

MEETING MINTES
Lower Hudson PRISM Meeting
Thursday, 11/4/2014, 1:00 - 4:00

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County, Stony Point, NY

As of 11/4/14 there were 33 signed partners in the Lower Hudson PRISM. 19 partners were present so there was a quorum (40% required). [Full attendee list is attached below.]

Announcements:

- NYS PRISM leaders and CCE reps working on a PlantWiseNY brochure (based off of Adirondacks PlantWiseADK and Lady Bird Johnson Center PlantWise program). Linda asked for anyone interested in helping to develop this brochure let her know. There is a “kickoff” conference call Fri Nov 14 at 2:00.
- Samantha will be teaching another Hydrilla Workshop 11/13/2014 @1pm at Rockland CCE primarily for Master Gardeners but all are welcome to attend. Please register by contacting Ellen Chorba at etc46@cornell.edu or calling the CCE office at 845-429-7085 x117
- Chuck O’Neil: overseeing state-wide IS awareness poll (hikers, campers, fisherman, boaters) and asking behavioral questions to ask these various groups
- Brent Kinal (iMapInvasives) working with SUNY ESF on new type of remote sensing for IS detection. Need locations of large (> 1 acre) spots of purple loosestrife, japanese knotweed, phragmites to test with.
- Emerald ash borer detected in Westchester County
 - Reach out to municipalities that might need information on how to prepare for loss of ash trees
- Spotted lantern fly – first record in US found in Berks County PA
- Southern Pine Beetle confirmed in Long Island
- PRISM Logo needed – Linda would like to gather a small group to provide feedback to designers in advance of selecting a set of logos for the partners to choose from. Targeting this work for early January.

Prevention Zones

Linda handed out a packed that included the Nature Conservancy ISPZ guidelines (Developed by Long Island chapter of the Nature Conservancy), list of Long Island ISPZs and their sizes (LIISMA uses the Nature Conservancy guidelines), SLELO ISPZ and Priority Conservation Areas guidelines.

- (Bob O'Brien) Minnewaska has low IS (5%) in large areas. Greater than ½ park, 16,000 acres out of 22,000 are "prevention zones" (they say <3% per acre to have it as a prevention zone) – does not account for hemlock wooly adelgid or emerald ash borer.
 - They conduct survey transects every 500 m (looking for blowdowns, openings, hemlock die off) staying on the line but looking at the entire park
- Feedback for adopting Long Island or SLELO guidelines
 - With 500 acre minimum we'll miss a lot of the Westchester and NYC areas (no area that large)
 - Need some representation in lower part of PRISM
 - Define what we're trying to protect (native plant communities, ecological processes, animals...)
 - "must be a biodiverse hotspot" – there are significant areas that don't have these/don't meet the size criteria (NYC)
 - We should base size on our PRISM (Adirondacks have much larger size minimum criteria because of continuous, unfragmented land)
 - Need to realize it's a long term project; will we have the means to keep people interested for that long?
 - The smaller the ISPZ, the easier it is to manage
 - SLELO states in order for an area to be an ISPZ, some organization or group needs to take it on as their project
 - Are we trying to meet a max threshold of IS in an area based off only ones listed in NY list, or ones we believe should be listed as invasive (and do we include animals, insects, diseases)
 - Why care about size at all? Keep all of our criteria general
 - Include aquatic systems. What would we consider an IS (macro invertebrates, plants, fish...)?
 - Think of specific places, and for those who know which areas they want, let Linda know so we can add it to the list (Eastwoods, Pound Ridge, Mohonk, Fishkill Ridge, Minnewaska)
 - Adopt SLELO ISPZ plan (need criteria to determine if it's worth becoming ISPZ, but change size and wording - make more general, ex: reword "unless biodiversity hotspot")
 - How much initial surveying should be done before it's accepted as an ISPZ?
 - Partners want a say in what places should be considered candidates
 - Identify the goals of what we want to get out of ISPZ designation
 - ISPZs are a tool for prioritizing work
 - Long term stewardship is vital. Only nominate/accept areas that will have long term monitoring plans

- There need to be other options for places like the Hudson (needs to be protected from hydrilla, but it would never qualify as an ISPZ)
- One of the goals of ISPZ zones is to put up signs and do outreach and education – develop stewardship programs
 - Education and adoption piece – whose going to adopt the area and update the PRISM partners
- Don't put any numbers in criteria (acreage, %IS) Let the people nominating the area determine why they think it's worthwhile
- Don't include area sizes, but accept plans that show promise to be successful
- If the site also meets Conservation Target criteria, it bumps up its importance
- Broader description than SLELO
- Whatever criteria we adopt, **adopt it for 1 year** – the more flexible and adaptable a system is, the better it is long-term
- High biodiversity that tend to be **dominated by natives**
- Maybe don't use the word *criteria*, use *guideline* or *suggestion*
- OUTCOME:
 - **Goals** for ISPZ
 - Rallying point
 - Education and outreach
 - Protect areas with low infestation rates
 - **Criteria** – Decision for 1 year
 - Minimally invaded, dominated by natives
 - Selection of site for conservation is defensible (those proposing the site should provide arguments)
 - The site has been adopted for long-term stewardship by a group or groups (those proposing the site should elaborate the commitments)
 - No acreage size limit
- VOTE: Majority agrees on criteria. 2 vote “no”. 1 abstains.

Conservation Targets:

John Mickelson presented each of the maps showing the different layers that could be used for conservation target areas. He suggested a simple scoring mechanism of assigning one point to each layer. Thus areas that fall within areas with more intersecting layers would have higher scores.

- Different layers – conservation overlay zone (8 layers)
 - *Important bird areas*
 - *Natural Heritage Element Occurrences*
 - *Estuary program*
 - *TNC Portfolio focal areas*
 - *Parks and protected lands*
 - *Forest blocks from Landfire (>500 acres)*
 - *Landscape-scale Connectivity*
- NOTES:
 - Try John's idea as a suggestion for a year
 - Other areas that don't rank on this system should still be able to make a case

- Need comparable metrics over the entire LoHud – layers that do not cover the whole area should not be used
- Maybe just don't draw boundaries at all, give suggestions and examples of areas that would be funded
- Discussion on completeness of connectivity layer
 - Right now only includes Forest Canopy
 - Include wetlands and stream systems, tidal and intertidal wetlands?
 - Include Bronx River? – it's too chopped up, but it could be a side project for a student (advice from Dave Strayer)
 - Proposed: Add the Hudson River into the Connectivity layer
- Do some layers rank higher than others?
- Should other layers be adopted?
 - Add hydric layer – Hudson river up to the first corridor – connectivity corridor
 - Klemens Biotic Corridor – hard to obtain the data
 - NYC Forever Wild areas
 - Bronx River – side project
 - DEC Streams and wetlands
- Is there a ranking system to determine which are more important?
 - Areas that overlap get higher ranking
 - Areas that multiple organizations believe should be CT get higher rankings
- How will someone be able to know where their project lies and how/which many layers it intersects?
 - Layers could be made available as KML files that can be used in GoogleEarth or as ArcGIS files
 - Implementation of a way for people to know will be figured out. If it has to be something as simple as send us a GPS coordinator for you sight and we will tell you.
- *Identify Data Gaps
 - Include invertebrates – they're not in Heritage inventories
 - Right now, it's not related to invasives – identify species that are most affected by invasives
- OUTCOME (again this decision is only effective for 1 year)
 - **All italicized layers listed above (Bird through Hudson) are accepted**
 - **Leave it to the Steering Committee assign importance to the layers when evaluating proposals**
 - Project will list which layers it falls under, and SC will determine weight to give
 - **Hudson River will be added as aquatic connectivity**
- VOTE: Majority votes “yes”, none vote “no”, there are 2 abstentions.

Priority Species

Linda handed out a packet that included the hierarchy outline that was at the end of the full document distributed in advance of the meeting and a printout of the species spreadsheet with all the data used to determine species categories.

- Widespread – these are species that are abundant throughout the Lower Hudson valley and also in most or all of the surrounding regions.
- Established – these species are common or abundant through most of the Lower Hudson valley but not in most of the surrounding regions.
- Emerging – these species are just starting to become established in localized parts of the Lower Hudson region.
- Threat – these are species that occur in very few locations or not at all within the Lower Hudson region.

Proposed Prioritization Hierarchy

For those that are on the Lower Hudson PRISM **Widespread** species list, prioritize according to threat posed to conservation target or invasive species prevention zones.

For species that are not on the Lower Hudson PRISM Widespread list,

First look at those with **VH or H invasive rank** by NYS,

Threat gets highest attention

 Next **Emerging**

 Next **Established**

 Treat those populations closer to a neighboring region that has low levels of that species

Then look at Species that have a **High** invasiveness rank in a neighboring region or which is on the **Early Detection** list of a neighboring region

 First deal with those where the Geographic region in question is near that neighboring region

 Then for those in a Geographic region that is not near that neighbor

 Treat those which are at Low levels of populations in LH PRISM (**Threat, Emerging**)

Then look at Species that are not in either of the above categories (Not VH or H Invasive rank in NYS or High or ED status in neighboring region)

 Treat species with **Moderate** invasive rank with low population numbers (**Threat, Emerging**)

All others record and monitor

NOTES:

- Add a “Watch” category – threat makes it sound like its going to be a problem. This would be for species we aren’t sure are going to be a problem.
- Need people to help go through the species and categorize them
- Be clear about what the priority species means – helps guide what projects to take on, what to fund....
- The hierarchy could become a ranking system eventually
- Take into account abundance, invasiveness, and approaching region

- Ranking it is going to be hard because observations are all about what we have recorded, implies fairly complete data sets
- Consider using this as a guidance document, not a ranking system
- Deal with underrepresented geographic areas (under surveyed) and underreported species before making it into a ranking system
- The PRISM should evaluate IPMPDAT tool (ipmdat.org) for making decisions about whether to work on a population/site.

OUTCOME (decision effective for 1 year):

- **Use prioritization hierarchy but how it will used will be made explicit**

VOTE: Majority votes “yes”. None vote “no”. There was one abstention.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 15 at Teatown – Education and Outreach

PARTNERS: send input to annual report by early December

ATTENDEES:

Tait Johansson	Bedford Audubon Society
Robin Kriesburg	Bronx River Alliance
Bob DelTorto	Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy
Dave Strayer	Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies
Annie Christian-Reuter	Cornell Coop Ext – Rockland Co.
Jonathan Rosenthal	Ecological Research Institute
Kali Bird	Hike New York
Erik Kiviat	Hudsonia
John Mickelson	Geospatial & Ecological Services
Helen Forgione	Natural Areas Conservancy
Daniel Atha	The New York Botanical Garden
Meredith Taylor	NY City DEP
Tim Wenskus	NY City Dept of Parks & Recreation
Linda Rohleder	New York – New Jersey Trail Conference
Nate Cyrus	Scenic Hudson
Carrie Sears	The Invasives Project – Pound Ridge
Tom Lewis	Trillium Invasive Species Management
Brenda Bates	Westchester County Parks
Tate Bushnell	Westchester Land Trust
David Decker	Constitution Marsh Audubon Center
Alyssa Reid	NYS Parks – OPRHP
Bob O’Brien	NYS Parks - OPRHP
John Thompson	Mohonk Preserve
Nancy Slovik	Hudsonia
George Profous	NYS DEC
Jim Utter	Friends of Great Swamp
David Berg	Wild Metro

Radka Wildova	Ecological Research Institute
Samantha Epstein	New York- New Jersey Trail Conference