

Great Lakes Slender False Brome Working Group Meeting Summary
November 6, 2019; 1:00 PM- 3:00/4:30 PM
Genesee County Park and Forest
11095 Bethany Center Road, East Bethany, NY 14054

Attendance: In Person: Brittany Herson (Facilitator, WNY PRISM), Andrea Locke (WNY PRISM), Amy McGinnis (NYS Parks), Audrey Bowe (NY Invasive Species Research Institute), Andrew Leonardi (SUNY Brockport), Megan Aubertine (SUNY Brockport), Andie Graham (SUNY Brockport), Aaron Heminway (NYS Parks), Steve Young (NY Natural Heritage Program), Amanda Gabryszak (WNY PRISM), Kathleen McCormick (Erie County CCE), John Kantrowski (Friends of Letchworth State Park), Linda Bergholtz (Friends of Letchworth State Park).

Conference Call: Dave Des Marais (MIT), Katie Grzesiak (NW Michigan Invasive Species Network)

Dave Des Marais, *Brachypodium* as a model for plant-environment interactions:

- *Brachypodium* is a well-developed model system in genetics.
- Looking into using *Brachypodium sylvaticum* as a system for perennials, since we are currently lacking a good model.
- Currently sequencing the genome of *B. sylvaticum* samples from Dryden and Danby State Forest in NY and additional sites in Oregon. This will provide insight on where the species came from and how it has changed.

Audrey Bowe, Assessing Impacts of *Brachypodium sylvaticum* on native understory plants:

- Audrey provided updates on research into the impacts of *B. sylvaticum* on native plant species and how deer play into this interaction.
- This research in Danby State Forest includes one section with fencing to prevent deer browse and another section without fencing, and both sections have paired plots in *B. sylvaticum* infestations and near infestations.
- Native plants were planted in all plots and survival, growth and insect/deer browse were measured.
- Preliminary analysis showed survival of native plants was high and uniform across sites, which is promising.

Andie Graham, *Brachypodium sylvaticum* projects in central and western NY State:

- Habitat suitability models:
 - *B. sylvaticum* typically found in areas with low annual precipitation and in freshwater forested/shrub wetlands.
- Mapping and vegetation surveys:
 - Surveyed high traffic trails and roads.
 - Species from surveys will be used for greenhouse competition experiments.
- Soil surveys:
 - Collected soil samples from Bergen Swamp, Danby State Forest and Taughannock Falls State Park to look at impacts of *B. sylvaticum* on ecosystem processes.
- Removal:
 - Saw an 82% reduction in *B. sylvaticum* cover in areas treated with a combination of cutting and herbicide and a 65% reduction in areas that were cut only.
 - Also saw many native species growing in the treated areas.

Amanda Gabryszak, Field Updates:

- WNY PRISM survey technician from May-September 2019.
- Some hurdles to surveying included incorrect or out of date trail maps and trail closures due to property disputes or logging.
- Saw many healthy forests with few invasive species in the Ellicottville area/Cattaraugus County.

Brittany Hernon, Working Group Updates:

- Surveys (2017-2019):
 - In 2017, 66 sites were surveyed and *B. sylvaticum* was found at 18 sites. The 4 sites found in the WNY PRISM region have all received treatment and NYS Parks has been working in the Ithaca area on removal as well.
 - In 2018, technicians surveyed 88 sites and 7 new *B. sylvaticum* sites were found. Some removal has been carried out at the sites, but private property and private landowner communication have been a challenge.
 - In 2019, 60 sites were surveyed and *B. sylvaticum* was found at 4 new sites. Plants were removed or treated at 2 sites, and communication with land managers is in progress for the additional 2 sites.
- Management:
 - Best Management Practices document available on the WNY PRISM website and was distributed at the meeting:
www.wnyprism.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/BMP-Slender-False-Brome.pdf
 - Management has been successful, took much longer to complete in the second year due to tedious treatment of seedlings.
 - Mechanical/Herbicide and Herbicide only treatments were the most effective for large, dense infestations.

Future Directions:

- DEC Early Detection Rapid Response Grant will allow Working Group efforts to continue.
- Working Group will continue to hold meetings, both in person and via conference call, to share ideas and research.