

WNY PRISM Steering Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, November 18, 2021; 1:00 – 2:30 pm
Conference Call

In Attendance: Megan Kocher (NY Sea Grant), Jennifer Dunn (NY DEC), Robert Coady (Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper), Aaron Hemminway (Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation), Sharon Bachman (Cornell Cooperative Extension – Erie County), Jonathan Townsend (Royal Fern Nursery, Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy)

Steering Committee/Partner Updates

Megan Kocher – In the early stages of updating the New York State Invasive Species Clearing House website (NYIS.info). Will be working with DEC to develop a steering committee, which will include the PRISMs, for the overhaul.

Robert Coady – Wrapping up the field season with some planting events and sampling. Will be working with University at Buffalo Researchers on a project involving harmful algal blooms. Sampling has led to identifying potential non-native algae.

Aaron Hemminway – The Strike Teams are done for the season, ending in October. They will start up again in the spring, depending upon budget approval. DEC Forest Health has reported additional Beech Leaf Disease observation point at Knox Farm and Darien Lakes State Park. Parks will be looking at various methods for addressing the infestations, depending on the size of the populations.

Sharon Bachman – Field season has slowed down and is working on reporting. Will soon shift attention to HWA monitoring. Will be working with Erie County, Hemlock Initiative and WNY PRISM to offer volunteer trainings and to acquire biocontrols for yet to be selected sites. WNY PRISM, Andrea Locke, and Town of Clarence, Jonathan Bleuer, were recognized as friends of the program at the annual meeting for assistance with the swallow-wort biocontrol project. The Forest Pest Task Force will be back to regular meetings in December.

Jonathan Townsend – Completed AIS surveys on Chautauqua Lake. No new invasive species infestations were found but did find recurring infestations of water chestnut. These were all smaller than in previous years and were removed. Roger Tory Peterson Institute will not be continuing with the AIS and HWA projects, however CWC has applied for funding to continue working on the AIS surveys and removals.

PRISM News and Updates

- Several seasonal staff members continued to work with WNY PRISM into the fall. Tyler Hamilton completed a survey of 76 public boat launches across the whole region. The survey looked at educational signs, disposal station and feasibility of the launch hosting a steward in the future. John Montgomery (E&O Assistant) and Jason Kappan (Early Detection) will continue through the end of the year working on various projects.
- The WNY PRISM Office will be moving from Classroom Building to Buckham Hall over the winter break. The new space will allow for separate offices for most staff, individual phones lines and a

much larger supplies closet. The move will result in some disruption to phones and access to computers, etc.

- WNY PRISM collected over 100 signatures on our Pledge to Protect Commitment Banners. Cecilia Pershyn and John Montgomery have been working on developing the program to include wallet cards, stickers and additional outreach items that will serve as reminders of participants commitments.
- All Crew Assistance Program projects were completed, and reports provided to partners. Work has picked up on development of the website project page which will go up along with the 2022 CAP announcement in early December.
 - Considering including cost as part of CAP reports moving forward. This would clearly demonstrate the monetary value of WNY PRISM's assistance, but also provide partners with a better understanding of the cost as they pursue invasive species management beyond WNY PRISM's assistance. This was discussed with the present Steering Committee Members and the consensus was that it is a good idea – it will be incorporated into project reports in 2022.
- The WNY PRISM Budget Amendment was approved. This moves unused funds from years 1-3 to years 4 and 5. Notable changes including the ability to hire a Field Operations Manager (similar to Lucy's previous position), website updates, the DEC required logo update and we will be able to hold the management symposium originally planned for 2020 and postponed due to COVID.
- The first NYS Invasive Species Summit was held this week in Albany. This will take place every other year moving forward.
- The glyphosate ban on state lands will go into effect on December 31. Exemptions for invasive species management are included in the law, but the protocols and permission needed have not yet been set. Rules should be presented by DEC shortly and we expect a short public comment window.
- Part 575 (Prohibited and Regulated species) is expected to be updated in 2023. A public comment period is expected.

2022 Annual Work Plan

- WNY PRISM is currently working on development of the 2022 Annual Work Plan, which will be provided to the Steering Committee in early January for review and comment before publishing.
- Several items will be included based on the recently approved budget amendment including the website and logo updates, symposium and filling the Field Operations Manager position.
- The work plan will focus efforts on several program/initiative priorities including SLF, Community Science, Pledge to Protect, Early Detection, Crew Assistance Program, Watercraft Inspection Program, Biocontrols, and improving technical assistance resources for spread prevention and native plants/restoration.
- Additional priority efforts will focus on data management and information sharing.

Upcoming Meetings

- Steering Committee Meetings – 1:00 – 3:00 pm
 - Thursday, February 17
 - Thursday, June 16
 - Thursday, August 18

- Thursday, November 17
- Partner Meetings – 1:00 – 3:30 pm
 - Thursday, April 21
 - Thursday, October 20