundant safeguards across fencing, signage, monitoring, and hazard mitigation.

#### 5.1.1 Our core safety commitments:

- No herbicides, chemicals, or hazardous products used
- Fully insured for livestock, liability, and public operations
- Trained handlers on-site daily
- Immediate response to hazards or municipal concerns
- Systems designed for high-visibility public spaces and pedestrian areas

### 5.2 Temporary Electric Fencing (Public-Safe Setup)

We use professional-grade, portable net fencing trusted by parks departments and conservation groups nationwide.

#### 5.2.1 Fencing safety features include:

- **Low-impact energizers** with compliant voltage for vegetation control—not harmful shock levels
- **Grounding and testing** prior to each deployment
- **Daily fence integrity checks** performed by trained staff
- **Secure anchoring** to prevent sagging or collapse
- **Double-gate design** for handler-only access
- **Child and pet awareness signage** around all perimeters

#### 5.2.2 Fencing is placed to avoid:

- High-traffic pedestrian corridors
- School pickup/drop-off zones

- ADA routes
- Utility access areas unless coordinated with the town

### **5.3 Public-Space Signage & Visibility**

Every project includes standardized safety signage placed according to visibility and traffic flow.

#### **5.3.1 Signage includes:**

- “Do Not Enter – Working Animals”
- “Electric Fence in Use”
- “Goats at Work – Municipal Vegetation Management”
- Contact information for Raptor Ridge Farm
- Optional QR code for community engagement

#### **5.3.2 Signs are placed:**

- At all trail entry points
- Along sidewalks, road edges, or public paths
- At any approach from residential properties
- Near parking lots or building entrances

### **5.4 Daily Monitoring & Welfare Checks**

Our handlers perform **two welfare checks per day minimum**, ensuring consistent oversight.

#### **5.4.1 Daily tasks include:**

- Animal welfare assessment (hydration, movement, appetite, behavior)
- Fence voltage check
- Hazard sweep (litter, dogs, public interaction, downed branches, etc.)
- Water refill and mineral upkeep
- Vegetation progress tracking

#### **5.4.2 Municipal staff involvement:**

**None required.**

Your team is never responsible for animals or fencing.

## **5.5 Public Interaction Policy**

For safety, the public is not permitted inside the fenced area at any time.

### **5.5.1 Public engagement guidelines:**

- Goats may be viewed from outside the fence
- No feeding or touching animals
- Goats are gentle and accustomed to people, but safety rules remain firm
- Staff respond promptly to any concerns

Optional:

We offer **scheduled educational walk-throughs** for parks departments, schools, or community groups, supervised by trained handlers.

## **5.6 Emergency Response & Communication**

Raptor Ridge Farm maintains a clear, rapid-response plan for any unusual event.

### **5.6.1 Emergency readiness includes:**

- 24/7 contact availability during active projects
- Immediate mobilization for storm events, high winds, or fallen trees
- Relocation plan if site conditions change unexpectedly
- Coordination with municipal police, fire, and public works if needed

### **5.6.2 We notify municipal contacts before:**

- Fence setup
- Herd arrival
- Weather-related delays
- Project completion

## **5.7 Insurance & Compliance Documentation**

We are fully insured and provide documentation prior to project start.

### **5.7.1 Provided upon request:**

- General liability coverage
- Livestock insurance
- Workers' compensation (if required)

- Safety plan
- Grazing plan
- Daily log summaries
- Closeout reporting

#### **5.7.2 Our practices align with:**

- CT DEEP guidelines
- NRCS targeted grazing standards
- CIPWG invasive plant recommendations
- Municipal public-space safety requirements

## **6. Program Deliverables**

Raptor Ridge Farm provides clear, transparent deliverables designed to support municipal reporting, board presentations, budgeting, and long-term vegetation management planning. Every grazing project, including pilots, includes documented outcomes and follow-up recommendations.

### **6.1 Operational Deliverables**

#### **6.1.1 Fencing & Site Installation**

- Temporary electric net fencing installed by trained handlers
- High-visibility public safety signage placed at all access points
- Gate system for handler-only entry
- Water, mineral, and shade considerations set up as needed

#### **6.1.2 Daily Monitoring & Logs**

- Morning and afternoon herd checks
- Fence voltage verification
- Hazard sweep (fallen branches, trash, off-leash dogs, etc.)
- Water refill and mineral replacement
- Optional: Daily digital log or email updates for municipal staff

### **6.2 Vegetation Management Deliverables**

#### **6.2.1 Before & After Photo Documentation**

Provided in the final report and includes:

- Photo sets from consistent angles
- Labeled species focus (e.g., bittersweet, knotweed, poison ivy)
- Notation of visibility improvements
- Summary of stand density reduction

#### **6.2.2 Vegetation Impact Summary**

A written assessment outlining:

- Target species grazed
- Defoliation percentage achieved
- Regrowth expectations

- Effectiveness of goats vs. species type
- Notes on areas requiring further action

## **6.3 Closeout & Reporting Deliverables**

### **6.3.1 Final Closeout Report**

Delivered as a PDF and includes:

- Before/after images
- Observed site conditions
- Safety compliance summary
- Herd monitoring overview
- Notes on public interaction (if any)
- Weather or site conditions affecting progress

### **6.3.2 Re-Browse & Maintenance Recommendations**

- Suggested interval for repeat grazing cycles (typically 6–10 weeks in-season)
- Notes on species requiring multi-year suppression
- Optional mechanical finish suggestions
- Optional tarping or restoration planting pathways

## **6.4 Optional Deliverables**

### **6.4.1 Municipal Education & Outreach**

Available upon request:

- On-site demonstration for staff or public
- Educational walk-through for schools or parks departments
- Press or media opportunity coordination

### **6.4.2 Extended Documentation**

- GIS or map-based fencing diagrams
- Additional photography
- Multi-cycle vegetation tracking logs
- Customized long-term vegetation plan

## **7. Site Requirements & Pre-Deployment Checklist**

For a safe and efficient grazing deployment, Raptor Ridge Farm requires several baseline conditions to be met. These ensure the safety of the public, the animals, and municipal staff while allowing for smooth day-to-day operations.

### **7.1 Site Access Requirements**

#### **7.1.1 Entry & Parking**

- Adequate space for a truck and livestock trailer
- Direct access to the fenced area to prevent goats passing through public zones
- Access route free of low branches, obstructions, or hazards

#### **7.1.2 Handler Access During Project**

- Accessible entry point for daily checks
- Gates must remain unobstructed during the full grazing window
- Municipal staff notified before any planned access restrictions in the area

### **7.2 Site Preparation Requirements**

#### **7.2.1 Hazard Mitigation**

Municipal staff should notify Raptor Ridge of any known hazards prior to deployment, including:

- Downed limbs, unstable trees, or widow makers
- Stored chemicals or treated areas
- Off-leash dog zones
- Water bodies, culverts, or drainage hazards
- Broken fencing or sharp debris

#### **7.2.2 Vegetation Considerations**

- Any toxic ornamental plants near the grazing zone should be flagged
- If present, staff should identify sensitive plantings to fence off
- Poisonous or treated vegetation must be disclosed

## **7.3 Public Access Considerations**

### **7.3.1 Foot Traffic & Visibility**

- Areas with high pedestrian activity may require expanded fencing or additional signage
- Municipal staff should alert us to:
  - School paths
  - ADA routes
  - Jogging trails
  - Community events scheduled near the site

### **7.3.2 Dog Traffic**

- Areas known for high off-leash dog incidence should be communicated in advance
- If needed, we may adjust fence setbacks or increase signage

## **7.4 Water & Shade Requirements**

### **7.4.1 Water Access**

- A nearby water source is preferred but not required
- If unavailable, Raptor Ridge will supply and transport water (fee may apply)
- Daily hydration checks are mandatory

### **7.4.2 Natural or Provided Shade**

- Trees, slope shade, or natural cover preferred
- If absent, portable shade solutions may be required depending on season

## **7.5 Pre-Deployment Coordination**

### **7.5.1 Municipal Responsibilities Prior to Arrival**

- Provide any required access permits or staff notifications
- Confirm any park/event conflicts
- Identify sensitive infrastructure (sprinklers, utilities, meters, etc.)
- Provide site contact for updates

### **7.5.2 Raptor Ridge Responsibilities**

- Conduct a final pre-deployment site walk-through

- Deliver fencing layout plan
- Confirm safety signage placement
- Establish communication channel for updates

## **7.6 Pre-Deployment Checklist (For Municipal Staff)**

### **7.6.1 Municipal Staff Checklist**

- Site map provided
- Access route confirmed
- Hazard information shared
- Events or public activity disclosed
- Sensitive plantings identified
- Water access confirmed (or alternative arranged)
- Primary point of contact assigned

### **7.6.2 Raptor Ridge Checklist**

- Grazing plan delivered
- Safety plan reviewed
- Insurance certificate provided
- Fence layout approved
- Signage ready
- Arrival time confirmed

## **8. Ideal Municipal Use Cases & Applications**

Goat-powered vegetation management is particularly effective in areas where machinery cannot safely operate, where herbicides are restricted, or where public visibility is important. The following applications represent the most common and successful municipal deployments.

### **8.1 Parks, Trails, and Public Pathways**

#### **8.1.1 Woodland Edges & Overgrowth**

- Suppression of invasive shrubs and vines
- Improved trail visibility and safety
- Reduced long-term maintenance needs

#### **8.1.2 Trail Side Invasive Management**

- Bittersweet, poison ivy, and multiflora rose suppression
- Safer access for hikers and park staff
- Reduced reliance on volunteer crews or mechanical labor

### **8.2 Roadsides & Rights-of-Way**

#### **8.2.1 Roadside Buffers**

- Goats safely clear vegetative overgrowth along road edges
- Improved line-of-sight for stop signs, intersections, and pedestrian zones

#### **8.2.2 Drainage Swales & Ditches**

- Goats access steep or wet ditches unsafe for mowers
- Reduces brush accumulation without disturbing soil

### **8.3 Storm Water & Utility Areas**

#### **8.3.1 Infiltration Basins & Outfalls**

- Remove invasive growth without machinery damage
- Maintain basin function and visibility

#### **8.3.2 Utility Easements & Access Corridors**

- Suitable for overhead utility lines

- Safe, low-impact vegetation control

## **8.4 Conservation Lands & Open Spaces**

### **8.4.1 Riparian Buffers**

- No herbicide risk to waterways
- Goats selectively browse invasive vegetation while leaving native grasses

### **8.4.2 Meadow or Pollinator Prep**

- Goats clear ground cover to prepare for restoration planting or seeding

## **8.5 School & University Campuses**

### **8.5.1 High-Visibility Sustainability Projects**

- Campus engagement
- Public relations and educational opportunities
- Safe alternative to spraying near student buildings

### **8.5.2 Woodland Classroom Areas**

- Brush clearing for outdoor learning spaces
- Poison ivy and thorny vine suppression

## **8.6 When Goats Are the Best Solution**

Goats are the preferred tool when:

- Slopes are >15%
- Herbicides are restricted or banned
- Machinery is unsafe, unavailable, or impractical
- Public visibility is high (parks, trails, campuses)
- Dense thickets or vines must be removed without soil disturbance

## **9. Pilot Program Timeline**

The municipal pilot program is designed to be simple, predictable, and easy for departments to schedule into seasonal maintenance cycles. A typical pilot project follows the general timeline outlined below, with adjustments made based on acreage, public activity, and invasive plant density.

### **9.1 Pre-Deployment Phase**

#### **9.1.1 Initial Review (Week 0)**

- Photos, site map, or GIS file reviewed by Raptor Ridge
- Municipal contact assigned
- Preliminary plant identification
- Access points identified

#### **9.1.2 Site Walk & Final Approval (Week 1)**

- Optional on-site walkthrough with municipal staff
- Fencing layout finalized
- Hazard review completed
- Municipal approvals confirmed

#### **9.1.3 Documentation Preparation (Week 1)**

- Certificate of Insurance delivered
- Safety plan and signage plan delivered
- Grazing plan finalized

### **9.2 Deployment Phase**

#### **9.2.1 Fence Installation (Day 1)**

- Electric netting installed
- Safety signage placed at all access points
- Water/mineral setup completed

#### **9.2.2 Herd Arrival (Day 1)**

- Goats introduced and acclimated
- Handler verifies all systems

### **9.2.3 Active Grazing Window (Day 1–3+)**

Duration varies by density:

- Light density: 1–2 days
- Moderate density: 2–4 days
- Heavy density: 3–7 days

### **9.2.4 Daily Monitoring (Daily)**

- Morning herd check
- Afternoon herd check
- Fence voltage verification
- Progress photo (optional)

## **9.3 Post-Grazing Phase**

### **9.3.1 Fence Removal (Final Day)**

- Complete removal of all materials
- Final hazard sweep
- Area cleared of debris or equipment

### **9.3.2 Report Preparation (Within 3–5 days)**

Raptor Ridge provides:

- Before/after images
- Vegetation impact summary
- Safety & compliance notes
- Re-browse recommendations
- Long-term vegetation strategy (optional)

## **9.4 Multi-Cycle Timeline (Optional Expansion)**

For species like Japanese knotweed, multiflora rose, or heavy bittersweet:

### **9.4.1 Cycle 1 (Early Season)**

- Initial defoliation
- Access restored

- Reduced canopy cover

#### **9.4.2 Cycle 2 (Mid-Season)**

- Weakened regrowth
- Reduced leaf size
- Open understory

#### **9.4.3 Cycle 3 (Late Season)**

- Strong suppression
- Transition to mechanical finish or tarping

### **9.5 Sample Seasonal Timeline**

#### **April–May:**

Early brush + poison ivy suppression, trail opening, slope clearing

#### **June–July:**

Heavy invasive vine suppression, knotweed cycle 1, park visibility work

#### **August–October:**

Knotweed cycle 2–3, barberry/multiflora rose suppression, fall trail prep

#### **November:**

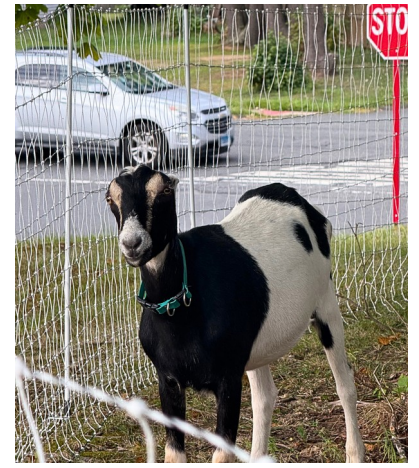
Final seasonal cycle, closeout reports, long-term planning

## 10. Before & After Examples

The following examples demonstrate typical vegetation suppression results achieved during short-term grazing cycles. All images are sourced from Connecticut properties and reflect real conditions similar to municipal parks, roadside buffers, trail corridors, and campus woodland edges.

Before/after photo documentation is provided with every municipal project to support internal review, reporting, and long-term planning.

### 10.1 Roadside Buffer Clearing



#### 10.1.1 Before (Roadside Vegetation – Suburban Right-of-Way)

Dense brush and invasive vines reducing driver visibility, crowding roadside signage, and encroaching into the right-of-way. Understory growth obstructed safe sight lines for both drivers and pedestrians.

**Location:** Suburban CT Roadside (Municipal Right-of-Way)

#### 10.1.2 After (Roadside Vegetation – Suburban Right-of-Way)

Goats cleared invasive understory, restored visibility to traffic signage, opened sight lines around curves and intersections, and reduced vine pressure on mature roadside trees.

#### 10.1.3 Impact Summary

Improved road-edge safety, better visibility for drivers approaching signage, reduced municipal trimming needs, and safer conditions for pedestrians and maintenance crews operating near the roadside.

## 10.2 Woodland Edge Understory Clearing



### 10.2.1 Before (Woodland Edge – Suburban/Trail Zone)

Heavy understory, poison ivy, multiflora rose, and ground cover thickets restricting access, visibility, and airflow around tree bases.

**Location:** Suburban CT Woodlot (Trail & Backyard Buffer Zone)

### 10.2.2 After (Woodland Edge – Suburban/Trail Zone)

Significant understory reduction, improved sight lines, safer trail access for staff and residents, and reduced vine pressure on mature trees.

### 10.2.3 Impact Summary:

Goat browsing restored visibility and airflow in a formerly overgrown woodland corridor, improving safety for trail use and reducing maintenance demands. This zone is now suitable for seasonal re-browse or mechanical finishing as needed.

## 10.3 Bittersweet Vine Suppression



### 10.3.1 Before (Tree-Vine Overload)

Dense bittersweet vines climbing mature tree trunks, restricting airflow, stressing the canopy, and filling the understory with heavy vine growth.

**Location:** CT Woodlot

### 10.3.2 After (Targeted Vine Suppression)

Goats reduced vine load, cleared around tree bases, and opened understory for follow-up trimming.

### 10.3.3 Impact Summary

Goat browsing significantly lowered bittersweet vigor, improved air flow around mature trees, and restored visibility for trail users. This pass sets the site up for effective mechanical finishing or additional re-browse cycles as needed.

## 10.4 Dense Brush & Ground Cover Thicket Suppression



### 10.4.1 Before (Dense Ground Cover, Woodland Edge Zone)

Dense invasive growth creating safety hazards, limiting sight lines, restricting boundary visibility, and providing unmanaged habitat for ticks and pests.

**Location:** Suburban CT Woodlot (Backyard & Woodland Edge Zone)

### 10.4.2 After (Cleared Ground Cover, Open Woodland Edge)

Ground layer cleared, understory opened for safe visibility, and improved visual clearance of trails, yard boundaries, and maintenance zones.

### 10.4.3 Impact Summary

Improved safety, expanded usable space, reduced tick-harboring vegetation, and better access for homeowners and maintenance crews.

## 10.5 Japanese Knotweed Suppression — HOA / Coastal Buffer Zone



### 10.5.1 Before

Dense Japanese knotweed wall (6–10 ft) surrounding a residential right-of-way. Heavy canopy and understory growth prevented visibility, access, and vegetation management.

**Location:** HOA-managed, coastal Connecticut property (Coastal Buffer Zone)

### 10.5.2 After

85–95% defoliation after one grazing cycle. Full ground visibility restored, knotweed suppression initiated, and the area made safe for follow-up maintenance or re-browse.

### 10.5.3 Impact Summary

This grazing project was completed for an HOA-managed coastal property where both machinery and herbicides were restricted. Species present included knotweed, bittersweet, and sumac adjacent to residential units and within a coastal buffer zone. Goats provided a safe, low-impact control method fully compliant with environmental restrictions.

## 10.6 Notes on Interpretation of Results

### 10.6.1 Short-Term vs. Long-Term Expectations

- Each pair represents **1 grazing cycle**, not eradication
- Goats **suppress regrowth**, reducing vigor
- Multi-cycle grazing yields stronger long-term benefits

### 10.6.2 Municipal Relevance

These examples represent what to expect for:

- Parks & trail edges
- Roadside buffers
- Storm water areas
- Riparian corridors
- Conservation land
- Campus woodland boundaries
- Vacant-lot cleanups

# 11. Municipal Pricing & Budget Planning

Raptor Ridge Farm provides clear, predictable pricing structures for municipal and institutional partners. Costs vary based on acreage, invasive plant density, access conditions, safety requirements, and the number of grazing cycles needed for effective suppression.

All pricing is quoted in writing before project initiation and can be scaled for single-site pilots or multi-acre seasonal programs.

## 11.1 Pricing Structure

### 11.1.1 Core Factors Influencing Cost

- Acreage and total area to be fenced
- Density and type of invasive vegetation present
- Slope, terrain complexity, and access conditions
- Public visibility and safety requirements
- Duration of grazing cycle(s)
- Travel distance from Lebanon, CT
- Optional add-on services (mechanical finish, restoration, debris removal)

### 11.1.2 Pilot Program Cost Characteristics

- Short-term deployment
- Includes all fencing, signage, daily checks, and reporting
- Ideal for first-time municipal clients
- Limited to 1–2 grazing cycles per site

### 11.1.3 Seasonal or Multi-Cycle Programs

For species requiring repeated suppression (e.g., bittersweet, knotweed, multiflora rose), seasonal or multi-cycle programs are available. These programs include:

- Scheduled repeat visits
- Long-term vegetation tracking
- Year-over-year suppression analysis
- Lower effective cost-per-acre over time

## **11.2 Budget Planning Options**

### **11.2.1 Annual Maintenance Programs**

Designed for municipalities seeking predictable budgeting and ongoing vegetation control:

- Annual contract with set grazing cycles
- Flexible scheduling based on department workload
- Reduced rates for multi-site agreements
- Opportunity for multi-year planning

### **11.2.2 Multi-Site Discounts**

Towns, universities, and land trusts may bundle multiple sites:

- Parks & recreation properties
  - Roadside buffers
  - Campus woodland edges
  - Utility or storm water areas
  - Conservation parcels
- This approach maximizes efficiency and lowers total cost.

### **11.2.3 Standalone Pilots**

For municipalities evaluating goat grazing for the first time:

- Single-site pilot with capped duration
- Lower commitment
- All documentation included
- Ideal for presentations to boards, councils, or committees

## **11.3 Additional Cost Considerations**

### **11.3.1 Travel Requirements**

Travel fees apply for sites beyond a defined radius from Lebanon, CT.

Travel includes:

- Transportation of goats and equipment
- Handler travel for daily checks
- Optional same-day arrival (request-based)

### **11.3.2 Mechanical Finish (Optional Add-On)**

If needed, Raptor Ridge can provide:

- Brush trimming
- Thorny stem reduction
- Debris removal
- Site preparation for restoration or seeding

Mechanical finish is ideal after goat grazing weakens vine systems.

### **11.3.3 Restoration & Habitat Options**

Add-on offerings available after suppression:

- Pollinator meadow seeding
- Hedgerow repair or planting
- Soil conditioning for restoration
- Invasive species monitoring

## **11.4 Procurement & Contracting**

### **11.4.1 Written Proposals**

Every municipal project includes:

- Itemized scope of work
- Estimated grazing window
- All required safety documentation
- Clear responsibilities for both parties

### **11.4.2 Insurance Documentation**

- Certificate of Insurance provided before project start
- Workers' comp documentation available upon request
- Optional vendor registration or compliance forms

### **11.4.3 Payment Terms**

- Invoices issued at project completion unless otherwise arranged
- Multi-cycle programs billed per cycle or quarterly
- Municipal purchase orders accepted

## **11.5 Funding Pathways**

Many towns fund grazing programs through:

- Conservation or open-space budgets
- Storm water or DPW maintenance funds
- Parks & recreation allocations
- Sustainability initiatives
- University or grant-funded environmental programs

We assist with documentation needed for grant applications or sustainability reporting if requested.

## **12. Contact Information & Required Documentation**

This section provides municipal partners with direct contact channels and a consolidated summary of all documentation available for procurement, safety review, and project approval.

### **12.1 Primary Contact**

#### **Bridgette Poper**

Phone: (860) 960-9052

Email: [bridgette@raptorridge.farm](mailto:bridgette@raptorridge.farm)

### **12.2 Documentation Provided**

#### **12.2.1 Insurance Documentation**

- Certificate of Insurance (liability)
- Livestock coverage details

#### **12.2.2 Safety & Compliance Documents**

- Safety Plan
- Grazing Plan
- Signage Plan
- Fence map and layout diagram
- Daily log sample (available on request)

#### **12.2.3 Reporting Documents**

- Before/after photo documentation
- Closeout report with vegetation impact summary
- Re-browse recommendations
- Long-term strategy options (if needed)

### **12.3 Project Scheduling & Communication**

#### **12.3.1 Scheduling Process**

- Preferred start dates provided by municipality
- Weather & site conditions reviewed prior to deployment
- Confirmation of fence setup and herd delivery timing

### **12.3.2 Communication Protocol**

- Two daily site visits (morning/afternoon)
- Immediate reporting of hazards or incidents
- Optional daily email/text updates
- Final report delivered within 3–5 business days after project completion

## **12.4 Required Municipal Information**

To ensure a safe and efficient grazing project, municipalities must provide:

### **12.4.1 Pre-Project Requirements**

- Primary point of contact
- Access instructions (gates/keys if needed)
- Notification of toxic plants or treated areas
- Notification of high public-foot-traffic zones
- Water access confirmation (if available)

### **12.4.2 Infrastructure Considerations**

- Identification of utilities or underground structures
- Sprinkler system timing (parks, campuses)
- Any scheduled public events at or near the site

## **12.5 Vendor Registration & Procurement**

Raptor Ridge Farm will complete:

- Municipal vendor registration forms
- W-9
- COI submission
- Procurement compliance acknowledgments

We support:

- Multi-department billing
- Pilot program funding requests
- Sustainability initiative documentation
- Press releases and community outreach



## **13. Long-Term Vegetation Strategy**

Targeted grazing is a highly effective tool for invasive plant suppression and long-term land management, particularly when integrated into a multi-season or multi-year strategy. Raptor Ridge Farm partners with municipalities to build sustainable vegetation management plans that reduce costs, chemical usage, and ongoing labor demands.

### **13.1 Multi-Season Approach**

#### **13.1.1 Early-Season Grazing (April–May)**

- First knockdown of poison ivy, multiflora rose, and vine growth
- Improves visibility and early access
- Ideal for park/trail opening preparations

#### **13.1.2 Mid-Season Grazing (June–August)**

- Most effective period for bittersweet and knotweed suppression
- Reduces canopy pressure on mature trees
- Opens dense understory for maintenance teams

#### **13.1.3 Late-Season Grazing (September–October)**

- Weakens final regrowth flush
- Prepares sites for mechanical finish or winter cut-back
- Ideal for year-end park maintenance cycles

### **13.2 Multi-Year Vegetation Objectives**

#### **13.2.1 Year 1 — Invasive Suppression**

- Reduce biomass and leaf load of invasive species
- Improve visibility and site access
- Establish cycle timing for best suppression

#### **13.2.2 Year 2 — Stabilization & Functional Control**

- Strengthen suppression of persistent species
- Expand grazing zones or add follow-up cycles
- Reduce reliance on mechanical or chemical methods

### **13.2.3 Year 3+ — Restoration & Maintenance**

- Integrate pollinator seeding or habitat recovery
- Transition to annual or semi-annual maintenance cycles
- Long-term cost reduction and sustainability gains

## **13.3 Restoration Pathways**

### **13.3.1 Goat-to-Meadow**

After suppression of dense vegetation:

- Over seeding with native or pollinator blends
- Soil conditioning if needed
- Follow-up maintenance grazing

### **13.3.2 Goat-to-Hedgerow**

For woodland edges:

- Remove vine pressure
- Plant native shrub species
- Protect young shrubs with temporary guards

### **13.3.3 Goat-to-Trail Improvement**

- Open trail corridors
- Reduce thorny or hazardous vegetation
- Improve sight lines and user safety

## **13.4 Reduced Maintenance Costs Over Time**

Grazing becomes more cost-effective each year when used in a cyclical program:

- Less fencing required as vegetation weakens
- Fewer cycles needed for control
- Less manual follow-up required
- Lower labor costs for municipal staff

Long-term vegetation management planning is available upon request.

## 14. Municipal Frequently Asked Questions

Municipal and institutional partners often have similar questions when evaluating targeted grazing as a vegetation management tool. The following FAQ provides quick reference answers for planning, safety, budgeting, and implementation.

### 14.1 Operational Questions

#### 14.1.1 How long will goats be on-site?

Typical municipal sites take **1–7 days** depending on density and acreage. Multi-cycle sites will require return visits.

#### 14.1.2 Do municipal staff need to handle goats or fencing?

**No.** Raptor Ridge handles all fencing, setup, monitoring, and removal.

#### 14.1.3 What happens in bad weather?

Goats continue to graze through light rain. Severe weather triggers shelter, monitoring changes, or temporary suspension of operations.

### 14.2 Safety & Liability Questions

#### 14.2.1 Is the electric fence dangerous?

**No.** It is a **low-impedance, pulsing fence** designed to deter animals, not harm people. Signage and standoff zones are clearly posted.

#### 14.2.2 What if someone enters the enclosure?

Electric fencing discourages entry. For liability, we post clear signage. Unscheduled entry incidents are logged and reported.

#### 14.2.3 Are goats safe around the public?

**Yes.** Our working herd is accustomed to public spaces, sidewalks, trails, and campuses.

### 14.3 Maintenance & Results Questions

#### 14.3.1 Will the brush grow back?

Some regrowth is normal. Goats **suppress** invasive plants; multi-cycle or seasonal programs improve long-term results.

### **14.3.2 Can goats eradicate knotweed or bittersweet?**

Not instantly. Eradication requires multi-year suppression and/or mechanical/tarp follow-up.

### **14.3.3 How soon will results be visible?**

Immediate visual impact within **24–72 hours**.

## **14.4 Budget & Funding Questions**

### **14.4.1 Do you provide formal proposals?**

Yes. All municipal work begins with a written proposal, scope, and documentation.

### **14.4.2 How is pricing structured?**

Based on acreage, density, safety needs, access, and number of grazing cycles.  
(Full explanation in Section 11.)

### **14.4.3 What funding sources do towns use?**

Common sources:

- Parks & Rec budgets
- Open space & conservation funds
- Sustainability/climate funds
- Storm water maintenance
- Grants

## **14.5 Contact & Scheduling Questions**

### **14.5.1 How far in advance should we schedule a project?**

2–6 weeks is typical. Peak season fills up fastest.

### **14.5.2 Who do we contact during grazing?**

Raptor Ridge provides a dedicated primary contact for daily updates and emergencies.

### **14.5.3 Do you work with multiple departments?**

Yes. We frequently coordinate across Parks & Rec, DPW, Facilities, Risk Management, Sustainability, and Campus Operations.

## **15. Case Study: Woodland Edge & Roadside Buffer Suppression (CT Property)**

A real example demonstrating how targeted grazing delivers fast, safe, and effective vegetation suppression in suburban public-facing environments.

### **15.1 Site Overview**

#### **15.1.1 Location**

Suburban Connecticut woodland edge adjoining a roadside buffer

#### **15.1.2 Conditions Prior to Grazing**

- Dense invasive understory
- Poison ivy, bittersweet, multiflora rose
- Limited visibility along the road edge
- Tick-heavy groundcover
- Safety concerns for pedestrians and vehicular visibility

#### **15.1.3 Municipal Relevance**

This site mirrors the conditions found in:

- Parks & recreation paths
- Campus woodland edges
- Right-of-way vegetative corridors
- Neighborhood open space parcels

## **15.2 Grazing Deployment**

### **15.2.1 Fencing & Setup**

- 300 ft. of electric netting
- Roadside setback maintained
- Public safety signage placed at approach points
- Water station installed on interior corner

### **15.2.2 Grazing Duration**

1-day grazing cycle  
(High-density vegetation)

### **15.2.3 Monitoring Activities**

- Daily welfare checks
- Fence voltage tests
- Hazard sweep
- Photo documentation

## 15.3 Before & After Results



### 15.3.1 Before

Dense brush and vine cover restricting visibility and access.



### 15.3.2 After

Significant vegetation suppression; visible tree bases; open understory; improved line-of-sight.

## **15.4 Impact Summary**

### **15.4.1 Vegetation Suppressed**

- Bittersweet vines
- Multiflora rose
- Poison ivy
- Misc. invasive brush
- Tick-heavy ground cover vegetation

### **15.4.2 Public-Safety Improvements**

- Improved roadside visibility
- Clearer walking paths
- Reduced hazard from thorny species
- Enhanced access for maintenance teams

### **15.4.3 Ecological Benefits**

- Reduced vine pressure on mature trees
- Increased airflow and sunlight penetration
- Better conditions for native plant regrowth

## **15.5 Key Takeaways**

- Goat grazing quickly transforms dense municipal-style vegetation
- Safe for roadside and public-space operation
- Minimal disturbance, no chemicals, no machinery
- Easily scaled into a multi-site municipal program

## **16. Summary & Contact Information**

Raptor Ridge Farm provides municipalities, universities, and land trusts with a safe, effective, and environmentally responsible solution for invasive vegetation management. Our grazing programs are designed to meet public-space safety requirements, deliver measurable results, and support long-term land stewardship goals.

For questions, scheduling, or proposal requests, please use the contact information below.

### **16.1 Primary Contact**

#### **Bridgette Poper**

Phone: (860) 960-9052

Email: [bridgette@raptorridge.farm](mailto:bridgette@raptorridge.farm)

### **16.2 Project Request & Proposal Information**

#### **16.2.1 How to Request a Proposal**

Municipal partners may request:

- Written project proposals
- Formal scopes of work
- Multi-site estimates
- Pilot program evaluations
- Seasonal grazing programs

Requests may be submitted via phone or email.

#### **16.2.2 Proposal Turnaround Time**

Most municipal proposals are delivered within **3–5 business days**, depending on site complexity and seasonal workload.

### **16.3 Documentation Included Upon Request**

#### **16.3.1 Standard Documentation**

- Certificate of Insurance
- W-9
- Grazing plan
- Safety plan

- Signage plan
- Site map or fencing layout

### **16.3.2 Closeout Reporting**

Upon completion of grazing:

- Before/after photos
- Vegetation impact summary
- Safety log notes (optional)
- Recommendations for re-browse cycles
- Long-term strategy overview

### **16.4 Vendor Registration & Procurement Compliance**

Raptor Ridge Farm is prepared to complete:

- Municipal vendor registration
- Required procurement forms
- Town or campus onboarding paperwork
- Digital systems registration (e.g., VendorLink, Bonfire, etc.)

We work directly with departments including:

- Public Works
- Parks & Recreation
- Sustainability/Environmental Services
- Facilities & Grounds
- Conservation Commissions
- Campus Operations

### **16.5 Service Area**

Raptor Ridge Farm provides municipal grazing services throughout Connecticut, with a primary focus on:

- Eastern CT
- Central CT
- Greater Hartford region

- Shoreline communities
- University campuses statewide

Service outside these areas are available upon request.

# Raptor Ridge Farm

## Goat-Powered Vegetation Management

Serving Municipalities • Universities • Land Trusts  
Lebanon, Connecticut

**Website:** [www.raptorridge.farm](http://www.raptorridge.farm)

**Email:** [bridgette@raptorridge.farm](mailto:bridgette@raptorridge.farm)

**Phone:** (860) 960-9052

Instagram: [@raptorridgefarmllc](https://www.instagram.com/raptorridgefarmllc)

*Thank you for your interest in Raptor Ridge Farm's municipal grazing programs.*

We look forward to assisting with your land management and restoration needs.