

**Lower Hudson PRISM
Outreach and Education Workshop**

January 19, 2016 – 10:00 am-3:00 pm

Cornell Cooperative Extension – Rockland Co. 10 Patriot Hills Dr. Stony Point, NY

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Get to know each other better
2. Discuss our message and target audiences for 2016
3. Plan actions for: Invasive species awareness week, training sessions, and develop educational materials for the year

Linda introduced Agenda and updated the attendees on RFP and LH PRISM assistant

List of Important Upcoming Dates

National Volunteer Week 4/10-4/16

Earth Day 4/22

I Love My Parks Day 5/7

EAB Awareness Week – end of May

~~Clearwater Festival 6/18-19~~

NY Invasive Species Awareness Week – 7/10-7/16

National Public Lands Day – 9/24

Everyone introduced themselves.

Mary Johnson, Rockland County CCE Master Gardener volunteer, gave us an overview of the “New York Residents’ Awareness of Invasive Species” study done by the Human Dimensions Research Unit at Cornell University (2015). [Thank you to Mary for volunteering to read and summarize this study for the meeting attendees.]

Some points we noted:

About 75% of New Yorkers have a general awareness of invasive species. People reported that they got most of their info from newspaper and printed materials. Awareness was higher among boaters and anglers. Aquarium owners/pet store owners may be an untapped audience. The largest percentage of those that were randomly selected for the survey identified themselves as gardeners yet awareness was low. Awareness was lower in urban audiences than in non-urban.

Question was raised: should there be a survey to elected officials and decision makers?

Full report will be made available on the PRISM Website.

Breakout session: discuss and brainstorm

1) Sharpening our focus 2) what messages should we take up?

Groups came back together to present to the whole.

Who is our Audience?

- Landscapers
- Landscaping Firms
- **Policy Makers (state, local, town, county)**
- **Municipalities**
- Home Gardeners

-Ideas included: (Items in **Bold** are recurring themes) Looked back to "Look, Learn, Lend a Hand." "**Take Back your Backyard.**" **Stick to the slogan or message for a few years** for recognizability, then freshen it up.

The message we choose should last 3 years before we come up with a new one.

Focus on intrinsic motivations: Where does it hurt, people's pockets, or health? "Pay me now or Pay me later." Message that includes: what do you compost as it applies to invasives? "**You can make a difference.**" "**Why should you Care?**"

Mix message with **Native** Plant outreach. Economic benefits to switch to natives.

Local & Biodiversity message. "Stop the Spread" but augment it with a tag line (ex. **Stop the Spread: PlantWise**)

Message under an umbrella of stewardship.

Schools and youth (Boy scout or Girl scout Badge).

Appeal to **Self Interest (Benefits and Costs)** (What are the benefits to ME).

Focus on **Harm, Biodiversity impacts, and Positive Actions**, and then craft message to audience.

Short Tag Line. The tagline should be short – anything too long and people will lose interest.

Make sure we **reach NYC audience** and its citizens - "Save our Shade."

Don't forget about schools.

Group then discussed how to further develop these ideas. How do we teach value of biodiversity? Messaging?

A little push and pull between positive message of habitat/biodiversity vs. sense of harm and urgency.

Sense of place and impacts as a connection. Short phrase. Not too preachy. "Threat and Protect" "Benefit to me" Reverse order: Positive impact first, then awareness worked in.

Floating back and forth the between a few ideas. Need a lunch break and will try to pull it back together.

Lunch

Reviewed before lunch ideas. Reiterated some of the slogans we came up with. Some discussion of the angle we want to approach the issue from.

Developing a message for municipal decision makers. Do we have the wherewithal to approach this audience? Do we need a group to meet and share on this topic? What part of the Municipal/Decision Makers audience do we need to reach? (Tabled this part of discussion in the interest of moving forward with agenda)

Of the main points, we tried to narrow it down to a single message/slogan.

“Love your yard, be Plantwise”

“Be Plant Wise, Know Before You Grow” (it is the same message as NYS but it is effective)

Clean, Drain, Dry

“Take back your _____ (backyard, lake, etc.)”

_____ (Plants, Habitats, Place) matters, make your _____ a better place”

“There are alternatives, and they are Native.”

In the end, we decided to stick with the more widely used catch phrases for greater effect: “Be PlantWise, Know Before You Grow” and “Clean, Drain, Dry”.

Break out into working groups to work on Action Plans

Planning strategy for E&O:

- i. Available educational resources and “holes”
- ii. Early detection template- outreach materials, door hangings, factsheets, timed alerts
- iii. Early detection training (for professionals)
- iv. Public removal/mgmt. information aka BMPs
- v. Offering Training for Blockbuster Survey

Each group reported and attendees were requested to sign up for specifically defined tasks. Linda will transcribe and send to entire group for more sign up.

Meeting was adjourned with reminder about next meeting at Teatown Lake Reservation in March.

Notes Written By:

Jennifer J Stengle, Matt Simonelli, and collaborative efforts on the easels

Attendees:

Tim Wenskus	NYC Parks
Matt Simonelli	NY-NJ Trail Conference
Mary Johnson	Rockland Co. CCE
Danielle Bissett	NYC Parks
Samantha Epstein	Clearwater

Diane Alden	Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct
Karalyn Lamb	Saw Mill River Audubon
Lillit Genovesi	Trout Unlimited
Suzanne Clary	Jay Heritage Center
Liz Garret	Jay Heritage Center
Bob DelTorto	Bronx River Conservancy
Debbie Lester	CCE, Orange Co.
Tonia Shoumatoff	Housatonic Valley Association
Hillary Siener	Teatown Lake Reservation
Joyce Tomaselli	CCE, Dutchess
Ann Barry	Rockland Co. CCE
Daniel Atha	NY Botanical Garden
Annie Christian-Reuter	Rockland Co. CCE
Carrie Sears	The Invasives Project-Pound Ridge
Jen Stengle	CCE, Putnam
Meredith Taylor	NYC DEP
Tate Bushell	Westchester Land Trust
George Profous	NYS DEC
John Mickelson	
Brenda Bates	Westchester County Parks
Erik Kiviat	Hudsonia