

WNY PRISM Full Partnership Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 5th 2014; 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Cornell Cooperative Extension Office/Farm & Home Center

WNY PRISM Updates

Chris Pennuto (WNY PRISM Director) started off the meeting describing the history of WNY PRISM and making special acknowledgement of Paul Fuhrmann's efforts to getting WNY PRISM up-and-running. Andrea Locke (WNY PRISM Coordinator) then updated the group on what has been accomplished during the first 5 months of 2014 and what can be expected for the rest of the year. Accomplishments included finalizing the operational guidelines and steering committee, attending PRISM Leaders Boot Camp, updating www.nyis.info WNY PRISM webpage, developing the 2014 Annual Work Plan, assisting with drafting the letter to business owners for the Water Chestnut Initiative – Chautauqua County, holding iMapInvasives Trainings in Jamestown and Lockport, beginning the 5-year strategic planning, creating the WNY PRISM logo, hiring 1 Education and Outreach Assistant, hiring 3 Stewardship Assistants and holding an Aquatic Invasive Species Management Workshop with visiting presenter Dr. Frances Lucy (Sligo, Ireland). We also discussed some of the results of the Listserve survey sent out early in 2014, which provided important baseline information for WNY PRISM.

Looking forward, WNY PRISM will complete the 5-year strategic planning, participate in Education and Outreach Events including attending festivals and presenting at workshops, expand invasive species presence and infestation data for the region through targeted surveys and iMapInvasives, develop volunteer program to assist with invasive species surveys, education and outreach and boat launch stewardship, develop invasive species priorities including prevention and early detection lists, assist partners with ongoing invasive species removal projects, distribute information, promote best management practices and promote Invasive Species Awareness Week (July 6 – 12).

Panel Discussion

Project: Times Beach Aquatic Invasive Plant Control Demonstration Project

Primary Partners: US Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District; ERDC Innovative Solutions; Great Lakes Restoration Initiative; Times Beach Nature Preserve; Ecology & Environment, Inc.; Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve

Presenter(s): Paul Fuhrmann, Ecology & Environment Inc.

Discussion: Times Beach, 56 acres located along Buffalo's Outer Harbor, was originally a confined disposal facility for dredged material. The CDF was in operation from 1972 – 1976 when it was partially filled and returned to the City of Buffalo for use as a nature preserve. Times Beach is an important migratory bird site and it sees great use as a bird-watching site and has remained open for such use. Invasive species are extensive on the site and include phragmites, Japanese knotweed, mugwort and common buckthorn. The purpose of the project was to demonstrate site-specific measures for invasive species management and encourage the participation of many partners and stakeholders. Initial treatments have already occurred on site and additional treatments/follow-up will take place over the next couple of years.

Project: Emerald Ash Borer Task Force

Primary Partners: Erie County; Ecology & Environment, Inc.; Cornell Cooperative Extension; USDA APHIS, Buffalo State College; NYS DOT; NYS DEC

Presenter(s): Sharon Bachman, Cornell Cooperative Extension; Bob Smith, NYS Nursery & Landscapers Association

Discussion: Sharon provided an update on the many things the Emerald Ash Borer Task Force has accomplished. They hosted a 1st Detector Training at Reinstein Woods this winter and will be following-up shortly with a second training. They have produced an updated brochure which includes an updated

map of confirmed infestations and participated in Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week events and educational activities. The discussion focused on the expansive list of partners involved with the EAB Task Force (agencies, municipalities, forestry professionals, business, citizen groups, universities) and how their success has created a more informed public, one that is more able to understand the impacts of invasive species. Questions about the use of trap trees and timing of when to start treating healthy trees were presented and will be brought to next Task Force Meeting.

Project: Water Chestnut Initiative – Chautauqua County

Primary Partners: Jamestown Audubon Society; Conewango Creek Watershed Association; Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission; Chautauqua County

Presenter(s): Jeff Diers, Conewango Creek Watershed Association; Ruth Lundin, Jamestown Audubon Society

Discussion: Jeff began by discussing the discovery of water chestnut in Chautauqua Lake in 2012 and the quick response that included removing the known plants. At that point they were unaware of other populations in the County. Water chestnut had been discovered at the Jamestown Audubon property earlier, however since they were unaware of other populations or the primary method of spread, they weren't actively removing the plant. After the two groups became aware of one another and the ability of birds to spread water chestnut, they began to work together to get a better idea of the expanse of water chestnut in the area (Chautauqua County and nearby natural areas in Pennsylvania). They have also been working to get information out to citizens and local business owners about the harmful impacts of water chestnut and how to report sightings. Jamestown Audubon has taken advantage of their ability to moderate the water level in their big pond to assist with access and removing water chestnut plants. Hand removal will begin shortly with a volunteer kick-off on June 21st.

Participant Updates

Bill Des Jardin (Bergen Swamp Preservation Society) – Continuing targeted phragmites treatment and assessing additional invasive species present on properties including known *Brachypodium slyvaticum* infestation.

Meg Janis (NYS Parks) – Seasonal crews including a 4 person mapping and treatment crew, boat stewards and 2 person crew focusing on the HWA surveying in Allegany State Park have started up. Parks is looking for any additional help or volunteers interested in surveying for HWA in Allegany SP.

Jeff Diers (SUNY Fredonia/Conewango Creek Watershed Assoc.) – Working to identify additional populations of water chestnut to target for removal, getting word out about the impacts and identification of the plant.

Paul Fuhrmann (E&E) – Many ongoing projects involving native plant restoration and invasive species management. Paul stressed the importance of sharing knowledge and working with a team of partners.

Sharon Bachman (CCE) – Continuing work with Emerald Ash Borer Taskforce (next meeting Thursday, June 12th @ Ecology and Environment annex @ 9:00am) and further developing/expanding the Wasp Watchers Program.

John Whitney (USDA NRCS) – NRCS not currently involved with invasive species management, but there are programs that are being used to address IS issues in other states – would like to see similar things in NY and is looking toward ways of implementing programs here.

Doug Conroe (Chautauqua County Institute) – Doug is working on creating wetlands, involved in habitat restoration and interested in shoreline sustainability/management projects.

Jane Conroe (Chautauqua Co./Jamestown Audubon Society) – Currently working with Ruth Lundin and others involved with the water chestnut initiative in Chautauqua County. As part of the Chautauqua Lake Association (name?), Jane has been encouraging landowners to install aquatic buffers of native plants to restore lakeshore, but has had some difficulty with landowners being willing to give-up their manicured lawns and neat gardens for the more natural look.

Jim Berry (RTPI) – Jim talked about Jamestown Preservation documenting WNY Biodiversity and mentioned a Naturalist Gathering he is putting together for June 19th (6 pm @ Bemus Point). The intent

of this gathering is to share knowledge, present an opportunity for field biologists to network and to identify ways to get young people interested in Field Biology. Contact Jim for more information.

Lynn Greer (USACE) – Lynn provided information about the Tonawanda Creek/Erie Canal Hydrilla Demonstration Project and the Springville Dam project to increase fish passage while continuing to block potential movement of sea lamprey up river. There will be an announcement soon for a public meeting for those interested in the Springville Dam Project.

Bob Smith (NYS Nursery & Landscape Assn.) – discussed the importance of landscapers in both the spread of some invasive species, but also the potential for change and education about the spread of cultivars and horticultural species.

Dave Spiering (Tifft Nature Preserve) – Has successfully eradicated 5 acres of once solid phragmites on Tifft Nature Preserve and Dave is looking for a seed mix (20+) species to restore treated acres. Invasive species removal (phragmites, Japanese knotweed, buckthorn, honeysuckle) is continuing.

Nicole Dimond (NYS DEC) – Updates on the Tonawanda Creek/Erie Canal Hydrilla Demonstration Project include potential dates for treatment (mid - late July). The final dates are weather dependent. There is also going to be a Hydrilla Hunt webinar (late July/early Aug) with more information coming later.

Joseph Gould (Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers) – A number of projects are coming together involving the Greenway and Niagara River Strategies.

Ba Zan Lin (Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers) –Working on projects involving the water quality in the Buffalo River and outreach to the communities using the Buffalo River for fishing. There are also a number of groups/agencies running boat steward programs this summer and Lin is looking to have a meeting of all those groups, to ensure everyone is working together and covering different/important boat launches.

Vicki Haas (Erie County DEP) – Vicki is the Buffalo River AOC Project Manager and as these projects continue to progress, she expects to reach out to Partners for information, advice and assistance to ensure restorations are successful in the long term.

Clara Holmes (NYS Parks) – Clara provided information about an Ash Seed Collection Project for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank. She is looking for volunteers interested in scouting or collecting ash seed. If interested, please contact Clara (clara.holmes@parks.nyc.gov).

Next Meeting:

Steering Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 31st

Time: 3:00 – 5:00 pm

Location: Great Lakes Center Field Station/WNY PRISM Office

WNY PRISM Full Partnership Meeting Summary
Thursday, December 4th 2014; 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters and Visitor Center

In Attendance

Mark Carra – Buffalo Audubon, Douglas Conroe – Chautauqua Co., Jane Conroe – Jamestown Audubon, Helen Domske – NY Sea Grant, Shannon Dougherty - DEC, Jack Feltz – National Grid, Joseph Gould – BNRiverkeeper, Paul Groves – Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Vicki Haas – Erie Co. DEP, Robert Haltner - USFWS, Jeff Harrington – National Grid, Paul Hess - USFWS, Mike Jabot – SUNY Fredonia, Meg Janis - OPRHP, Sandra Keppner - USFWS, Andrea Locke – WNY PRISM, Hilary Mosher – FL PRISM, Paul Fuhrmann – E & E, Chris Pennuto – SUNY Buffalo State/ WNY PRISM, James Rauch - NFBS, Mark Seider – Niagara Co. SWCD, Sharon Bachman – CCE Erie Co., Shanna Shaw – USDA/NRCS, Janine Shepherd - DOT, Loren Smith – Buffalo Audubon, Emily Staychuck – CCE Yates Co., Jennifer Tait - DEC, and Stephen Tentinger – SUNY Buffalo State

Presentations

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office and Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge Programs and Updates

Sandra Keppner, Northeast Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, spoke about the Aquatic Invasive Species Program, part of the Fisheries Program of the Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office. Additional program areas include Native Species (Lake Trout/Lake Sturgeon), Habitat Restoration, GIS, and Outreach/Education. The Aquatic Invasive Species Program includes Prevention, Early Detection and Monitoring, Control/Management, and Technical Assistance/Coordination.

2014 highlights included Ecological Risk Assessment Screening, Early Detection Sampling, and Policy Development. Utilizing funds from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), work was done on Asian Carp, Environmental – DNA (E-DNA) sampling within area rivers, and monitoring of fish and benthic invertebrates and priority areas. Priority sample sites for 2014 included Areas of Concern of Buffalo and Upper Niagara River, Lower Niagara River and Rochester and Irondequoit Bay. If funding is available for 2015, Oswego will be included in the priority sample sites. GLRI also funded work on the removal of water chestnut from Tonawanda Creek, beginning in 2008. This successful program has drastically reduced the amount of water chestnut in Tonawanda Creek. Volunteers and staff continue to monitor the area and in 2014 only isolated plants were found and removed. Additional work was done on long-term/early detection and monitoring of fish and aquatic plants along the NYS Canal System (Erie Canal) and USFWS provided assistance to the hydrilla removal effort (primary partners included USACE, NYSDEC and USFWS) in Erie Canal and Tonawanda Creek by providing the 2014 Herbicide Treatment Plan and pre, during and post-treatment surveys.

Paul Hess, Wildlife Biologist spoke about the history of the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge and invasive species efforts.

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1958 as a sanctuary for migratory birds and land acquisition was completed in 1966. The refuge covers 10,828 acres of different habitats – Forested Wetlands, Emergent Marsh, Upland Forest/Shrubland, and Grasslands. The invasive species program includes Prevention, Early Detection and Monitoring, and Control/Management (Mechanical, Chemical, Biological). Their ability to manipulate the water level of some of their wetlands has assisted in invasive species management, as has biological controls for purple loosestrife. Use of volunteers is also important as a compliment to on-site staff.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) – Zoar Valley Early Detection and Rapid Response

This presentation was developed by Mark Whitmore, Forest Entomologist with the Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University, but was interpreted by Andrea Locke, WNY PRISM Coordinator.

On September 27, 2014, Mark Whitmore observed a single tree infested with HWA in TNC's Deer Lick Preserve, part of Zoar Valley MUA. The HWA was located on branches hanging over the creek bed, which is commonly the first place HWA is discovered. A means of HWA spread is believed to be birds carrying HWA crawlers on their feet, in this case likely visiting the water. Mark quickly reached out to area partners including TNC's preserve steward, DEC, PRISM and many others, about the need to move quickly with a survey and treatment. On October 12th, a follow-up survey was conducted using volunteers and DEC staff. During this survey 2 additional trees were found to have HWA. These trees were directly across the creek from the initial sighting. On October 20th, trees were marked and on October 27th, a total of 594 trees were treated (199 north of the creek and 395 south of the creek, where the initial tree was found). Treatment included a basal bark spray with a tank mix of Safari and imidacloprid. Safari moves rapidly into the tree through the bark and will kill all HWA before they begin laying eggs in the spring, but this lasts only 1 year. Imidacloprid is slow moving, but will remain effective for up to 7 years.

Looking forward, there is still a need to survey the remainder of Zoar Valley. The need to locate HWA during the early detection phase is essential, not only to minimize the damage and cost of treatment, but also because there is hope on the horizon for a successful biocontrol – a beetle native to the Pacific Northwest, *Laricobius nigrinus*. This beetle has already been released in 16 states on the east coast since 2003, but, the cost of rearing and collecting these beetles is high at \$4.00 per bug. So the current push is to create field insectaries here in NY by utilizing hedges that are easy to collect from (accessible with foliage close to the ground). If anyone is aware of hemlock hedges that may be a good match for this project, please contact Mark Whitmore (mcw42@cornell.edu).

WNY PRISM

2014 Highlights

- Operational Guidelines
- Steering Committee
- Hired 4 Seasonal Employees
- iMapInvasives
 - 2 Spring Trainings in Jamestown and Lockport
 - 3238 observations entered (as of October)
 - 63 species
 - 12 projects
 - 33 observers
- Education and Outreach
 - Participated in 48 events across the region, assisted with and had a presence with many more
 - Training and Workshops including an Aquatic Invasive Species Workshop with visiting presenter Dr. Frances Lucy and Invasive Species ID
 - Attended Farmer's Markets and County Fairs
- Assisted Partners with IS Removal Projects
 - Partners included Tiffit Nature Preserve/Buffalo Museum of Science, WNY Land Conservancy, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and Jamestown Audubon
 - Targeted species included Japanese knotweed, pale and black swallow-wort, reed canarygrass, water chestnut, and woody shrubs (honeysuckle, m-f rose, common buckthorn, etc).
- Developed Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

- Partner/Network Coordination
 - Establish a partnership network and communication for those involved in invasive species information and management within the WNY PRISM region. Facilitate opportunities for cooperation including sharing of information, personnel, equipment and expertise.
- Information Management
 - Collect, utilize, and share information regarding invasive species management including species, pathways of invasion, surveys, infestations, control methods, monitoring, research, current efforts/projects and opportunities for partner collaboration.
- Education and Outreach
 - Increase the public, partner, and stakeholder awareness, understanding and participation in invasive species issues and management within the WNY PRISM region, through effective educational and outreach efforts.
- Prevention
 - Facilitate the prevention of new occurrence, spread, and further establishment of invasive species within the WNY PRISM region through understanding of pathways of invasion and targeting of priority conservation areas. Prevention measures must address both the movement of invasive species in and out of the WNY PRISM region.
- Early Detection and Rapid Response
 - Develop effective early detection, assessment and rapid response protocol(s) for the WNY PRISM region including mapping procedures, volunteer training/involvement, Best Management Practices, permit regulations and response teams, and provide assistance to partners for implementation of recommended protocols.
- Invasive Species Management and Habitat Restoration
 - Assist partners with control of invasive species (eradication, containment, suppression) on high priority conservation areas based on identified regional conservation targets. Assist with the establishment of long-term management and monitoring, and the restoration of impacted sites to healthy native vegetation, to provide increased resilience against future invasions.

Looking Forward, 2015

- 2014 Annual Report
 - The 2014 WNY PRISM Annual Report is not only intended to be a record of what the WNY PRISM Office did directly, but also a report on the invasive species management activities that took place throughout the region. With this in mind, Andrea will be sending out a survey to partners, through the listserve, to provide information on the activities and actions you have taken in 2014.
- 2015 Work Plan
 - Currently being drafted, this plan will be made available to the partnership.
- Formalizing Partnership and Support
 - WNY PRISM is currently asking for Letters of Support from our partners, if you would like to provide a letter of support and would like a template to work from, please email Andrea (lockeas@buffalostate.edu)
- 5-year Strategic Plan
 - The Strategic Goals and Objectives have been reviewed and accepted by the WNY PRISM Steering Committee, the full plan will be available this winter.
- 2015 PRISM Crew

- WNY PRISM will be hiring 4 seasonal employees this year, similar to 2014. This crew will include an Education and Outreach Assistant and 3 Invasive Species Management Assistants/Stewards. The crew will work June – August.
- If you are interested in having the crew help with a project you are working on, please send information to Andrea Locke. The WNY PRISM Staff and Steering Committee will review projects and prioritize based on the crew's availability and available resources
- WNY PRISM Website
 - WNY PRISM is looking at developing an independent website to meet a number of our identified goals and needs, we hope to have this site running by spring.
- Working Groups
 - 5 Working Groups are being created to address many WNY PRISM's needs, goals and objectives. These Working Groups are Agriculture, Terrestrial, Aquatic, Education and Outreach and Conservation Targets. Working Groups will be essential to determining the focus of WNY PRISM moving forward and will offer partners a great opportunity to bring issues to statewide focus.
 - Invasive Species Working Groups (Ag, Terrestrial, and Aquatic) will work to identify priority species and associated pathways of invasion, identify needs to address these priorities, identify High Probability Areas (areas most likely to be invaded), and much more.
 - Education and Outreach Working Group will determine needs and priorities, assess current models of E & O, develop effective metrics and seek ways to address regional priorities and needs
 - Conservation Targets Working Groups will focus on the development of Invasive Species Prevention Zones, identifying high value conservation areas/habitats, and identifying species of special concern.
 - If you are interested in serving on any of these Working Groups, please contact Andrea.

Other Topics

Grants

- A number of grants are currently available. If you are interested in submitting a proposal, please let WNY PRISM know. Many grants now call for partnerships and the greater the partnership, the stronger the proposal. WNY PRISM can help put you in contact with other groups looking to submit similar or complimentary proposals, help show partnership through letters of support, or help review your submission.

Upcoming Events

- Keep checking the WNY PRISM Invasive Species Events Calendar for upcoming events, trainings, and volunteer opportunities. If you have an event you would like to have added to the calendar, please send it to Andrea Locke. See our Calendar [HERE](#).

Save the Date!

Our Next Full Partnership Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28th 2015