

Great Lakes Slender False Brome Working Group Meeting Summary
August 13, 2019, 1:00-1:40 PM, Conference Call

Attendance: Brittany Herson (Facilitator, WNY PRISM), Andrea Locke (WNY PRISM), Amanda Gabryszak (WNY PRISM), Kathleen McCormick (WNY PRISM), Melissa Boglioli (WNY PRISM), Joshua Beese (NY NJ Trail Conference), Aaron Heminway (NYS Parks), John Kantrowski (Friends of Letchworth State Park).

Dia the Conservation Detection Dog:

- Joshua Beese, dog trainer and handler, provided an update on Dia's slender false brome training.
- Dia trained at Letchworth State Park and is training in the Lower Hudson region. She can detect a couple of 3-inch slender false brome plants in large patches of other grasses that are a foot tall. She has demonstrated that dogs are highly capable of searching out invasive species.
- Will also start spotted lanternfly training soon. Work on the different life stages- adults, eggs, nymphs.
- We look forward to hearing updates on Dia's progress and hope to work with Joshua and Dia again in the future.

Surveys:

- Kathleen McCormick and Amanda Gabryszak, Survey Technicians:
 - Surveyed 33 sites so far this summer, surveys will continue through September.
 - Found new slender false brome populations at Genesee County Park and Forest, Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area, along the Genesee Valley Greenway and along the Groveland Secondary Trail. Small populations were dug up after data collection, while removal efforts for larger populations are still in the planning phase.
- Will travel to Owasco Lake in the Finger Lakes Region in September to survey the area near a new slender false brome report.

Habitat Suitability and GIS Update:

- Melissa Boglioli, GIS Technician, updated the habitat suitability model to focus on seasonal precipitation. Snowmobile trails now came out as the most important factor. Created a new map where the Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area and Groveland Secondary Trail came up as important areas to survey, and slender false brome was subsequently found in those spots.
- Created a map of slender false brome occurrences in North America which will be posted on the website.
- Will update maps at the end of the season to show all areas surveyed for this project, slender false brome occurrences and then slender false brome management.

Management:

- Conducting second year of treatment in the management units at Genesee County Park and Forest and Letchworth State Park.
- Management required more time this year. Manual removal in the first year involved digging up large bunches, but in the second year many small seedlings had to be pulled out of the soil. Very time intensive and disruptive to the soil. Herbicide treatment of seedlings also took more time

to ensure the herbicide was only applied to the slender false brome seedlings and no other adjacent species.

- Used results from vegetation surveys to create Best Management Practices document, available on the WNY PRISM website: www.wnyprism.org/resources/bmps/.

Management Workshop:

- Good turnout with 28 attendees.
- Discussed the different removal methods and when they are appropriate. Had a brief tour of the management area to see the species and practice ID.
- Distributed Identification Fact Sheet and Best Management Practices.

Education and Outreach:

- Mailed 167 letters to residents along the West Shore Trail with slender false brome identification information and encouraged people to search their yards and report the species. Letter included dates WNY PRISM staff would be at nearby county fairs and invited them an Education and Removal Day at Drew's Nature Center, held for private landowners to report the species or help dig up plants. Had a private landowner stop by Drew's to report the species and the survey technicians were able to survey the property. The techs found dense stands of slender false brome and provided the homeowner with management information. The homeowner was very interested in applying herbicide.
- Tabled at the Genesee and Orleans County Fairs.
- Taught a half day of Environmental Science Camp at Genesee County Park and Forest. Campers learned to use field guides, completed a slender false brome survey activity and played invasive species BINGO on our walk and talk.
- Friends of Letchworth organized a Stewardship Day where we discussed common invasive species and displayed specimens. Thunderstorms prevented the outdoor portion, but the plan was to bring Friends members to the Letchworth slender false brome infestation to cut the plants.

Future Directions:

- While the GLRI/EPA grant will wrap up this year, we would like to continue to have Working Group meetings to keep everyone updated on research, management and survey efforts.
- Plan to have an in-person meeting in the fall, likely early November, to showcase the efforts of the Working Group over the past few years. **Please let Brittany know of any dates that will work well for this meeting.** We want to ensure members can attend to share their work!