

Lower Hudson PRISM

Partners Meeting

September 26th, 2017 – 10:00 am-3:00 pm

Scenic Hudson River Center. Beacon, NY

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Get to know each other better
2. Begin planning 2018 activities
3. Discuss progress made on 2017 objectives
4. Elect 2 new Steering Committee members

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Linda Rohleder, LH PRISM coordinator, began the meeting with an introduction of two new PRISM staff members: Mike Young, Terrestrial Invasive Species Project Manager, and Eric Stone, Invasive Program Educator and Volunteer Coordinator. The PRISM has a program with USDA APHIS to sponsor the Mile-A-Minute Program of the Hudson Valley, and seasonal intern Alyssa Coleman was introduced to the partners. All partners in attendance introduced themselves. Attendees are listed at the end of the report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jessica Schuler, NYBG, handed out flyers for the November 3rd Invasives Summit on Restoration and Long Term Management being held at the New York Botanical Garden and urged partners to promote the event with municipalities, parks, and other organizations . Discounted rates available for PRISM partners, as well as CEUs
- The Cornell In-Service: Invasive Species Track will take place November 13th-15th and will offer presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities.
- The PRISM issued an RFP for 19 kudzu sites in the Lower Hudson region. These sites were previously monitored by the DEC; the PRISM took on the project due to lack of funding at the state level this year. The bid for the removal sites was awarded to Tom Lewis of Trillium Invasive Species Management. Linda opened the floor to partners who would be interested in assisting with monitoring sites. Please email lrohleder@nynjtc.org if interested.

LHPRISM UPDATES: THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

In June, the Request for Proposals was issued for the Lower Hudson PRISM grant and bids were due at the end of July. The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference applied to continue hosting the PRISM and received confirmation of the award in mid-August. The LHPRISM contract is for 5 years, from 2018-2022. Dr. Linda Rohleder will continue as the PRISM Coordinator, and the PRISM will continue to offer \$100,000 per year to contracted projects. The PRISM Request for Proposal is issued in January of each year. Under the new contract, the PRISM is able to hire more staff to better serve the goals of the PRISM. The new staff and positions are listed in Appendix I.

ELECTION OF NEW STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Krista Munger (PRLC) was elected as a new Steering Committee member and Mike Fargione (Cary Institute) was elected to renew his term. These terms will begin in January 2018. Krista is replacing Jonathan Rosenthal who elected to not continue on the committee. Both will start their three-year term in January 2018. Linda expressed thank to outgoing committee member Jonathan for his service and also to Mike Fargione for his service during his previous term.

OVERVIEW OF 2017 PRISM GOAL PROGRESS, PLANNING FOR 2018

The main objective of the September partner meeting was to hear progress made by the partners with our current six strategic goals in mind. We also held several focused working group meetings during the lunch break to discuss ways of furthering these goals, and reviewed and discussed objectives for 2018.

2017 GOAL UPDATES

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

- The BlockBuster Survey, now in its third year, was updated and developed further. Joyce Tomaselli of Dutchess County CCE and Jen Stengle of Putnam County CCE took the lead in updating training materials. 11 trainings were held at 10 CCEs and the NYBG. In an effort to simplify the survey, protocol was updated and a new smart phone app was developed by Trail Conference volunteers. 101 volunteers signed up for 104 blocks throughout the region, but there was very little follow-through. As of now, 31 blocks have been completed, 3 blocks have completed 2 surveys, and 9 blocks have completed 1 survey. 50 of the assigned blocks have had

no data submitted, and 10 blocks were dropped out of. Volunteers generally felt the protocol was too confusing.

- The 2016 results are still being uploaded into iMapInvasives, and the data will be analyzed by Jonathan Rosenthal at ERI. We should expect results by the end of 2017.
- According to our prioritization guidelines, multiple Tier 2 species have been treated.
- Jessica Schuler, Christy King, and Tate Bushell will be presenting at the November 3rd Summit at the NYBG on restoration.
- The PRISM has developed a focal species list of plants that are listed as Tier 1, 2 and 3.
- Jen Stengle announced that the statewide set of fact sheets are under review for forest pests, but vary from region to region. The working group has not yet classified forest pests into the Tier categories.

PROGRESS REPORTS:

- Hunter Tronbridge with Trillium presented an update on the ED/RR project in Dutchess County, eradicating *Salvia glutinosa* (sticky sage) from 200 acres of conservation land. The project was contracted by the PRISM. Sticky sage is listed as a Tier 2 emerging species. The infestation was in Dover, NY with a second population found in Pound Ridge, which was manually removed by the ISF crew. This year, more land owners granted access to their land and more focused efforts along the Appalachian Trail allowed 60 acres to be treated. Looking forward the goal should be to get permissions from more land owners on the northern and eastern boundaries of the populations and wetland permits. The Trail Conference received a 3-year NYSDEC Invasive Species Rapid Response and Control to continue treatments of this population in partnership with Trillium and local landowners.
- Alyssa Coleman with the Mile-A-Minute Program of the Hudson Valley updated partners on the project and use of biocontrol. Weevils were released in large mile-a-minute populations in Blauvelt State Park, Mianus River Gorge, Stewart State Forest, and Hudson Highlands State Park. Weevils are specialist predators, and are highly unlikely to eat native species or become invasive themselves. Weevils will not eat the entire plant, but in combination with regular pulls they will help slow the spread. Future goals of the project will be to organize group pulls, release more weevils at additional edge sites in Esopus, NY, Gardner, NY, and also in Hudson Highlands SP where the infestation is spreading due to defoliation of the forest by gypsy moth outbreak.
- Mike Young, the new Terrestrial Invasives Project Manager, also presented on ISF crew control project prioritization. A new evaluation method will allow partners and land owners to submit for projects to be ranked and selected based on higher prioritization. Partners were asked to give feedback on potential criteria by ranking their importance for the new method, which will be released at the November partner meeting. A working group was formed to develop the ranking criteria and had their first meeting during lunch.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- Jen Stengle hosted a forest pest program that brought in volunteers.
- The NYBG held a home gardeners course and a field day for New York State Turf and Landscape Association, teaching about invasive plants and native alternatives.
- Westchester CCE held an Oak Wilt program training for municipal leaders and horticultural professionals.
- Several workshops were held throughout the PRISM: iMapInvasives training, BlockBuster Survey train-the-trainers and volunteer surveyors, Meadow Establishment Workshop focusing in invasive species control with Krista Munger of PRLC, Mid-Atlantic Seed Bank (MARSB) workshop on ash seed collection, and Jen Stengle spoke at several Putnam County garden clubs.
- Invasive Species Awareness Week fell short on targeted planning. Many events were held but not in conjunction or with respect to other events. CCE posters are very successful at tabling events.
- The Community Action Plan for Invasive Species Removal, a phenological calendar developed by Hudson Highlands Land Trust can be found [here](#) on the PRISM website, but still needs to be developed more and integrated with web and with alerts.
- Our SUNY-ESF/DEC rapid response intern. Allison McKenna, developed outreach flyers for several early detection species to be used with alerts, but we would like to do more.

MITIGATE PATHWAYS OF INVASION

- Clearwater's Watercraft Inspection Program had difficulties maintaining full staff this season. Still, over 1,000 boats were inspected at 9 different boat launches along the Hudson River. 6 trainings were held, and 73 people were educated in AIS identification and surveying protocols.
- NYC DEP received funding for 2 bootbrush stations and Scenic Hudson will add one in Beacon. 4 have been added in Sam's Point. Partners expressed uncertainty about the effectiveness of boot brush stations at preventing spread although some see them as effective outreach/educational tools.
- Partners agreed that "Don't Move Firewood" campaign is still an important message to share with local sellers.
- The Trail Conference held a Southern Pine Beetle Trap Monitoring Workshop and assigned sites to 7 volunteers. The volunteers completed 67 hours of monitoring.

CONSERVATION TARGETS

- Invasive Species Prevention Zones: Jonathan Rosenthal was on the statewide conference call, and it was decided that every PRISM can have its own definition of an ISPZ that reflects what is best for them. Jonathan will continue leading the effort to define LHPRISM ISPZ's. Locations as candidates for ISPZ still in progress and delayed by the state.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- A forest pest seminar was held for members
- Janis Butler is maintaining a list of press contacts for press releases.
- Make meetings more valuable: This year, the PRISM included partner presentations at meetings, scheduled time for networking, and included an outdoor component for our July Meeting. We also held the July meeting as a webinar or conference call for those who could not attend.

Please see the Appendix II for an outline of the six strategic goals and the suggestions made for the 2018 season. A 2018 Annual Work Plan will be drafted based on these and circulated to partners prior to the next meeting.

CONCLUSION

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 from 10am – 3pm at Teatown Lake Reservation in Ossining, NY. **We will be voting to approve the 2018 Annual Work Plan.**

Notes written by: Lindsay Yoder

ATTENDEES:

Alyssa Coleman	Mile-A-Minute Program of the Hudson Valley
Anne Osborn	Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
Bob del Torto	Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy
Bruce Friedmann	Ecological Analysis, LLC
Carol Capobianco	Native Plant Center
Christopher Gow	Village of Tuxedo Park
Daria Gregg	Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct
David Decker	Audubon NY
Diane Alden	Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct
Eric Stone	New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
George Profous	NYSDEC Region 3
Hunter Tronbridge	Trillium Invasive Species Management
Jason Klein	Westchester County Parks
Jason Matts	Pace University
Jen Stengle	CCE Putnam County
Jessica Schuler	New York Botanical Garden
Jonathan Rosenthal	Ecological Research Institute
Joyce Tomaselli	CCE Dutchess County
Karalyn Lamb	The Native Plant Center
Krista Munger	Pound Ridge Land Conservancy
Lauri Taylor	Putnam County Soil and Water
Linda Rohleder	Lower Hudson PRISM Coordinator
Lindsay Yoder	New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
Mary Rice	Friends of the Great Swamp
Matt Aiello-Lammens	Pace University
Megan Johnson	Scenic Hudson
Meredith Taylor	NYC DEP
Mike Fargione	Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies
Mike Young	New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
Nate Nardi-Cyrus	Scenic Hudson
Nicole Wooten	Hudson Highlands Land Trust
Rebecca Policello	Teatown Lake Reservation
Robert Celestin	New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
Suzanne Nolan	Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy
Tait Johansson	Bedford Audubon
Tate Bushell	Westchester Land Trust
Tim Wenskus	NYC Parks and Natural Areas Conservancy
Tom Lewis	Trillium Invasive Species Management
Walt Daniels	New York – New Jersey Trail Conference

APPENDIX I – LHPRISM Staff Roles and Positions

Aquatic Program Coordinator (FT): Samantha Epstein will continue to oversee the aquatic invasives program, conducting trainings on AIS identification and spearheading the Watercraft Inspection Program.

Terrestrial Invasive Species Project Manager (FT): Mike Young will plan invasives removal projects and train the 16-week seasonal AmeriCorps Crew in the summer. The crew will work throughout the Lower Hudson Valley.

Invasives Program Educator and Volunteer Coordinator (FT): Eric Stone will conduct trainings for terrestrial invasives programs, such as the BlockBuster Survey and the Invasives Strike Force (NY-NJ Trail Conference), as well as represent the LHPRISM at tabling events.

AIS Watercraft Inspection Program:

Boat Steward Captain, seasonal AmeriCorps (900 hr)

4 additional Boat Stewards, seasonal AmeriCorps (900 hr) beginning in 2019

All stewards will work 40 hours per week and will be stationed at boat launches on the Hudson River every weekend, educating boaters on aquatic invasives species to watch for. They will also survey water bodies throughout the LHPRISM during the week. The Captain will oversee stewards and rotate to different boat launches each week to ensure we are utilizing the program to its full potential.

Invasives Strike Force- Invasives Removal Crew:

ISF Crew Leader, seasonal AmeriCorps (900 hr)

3 ISF Crew Members, seasonal AmeriCorps (675 hr)

The Invasives Removal crew will work with partners and parks to establish removal projects. The crew will extend their efforts to emerging invasive species.

APPENDIX II – Suggested Objectives for 2018

Goal 1: Capacity Building

- Content creation: group of PRISM partners to write articles, create videos, and other content to increase credibility
- More focused efforts on advertising specific events
- Grow active membership
- Sustain membership and enable partners to be more fully engaged
- Continue outdoor component of partner meetings

Goal 2: Conservation Targets

- Partners should come together to create a list of SGCN using knowledge of threatened populations
- Target projects where IS management is likely to benefit SGCN species and other regionally rare species or species of concern or significant communities.
- Continue to identify candidate Invasive Species Prevention Zones

- Further elaborate our methods for Prioritizing IS management projects with respect to conservation targets

Goal 3: Strategic Management (includes suggestions from discussion groups during meeting)

- One location for Rapid Response reporting of emerging species
- Use ArcGIS to map Early Detection and draw boundaries around infestations. Live file to be loaded onto the website.
- More restrictions for voucher specimens
- Require PRISM partners to participate in BlockBuster Survey (more experience, higher level data)
- Incorporate Tiered species with State-wide list
- Forest pests and aquatic invasives should be included in education and outreach efforts to a greater degree
- Higher priority education on Tier 2 species
- Create alert system (Facebook/twitter?) for new sightings of emerging species
- Offer a Blockbuster “Light” option for less experienced volunteers (less species to search for/one survey only, etc)
- Monthly data collection: volunteer survey of existing sites that have been treated
- Incorporate time of year into species prioritization projects
- Make BMPs more like a toolbox of options
- Create a BMP forum for professionals to share ideas
- More training on restoring areas with native species
- Should be using Society for Ecological Restoration National Standards for any restoration projects
- Species inventory to measure ecological value, assess impacts and strategies when considering restoration

Goal 4: Education and Outreach- (includes suggestions from discussion groups during meeting)

- Spring awareness push
- Create a more professional website
- Update resources to be accessible to the public
- Use other PRISMS as examples of what to do and what not to do
- Create informative YouTube videos.
- Spring Oak Wilt awareness: teach homeowners when to prune and how to treat wounded trees
- Find events to table on Earth Day
- More proposed audiences: Foresters/arborists, homeowners, municipalities, watershed groups, lake associations
- Seek out arborist meetings and ask if they would like to have someone present
- Dead tree warning signs: Signs posted on infected trees educating the public on why it happened.
- Connect with seedbanks
- Reach out to land trusts that have newsletters with wide audiences
- More focus on social media

- Facebook phenological calendar to build off HHLT CAP
- Distribute materials to Soil and Water and seedling sales
- Create photo database and encourage season long monitoring of plants at different stages
- Provide incentives/prizes for volunteer surveying
- Summer camp-type education events

Goal 5: Mitigate Pathways of Invasion

- Advocate for listing additional prohibited/regulated species in Part 575
- Expand watercraft inspection steward program
- Increase bootbrush stations at trailheads
- Support “Don’t move firewood” program and improve outreach
- Support TreeSmart trade through political advocacy and influencing what to buy.
- Continue making BMPs available on cleaning equipment
- Continue working with nurseries to discourage sale of native alternatives

Goal 6: Information Exchange

- Continue work on website redesign
- Continue gathering information and progressing with development of BMPs
- Increase use of social media
- Continue to have partner case studies at meetings