

WNY PRISM Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 21; 1:00 – 3:00pm
Great Lakes Center Field Station

In Attendance: In-person: Sharon Bachman (CCE – Erie County), Jennifer Dunn (NYS DEC), Jillian Harris (Parks), Colleen Kolb (USFWS), Peter Pasnik (DOT), Chris Pennuto (GLC, WNY PRISM), Jonathan Townsend (CWC and RTPI), Andrea Locke (WNY PRISM), Emily Thiel (WNY PRISM). On-phone: Lynn Greer (USACE – Buffalo District)

Steering Committee/Partner Updates

Jillian Harris (Parks): Invasive species management plans for Beaver and Buckhorn Islands are nearly complete. The Strike Team may look different in the coming years where instead of 4-person team visiting each section, each region would receive two 5-month seasonals to work on invasive species management and restoration. These changes pertain only to the Terrestrial Strike Team as the Aquatic Strike Team grant ends next year. Management is being planned for frog-bit infestations, continued work in the Niagara Gorge and the treatment of *Phragmites* at Four Mile Creek State Park.

Chris Pennuto (GLC, WNY PRISM): Attended the International Aquatic Invasive Species Conference this fall. Brittany is completing her management efficacy work with slender false brome while Chris helps with data quality assurance and analysis.

Colleen Kolb (USFWS): Finished their early detection monitoring of 284 sites including those at Presque Isle Bay in Pennsylvania, the Upper and Lower Niagara River, Irondequoit Bay and the Genesee River in Rochester, Oswego and several sites on the St. Lawrence. About 27,000 fish were caught during this time, but no new invasive species were detected. They will begin processing benthic samples collected at these locations shortly. USFWS expanded its crayfish sampling this year and caught 500 specimens which demonstrated the expansion of rusty crayfish distribution into Oswego and parts of the St. Lawrence.

Sharon Bachman (CCE – Erie County): The swallow-wort biocontrol may be released in 2020 at the chosen site in Clarence, depending on the availability of biocontrols given trouble rearing them in a lab. Next year's plans may include HWA volunteer surveying. The presence of *Amyanthus* worms will also be a focus including statewide resources and how to continue using plant sales to raise money given this is one of the primary pathways for spread.

Lynn Greer (USACE): The Emerald Shiner Remedy Effectiveness Project near Broderick Park will make repairs to the downstream area and make it viable for shiner passage. Planning level studies are nearly complete, and the contract will be awarded in the spring. Unity Island management of *Phragmites* is done and work to plant across 6 acres in upland and aquatic habitat is nearing completion. The Seneca Bluffs Project includes nearshore restoration along the Buffalo River and involves invasive species management and native plantings. This is nearly complete, and Erie County will take over the monitoring at this site for at least 5 years. The Buffalo Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Project involves the Buffalo River around the industrial sites to restore aquatic habitat and manage invasive species. This project features more natural in-water structures and submerged and emergent plantings. Two of three sites are complete with some more plantings needed at the Ellicott site to complete in the spring. The Springville Dam Project will open blocked fishery access along the Cattaraugus Creek to provide 70 miles

of spawning habitat. They have nearly finalized the project design and will advertise this in the spring. Lastly, the Caplan Street Peninsula Project along the Buffalo River includes a lot of native planting to promote wetland habitat. It needs a bit more invasive species management and native plantings and will be finished in the spring.

PRISM Updates

- 2019 Partner Survey
 - Included questions in a similar survey done in 2014 allowing for the direct comparison in some questions. Such a comparison shows that the greatest misconception about invasive species in the public is no longer that they don't exist and is more nuanced about definition and threat level.
 - Our partners view our most important work as invasive species management efforts, early detection surveys and invasive species workshops for professionals.
 - Respondents desired increased efforts on public outreach and partner aid including training, resources and grant assistance.
- Grant Updates
 - Tiff's Greenway Application for Mosquito Junction has been accepted and WNY PRISM will work there over the next few years managing mostly *Phragmites* and common buckthorn.
 - We applied for funding through LEWPA to develop restoration planting seed mixes for native cover for the years immediately following invasive species removal. Awards will be announced shortly.
 - US Forest Service GLRI RFP has been released and several of our partners have approached WNY PRISM with project ideas. Clarification is needed to determine if WNY PRISM must serve as applicant or if other levels of participation are enough to qualify a project.
- New York has worked to develop an invasive species documentary and its rough cut will be screened for PRISM staff early next week. With a full release to follow in 2020.
- PRISM staff met with iMapInvasives team last week. We discussed new tools we can implement in the near future including the integration of ArcGIS Online, management mapping, mobile tools and data visualization tools.
- We plan on releasing our 2020 Crew Assistance Program in a couple of weeks, aiming for the first week in December.
- Watercraft Inspection Program
 - Kristin created launch profiles to demonstrate the average number of inspections by day, cost per inspection and geographic location of all 22 launches we staffed this year. This information will be used to improve the 2020 Watercraft Inspection Program.
 - WNY PRISM will be discussing the program and potential options for program improvements next week.

Discussion Topics

- Partner Categories
 - Not in favor of strict enforcement
 - May add an "Active Partner" category

- Should include soft parameters including recent meeting attendance, etc.
- 2020 Conference/Symposium
 - Request to put together a working group of 3-4 people to help plan this event
 - Representatives from the *Phragmites* and *Hydrilla* Collaboratives would be invited and encouraged to provide feedback, but the format of the event should focus on case studies of adaptive management.
 - Planning on holding the event from late October to Early November
 - In-Service will likely be held the first week of November.
 - Consider reaching out to FL-PRISM to see if they would be interested in being involved.
 - Decision on the desired size of the event needs to occur quickly.
 - We may also need to look for one of our partners to collect registration fees should this become necessary.

Upcoming Meetings

TBD