

Operational Guidelines
For The
Western New York
Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management
Updated August 2024

I. ORGANIZATION/PARTNERSHIP

The name of the organization/partnership shall be the Western New York Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (WNY PRISM).

II. HOST ORGANIZATION (SPONSOR)

WNY PRISM is a sponsored program of the Research Foundation for SUNY Buffalo State University and is part of the Great Lakes Center at SUNY Buffalo State. The host organization retains the authority for financial and contractual oversight as well as the authority to manage and implement grants, contracts, programs, and agreements that it has entered into on behalf of WNY PRISM. The host organization is The Research Foundation for SUNY Buffalo State University. Core funding of the WNY PRISM is provided by State contract C012855 as administered by the Dept of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Activities of WNY PRISM are subject to provisions of this contract.

III. PURPOSE

WNY PRISM was formed to combat the spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, and to mitigate associated threats by providing region-wide coordination for invasive species monitoring and management. The WNY PRISM region includes Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming counties of Western New York and covers 6,440 square miles.

IV. MISSION

The WNY PRISM mission is to proactively identify, evaluate and address invasive species priorities in western New York using a coordinated partnership of local professionals, organizations and community members to improve, restore and protect local aquatic and terrestrial resources.

V. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is comprised of a core group of individuals representing a variety of organizations, agencies, businesses and community members who have demonstrated the greatest financial and time investment in WNY PRISM as well as have vested interest in invasive species management within the WNY PRISM region. Every effort will be made to ensure that the Steering Committee is representative of the invasive species management needs of the WNY PRISM region. Participation in the Steering Committee is strictly voluntary and shall be comprised of no less than 7 members at any given time.

Steering Committee member organizations may select their representative for the Steering Committee. WNY PRISM encourages consistency regarding the identified representative, however, Steering Committee member organizations may change their representative as needed and may identify an alternate if the identified representative is unable to attend a specific meeting.

See Appendix A for current list of Steering Committee Members.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STEERING COMMITTEE: The Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the functioning of WNY PRISM. It will assist the PRISM Coordinator and PRISM Director with prioritization of tasks within the region, partner outreach and coordination, creation of strategic plans, creation of region-wide invasive species management plans and implementation of the strategic and management plans. The Steering Committee can suggest agenda and discussion items for Partner Meetings and will aid with review of WNY PRISM operational documents.

WNY PRISM DIRECTOR: The WNY PRISM Director is the ultimate responsible party to DEC for implementation of PRISM. The Director has final signing authority on purchases made by WNY PRISM. The Director also must sign partnership agreements, external grant applications, or any other contractual agreements made with outside agencies if they require host organization approval. The Director provides guidance to the Coordinator on regional invasive species priorities and partner coordination.

WNY PRISM COORDINATOR: The WNY PRISM Coordinator will be responsible for the coordination of partners and the implementation of the core functions of a PRISM to include planning regional invasive species management, developing early detection and rapid response capacity, recruiting and training volunteers, implementing eradication projects, raising awareness about invasive species issues and supporting research through citizen science. The Coordinator will be responsible for facilitating meetings and preparing and distributing meeting summaries. The Coordinator will also provide supervision and direction for additional WNY PRISM Staff.

WNY PRISM STAFF: Additional Staff positions may be developed and filled based on identified programmatic need and availability of funding. Program and Project Manager positions may include those focused on Education and Outreach (Community Science & Engagement), Aquatic Invasive Species, Terrestrial Invasive Species, Data Management, and/or Early Detection. WNY PRISM will also use various seasonal and temporary positions to fill programmatic needs. Program and Project Managers will provide supervision and direction for seasonal staff.

VII. PARTNERS

WNY PRISM partners are those parties that assist with the advancement of the WNY PRISM mission. This may involve contributing to the successful implementation of the strategic plan, working cooperatively with WNY PRISM and other partners, serving as part of a Working Group, and/or providing annual summaries of their activities to WNY PRISM for regional coordination and reporting purposes. To maintain the designation of partner, parties must attend at least one Partner Meeting within a two-year period.

VIII. STAKEHOLDERS

WNY PRISM recognizes additional parties, referred to as stakeholders, that may not have the level of involvement found within the Steering Committee, or meet the criteria to be considered a partner, but who have demonstrated an active interest in invasive species management, support our mission, and

have engaged with WNY PRISM on efforts associated with at least one of our established Core Functions (Partner/Network Coordination, Information Management, Education and Outreach, Prevention, Early Detection and Rapid Response, Management and Habitat Restoration). Stakeholders are encouraged to participate in Working Groups and attend Partner Meetings.

IX. MEETINGS

The Steering Committee shall meet no less than three (3) times per year with special meetings as deemed appropriate by the Committee. When appropriate and available, meetings may be held through conference call or Web-based conference. Partners and stakeholders may request to attend and/or be present at individual Steering Committee meetings, with approval of requests being granted by the Steering Committee.

Partner Meetings shall take place no less than semi-annually and Steering Committee member organization participation is expected. All partners, stakeholders and interested parties are strongly encouraged to attend both the Spring Partner Meeting (held in April) and the Fall Partner Meeting (held in October/November).

The Program Coordinator shall cause a notice of scheduled meetings to be sent to representative partners and interested individuals. Agendas shall be prepared in advance by the Program Coordinator and shall include items as requested by the partners.

The Program Coordinator shall record meeting summaries, or minutes, at all meetings and they shall be made available to all representative partners and interested parties.

X. DECISION MAKING

WNY PRISM shall strive to work through consensus (i.e. non-voting agreement by all members present). Should a vote be necessary, a 2/3 majority vote is needed for the passage of any resolution. Resolutions may be voted on during a Steering Committee Meeting, sub-committee meeting or Full Partner Meeting. Each partner organization shall receive a single vote. Partners must be represented at 50% of the meetings each year to receive a vote and only those partners present at the given meeting may vote.

XI. SUB-COMMITTEES

All sub-committees and/or working groups acting on behalf of this partnership shall be made up of those wishing to volunteer for the committee cause or assignment. Sub-committees, also referred to as Working Groups, shall be developed based on need as identified by the partnership and may be either on-going or ad hoc (dissolved after completion of specific task). Possible sub-committees may include: 1) Grants Committee, 2) Education & Outreach Committee, 3) Research Committee, 4) Strategic Planning Committee, 5) Aquatic Invasive Species, 6) Terrestrial Invasive Species, 7) Early Detection, 8) Conservation.

Appendix A: WNY PRISM Steering Committee, 2024

WNY PRISM Steering Committee Members

Name	Affiliation
Chris Pennuto	Buffalo State University
Sharon Bachman	Cornell Cooperative Extension, Erie County
Megan Kocher	New York Sea Grant
Jenny Landry	NYS DEC Region 9, Buffalo Office
Leslie Moma	NYS Department of Transportation
Aaron Heminway	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Jonathan Townsend	Royal Fern Nursery
Colleen Keefer	USFWS - Lower Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office
Open	US Army Corps of Engineers - Buffalo District
Mike Shaw	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service