

St. Lawrence-Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management

## **Citizen Science & Volunteer Monitoring Event**

### **Salmon River Estuary Water Chestnut Pull**

#### **July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

*Report drafted by Sabrina Dreythaler, July 14<sup>th</sup> 2014*



**Figure 1.** New York Sea Grant Stewards pulling Water Chestnuts in the Salmon River Estuary, southeast of the Pine Grove Boat Launch.

### **Introduction and Background**

The SLELO PRISM in cooperation with partners from the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District and the New York Sea Grant planned a two part citizen science and volunteer monitoring event on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014. This event took place on the Salmon River Estuary, starting at the Pine Grove Boat Launch, Port Ontario, NY. The purpose of this event was to:

1. Recruit and teach volunteers the skills to survey their favorite landscape and/or waterbody for invasive species.
2. Conduct a practical “hands-on” community demonstration designed around the hand-pulling of Water Chestnut plants.
3. To celebrate New York State’s first formal Invasive Species Awareness Week.

### **Program/Content**

There were three tables set up for this event. One was set up by The SLELO PRISM, one by Oswego Soil and Water Conservation District and the final table was set up by the New York Sea Grant Stewards. Refreshments were provided for the participants courtesy



**Figure 2.** Rob Williams, SLELO-PRISM coordinator, presenting on invasive species

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Rob Williams, PRISM Coordinator

of the Oswego SWCD. The first part of the event consisted of a training taught by Rob Williams, SLELO-PRISM coordinator, see (Figure 2).

Rob discussed five invasive species that are of concern in the region: Asian Clam (*Corbicula fluminea*), Rusty Crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*), Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) and Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*). Participants learned how to identify these five species of concern, as well as how to survey and monitor for them at their favorite landscape or body of water using the Highly Probable Area, HPA assessment protocol. A rake toss was also demonstrated by SLELO field crew member Sabrina Dreythaler. A short presentation was given by John DeHollander, Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager, about the Water Chestnut problem in the area. There was also a short presentation given by Brittney Rogers, chief steward of the New York Sea Grant Stewards, about the work that the Sea Grant Stewards are doing. The second part of this event was a volunteer Water Chestnut pull where participants went out into the Salmon River Estuary by boat, kayak or canoe and hand-pulled Water Chestnuts, see **Figure 4**.



**Figure 3.** Sabrina Dreythaler demonstrating the rake-toss method of sampling.

### Summary/Overview

There were a total of 29 participants (**Figure 5**) in this citizen science event. Each participant was given an invasive species handbook, a pocket magnifying lens and Hydrilla and Asian Clam identification cards. Approximately 11 cubic yards of Water Chestnut was pulled.



**Figure 4.** Volunteer Emily Sheridan pulling water chestnuts in Salmon River Estuary.



**Figure 5.** Participants included 29 people from as far away as the Thousand Islands region.