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SDI FINAL EVALUATION FORM 1.1

PART 1:

Journal Name:	International Journal of Plant & Soil Science
Manuscript Number:	**2014_IJPSS_13067**
Title of the Manuscript:	**An understory comparison of the exotic Phellodendron amurense Rupr. (RUTACEAE) and adjacent native canopy species in an urban and suburban woodland**

PART 2:

FINAL EVALUATOR'S comments on revised paper (if any)	**Authors' response to final evaluator's comments**
The manuscript has improved considerably. There are a few things that need to be addressed &/or commented upon & revised. They are as follows: Abstract: One of your sites is in Connecticut, which is not that close to NYC; You present t-values – is this $t_{critical}$ or a typo? i.e., do you mean p-value? L24 'economic' not 'economical' L26 unclear, please revise L159-163 This is a strange way to present CI - just show ±4.1 or whatever the value may actuallly be. How you present CI isn't the same above & below the mean value... so something is amiss..(i.e., 19.29-15.2=4.09 while 23-19.29 = 3.71) Same issues before with 't' vs 'p' value L172-175 Thus, you shouldn't even speak of them differeing at all.. they are <u>similar.</u> What would be of interest is to tell the reader if the actual species under canopy differed. Thus, impacts of invasive species may not be associated with density, but potential differences in the actual species that can establish under canopy. This can potentially have impacts on vegetation dynamics across the lanscape over time if more *P.amurense* establish throughout the forest blocks in the future; i.e., comuunity composition may change to favour species that can establish under P. *amurense* vs those that cannot. Your tables in your appendix actually show some potential impacts; i.e., there are a number of species establishing under native canopy only, as well as a number of species establishing under an exotic canopy only. This information could (should) be highlighted & then the message above about potentially changing forest composition over time could be explored.. L178-182 You could better state these results more in function of the *ecology* rather than the statistics. Please revise. L193 Is this supposed to be a heading? If not, this is a sentence fragment.. please revise L197-199 CI format not conventional L200-202 Again, the stats aren't what is of interest; rather, the ecology is what needs to explained & the stats should just be used to support your claims. As it is, it seems the reverse is highlighted.. L210 As above about subsection heading – please make it more explicit that this is what it is.. L212-216 CI format needs revising L245-246 Refer to your appendices here. It may be beneficial to explain your results a little further. Looking at your tables it is clear that a few species were found only under native canopy & a few only under exotic tree cover... perhaps if you determine which lifeforms (if any) are woody &	

can represent part of the overstory over time, you can speak of potentially changing canopy composition because of the presence/absence of *P.amarense* L265 What is a secondry publication? Also, there are many other potential causes; not just shading.. To state this is overly presumptious.	

Reviewer Details:

Name:	**Anonymous**
Department, University & Country	**Canada**