

***Adirondack Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management
Spring Joint Aquatic and Terrestrial Committee Meeting***

Thursday, May 7, 2009

Adirondack Park Agency, Ray Brook

I Introductions

In attendance: Rich Ambuske (DOT-R1), Mark Craig (DEC-R6), John Davis (Adirondack Council), Emily DeBolt (Lake George Association), Lance Durfey (DEC-R5), Steven Flint (APIPP), Peter Howard (DOT-R1), Dan Levy (DEC-R5), Jim Lieberum (Warren Co SWCD), Elizabeth Mangle (Hamilton Co SWCD), Hilary Smith (APIPP), Ray Oram (DOT-R2), Sue Smith (ADK Shatagee Woods Chapter / Lewis Creek Assoc. VT), Dan Spada (APA), Tyler Smith (APIPP), Pat and Tom Willis (Rainbow Lake Association), and Tom Colarusso (USDA-APHIS-PPQ)

II PRISM Report

Hilary congratulated the partners on receiving the 2009 EPA Award in Environmental Quality. She also indicated that longtime DOT partner representative Kyle Williams transitioned into new responsibilities at DOT and she asked attendees to sign a book of Adirondack photography to give him in thanks for his support of APIPP and statewide invasive species initiatives.

Cross boundary collaboration: Hilary reported that APIPP presented during the International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species in Montreal, Quebec and at the Odum Conference in Rensselaerville, NY.

Stimulus proposals: APIPP collaborated with partners to submit several proposals for economic stimulus funds: 1) TNC, PRISMs, and the Department of Transportation submitted a proposal for federal GreenTEA funds for roadside terrestrial invasive plant management. 2) Paul Smith's College, Lake George Association, Lake Champlain Basin Program, APIPP and others submitted a proposal to the Office of Invasive Species Coordination for a regional Adirondack Watershed Stewardship Program. 3) Larry Nashett from DEC-Region 5 sent an announcement to APIPP indicating that economic stimulus funds would be available via County Workboards.

Planning and management: APIPP's Annual Workplan is available online at <http://adkinvasives.com/documents/APIPP2009annualworkplan.pdf> as is the spring/summer newsletter, <http://adkinvasives.com/documents/APIPP2009annualworkplan.pdf>. Hilary said that as part of the EPF Scope of Work, APIPP will prepare a PRISM Management Plan (a 5-year Strategic Plan). She said that the ANS committee recently discussed updating their regional plan, which could serve as the template for the PRISM plan and would entail integrating the terrestrial component. Partners agreed that that would be a reasonable approach. A team will be formed this summer to help update the plan in the fall/winter.

Response teams: Formalizing and funding Response Teams remains a high APIPP priority, and Response Teams remain a line in the state EPF invasives budget, but state contracting is backlogged. There is no progress to report at this time.

Research projects: Hilary reported that APIPP is collaborating with SUNY ESF on an invasive earthworm geographic distribution project. She also met a SUNY Stonybrook scientist at the Odum Conference who had talked with Steven and was interested in monitoring spotted knapweed populations in the park. Steven said that he is also working with Jeff Corbin from

Union College on garlic mustard treatment and plant recovery within the Black River Wild Forest. Dan reported that DOT, the Invasive Species Council, and Cornell University are collaborating on a *Phragmites* biocontrol project. A SUNY ESF undergraduate is monitoring crayfish in Huntington Wildlife Forest; this is a precursor for invasive rusty crayfish monitoring.

Education opportunities: APIPP is continuing to work on its Federal Highways Administration grant with the Adirondack North Country Association to increase public awareness about invasive species along Scenic Byways. Three educational initiatives underway: 1) daily underwriting of North Country Public Radio June – Columbus Day; 2) posting education statements at gas stations and convenience stores; and 3) designing a poster with invasive species spread prevention information to be posted at businesses along Scenic Byways. Hilary also mentioned that Peter Repes from Mountain Lake PBS called seeking underwriting support for a documentary about aquatic invasive species in Lake Champlain and Lake George.

Statewide coordination: PRISM Conference calls are held monthly, the last Wednesday of each month (summer hiatus July and August). Both the Invasive Species Council and Advisory Committee met twice since our fall APIPP joint committee meeting. Dan mentioned that the RFP for the development of a draft statewide comprehensive mgt plan was distributed by the Department of Agriculture and Markets. Proposals have been submitted and will be evaluated in June/ July.

III. Terrestrial Project:

Seasonal Stewardship Capacity: Wayne Blanchard, DEC Operations Invasive Species Specialist, starts May 15; DEC funded 2 SCA invasive species stewards starting June 12; the APIPP invasive species steward starts May 26.

Monitoring & Control: Steven described several priority projects including *Phragmites* management at Wickham Marsh; mugwort control along I-87 between Exits 22 and 23; black swallowwort management along the Boquet River in Elizabethtown; followup treatments of APIPP's Biodiversity Research Institute monitoring plots; yellow iris controls; treatment of specific Oriental bittersweet infestations; and, surveys within the 5 Ponds Wilderness Area (located between Cranberry Lake and Stillwater) and Hoffman's Notch (located at Exit 29 to Schroon River). Though these Units may be candidates for invasive species prevention zones (ISPZ), specific criteria for designating ISPZs within the Adirondack PRISM still need to be defined.

Volunteer Opps: Steven announced the series of workdays this summer, indicating a real need May 20/21 for volunteers to assist garlic mustard controls. Workdays are posted online at <http://adkinvasives.com/terrestrial/program/volunteer.html> .

Group Discussion: Dan Spada said that there was a pocket of Norway maple southbound on the Northway, on the right just before reaching Exit 23. Sue Smith suggested submitting comments about invasive species to the Interim Management Plan for Sable Highlands. Comments are accepted until June 1. An effort is underway in Hamilton County to have local invasive plant coordinators who can mobilize citizens and municipalities to control Japanese knotweed and other terrestrial invasive plants in hamlet areas. Pete Howard asked if APIPP could update their best management practices to include other terrestrial invasives, like mugwort, the swallow-worts, Oriental bittersweet and others. Both the BMPS for the general public and for state land should be updated. Dan Spada commented that when monitoring success of treatment and plant recovery it's important to consider the timing of the followup surveys, which could mislead assessments and evaluations because of varying plant phenologies.

Aquatic Project:

BASS (Bass Angler Sportsmen Society) Questionnaire: Tyler updated the group on the progress of the questionnaire he has been working on with Mark Malchoff, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, and Burnie Haney, conservation program coordinator of NY BASS. The questionnaire will be distributed to 18,000 BASS members to gauge preliminary understanding of AIS and spread prevention measures. The survey will inform an education campaign targeting the fishing community. The target date for distribution is mid-late June.

Volunteer Survey / Opps: This spring Tyler distributed a questionnaire to APIPP aquatic volunteers past and present to evaluate the aquatic project's strengths and areas for improvement. Results indicate that most volunteers are satisfied with the level of training, content of training, and degree of assistance and coordination in the field and during the year. Most respondents felt comfortable with identifying the four target aquatic invasive plants but needed further training on those not yet in the park, eg. hydrilla. The volunteer monitoring program is now entering its 8th season. APIPP's annual aquatic plant training sessions will be held June 16 in Bolton Landing at DFWI, June 18 at Tupper Lake Public Library, and June 23 in Northville Hudson River Black River Regulating Field Office.

Paradox Lake: Tyler described plans to rapidly respond to a new Eurasian watermilfoil infestation in Paradox Lake, which consists of at least two beds near the boat launch and isolated occurrences of milfoil in several bays. A consortium of interest groups met in January to outline a response plan to this new infestation. In attendance were Ed Snizek (APA); Cathy Moses (Town Supervisor) and representatives from the town council; DEC staff from Operations, Fisheries, and Fish and Wildlife; APIPP; Lake Association members; and Steve Lamere (lake manager). The response plan involves all interest groups and includes buoying areas of infestations; additional training and intensive surveys by shoreowners, Steve Lamere, and APIPP; handharvesting plants; and raising awareness among visitors and residents.

Spiny Waterflea / Spread Prevention Plan: Tyler presented a draft spread prevention template that identifies considerations and actions to take when a new invasive species is discovered. He used spiny waterflea in Great Sacandaga as an example. Partners agreed that the plan had value. Dan Levy suggested adding natural pathways (such as waterfowl) to the plan template. The group discussed having DEC add more AIS information into their licensing guide and regulation magazine and getting campground staff more involved in education and inspections. Elizabeth Mangle requested information about waterflea monitoring protocols. The group also discussed what possible impacts waterflea might have on other systems, eg. the Hudson River and Lake Champlain.

Signage: Signage stating 'Attention: Invasive species are present in this waterbody' should now be posted at all infested waters in the park having state launches. Please let Hilary know if there is a lake in need of signage.

IV. Implementation of new data tracking system (WIMS) & Using GIS to prioritize spread prevention and mgt

Tyler outlined the capabilities of WIMS (Weed Information Management System), which is a database that will improve tracking invasive plant occurrences in the field and evaluating efficacy of controls over time. He also described preliminary GIS mapping of occurrence data to help determine monitoring and management priorities for aquatic and terrestrial plants.

V. Discussion:

Forest Pest Outreach and Surveillance - Emerald Ash Borer: Tom Colarusso (USDA) described forest pest monitoring priorities this summer in the North Country. USDA is partnering with DEC, Ag&Mkts, Cornell Coop. Exts, and PRISMs on a statewide surveillance trapping project for emerald ash borer, which last year was detected 30 miles or less from the US border in St. Lawrence and Clinton counties. Tom's efforts will focus on locations from Jefferson to Clinton counties. 3,000 traps will be deployed and 3,000 traps will also be set in western NY. USDA is hiring 12-15 temp employees and, with the assistance of DEC and volunteers, will deploy and monitor traps every 2 ¼ sq. mile on a grid system. The goal is to have traps up by the end of June.

Asian Longhorn Beetle update: Tom reported that the ALB infestation detected in Worcester, MA last fall is now thought to have been established for over a decade. Trapping is not a viable monitoring approach for ALB, so the focus is on education and visual surveys. Surveys are underway at high risk campgrounds in NY who have hosted guests from MA in the last 5 years. Partners discussed the value of training DOT, utility companies, and local dpws who may be the first line in an early warning system. Hilary said that Troy Weldy from TNC-Eastern NY Chapter secured funds from USDA to launch an ALB training, surveillance, and education campaign this summer in the Catskills, Capital Region, and Adirondacks. Stay tuned for more information about activities and opportunities to get involved.

Brown Spruce Longhorn Beetle: The Ag&Mkts CAPs program is deploying traps.

Group Discussion: Elizabeth Mangle passed around several fact sheets about new invasive species threats. These and more are available on their updated website, www.hamiltoncountyswd.com. Partners discussed that DEC's Unit Management Plans need to be updated to include language about forest pests.

Adirondack Invasive Species Awareness Week: The 4th annual ISAW is July 5-11. Please submit activities to Hilary by June 24 so that she can update the website and alert media.

Already planned:

Marcy Field – “Dig It” festival, green festival; invasive plant booths are planned
Display at the LG visitor center, activities around the basin

Partners generated the following ideas:

VIC – Paul Smiths (forest pest mask making with kids)

DOT Welcome Center – displays and poster making contest with kids

Parkwide kids poster contest

DEC Campgrounds – involve the interpretive coordinators to do something ISAW

Contact the Wild Center about doing something

Essay and poster presentation

Eric Holmlund – interpretive class, offering workshop that could weave in IS issues

The group also suggested establishing an IS Awareness Day during the school year so that more teachers and kids can be involved.

Announcements about partner / PRISM initiatives

In Carol Treadwell's absence, Hilary raised a question on her behalf about soil removal and disposal of soil contaminated with invasive species. Ray Oram, DOT Region 2, said that their protocol is to put spoils back within the ROW, so at least they know where it is going. DOT Region 1 indicated that soil becomes the “property” of the contractor, so it's difficult to track

where it goes. Others indicated that soils can be stockpiled at a DOT residency and covered to kill plant propagules. Further clarification about best management practices is needed.

Pat Willis of the Rainbow Lake Association thanked APIPP and the ANS Committee for helping to secure USFWS funds for the watershed stewardship program, which supported a part-time steward at Buck Pond campground.

Partner 2009 Spring / Summer Updates:

Ray Oram, DOT Region 2

I am in the process of obtaining landowner permission to spray Japanese knotweed on locations that are partly off the highway ROW and extend onto private property. I currently have two areal locations. The first area is along Route 30, south of Indian Lake. We have several locations that will be getting their 2nd and, in some cases, 3rd treatment. Most of these were large patches of knotweed that are now getting smaller. Hopefully some of the smaller patches will cease to exist after this year's treatment.

The second area is in and around the hamlet of Blue Mountain. These are all first timers. Some of these patches were initially identified as part of the highway project being planned in this area, but several others were found in the process of locating these initial sightings.

These should all be sprayed sometime after the middle of July.

Emily DeBolt, Lake George Association

1. Monitoring PL beetle release site on northern Lake George. Around 500 beetles released in 2008.

2. Working with Steven on IS removal at LG area campgrounds at the end of May

3. Volunteer event with LGLC and Steven planned for June 25 – spotted knapweed pull at Hudson Ice Meadows and Oriental Bittersweet removal along Route 9 in LG.

4. Continuing eradication of IS on our own property. Japanese Knotweed, and oriental bittersweet. Removing a patch of vinca as well.

5. Planning events and table at LG Visitor Center for ADK ISAW in July again.

6. Working on list of local and regional places to buy native plants to share with homeowners. Talking to local nurseries about carrying more native plants. Working with local landscapers about using native plants.

7. Lake Steward Program on Lake George. Stewards at boat launches around the lake.

Elizabeth Mangle, Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District

We are again working with DOT (getting permission forms) with their spraying program this summer.

Developing/disseminating numerous fact sheets on all possible invasive species coming into our area.

Received grant from FLOWPA for Knotweed eradication effort in Hamilton/Herkimer County.

Organizing county wide lake association workshop this summer.

Expanded website www.hamiltoncountyswd.com.

Working with various agencies to place and manage insect traps up in our county.