

Lewis County Invasive Species Signage Project
Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District

This project has provided invasive species public awareness signage for public boat launches and sites across the county including county forest land, Chamber of Commerce public kiosks and recreational trailheads.

The Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to support a comprehensive effort to protect the natural resources of Lewis County and the common watersheds outside the county boundaries. The Adirondacks, Tug Hill Plateau and Black River Valley contain an abundance of unique habitats and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species. The abundant trout waters, freshwater lakes and pristine forestlands of the county attract recreationalists world-wide. Extensive trail systems exist throughout the county that skirt unique habitats such as the wetlands of the Tug Hill Plateau and the Adirondacks. County reforestation land often has recreational trails on and adjacent to them. While this provides the opportunity for economic development and tourism in Lewis County, it also enhances the threat of invasive species introduction and spread throughout the county.

With this project, the District designed and constructed signage for recreational trails, highways garages, and boat launches. The District built 14 invasive species drop boxes for public boat launches throughout the county. These drop boxes were built for the disposal of weeds that accumulate in or on boats, as well as bait bucket contents. The NYS DEC Bureau of Fisheries Management provided signage for these disposal stations and a standard design drawing for these drop boxes.

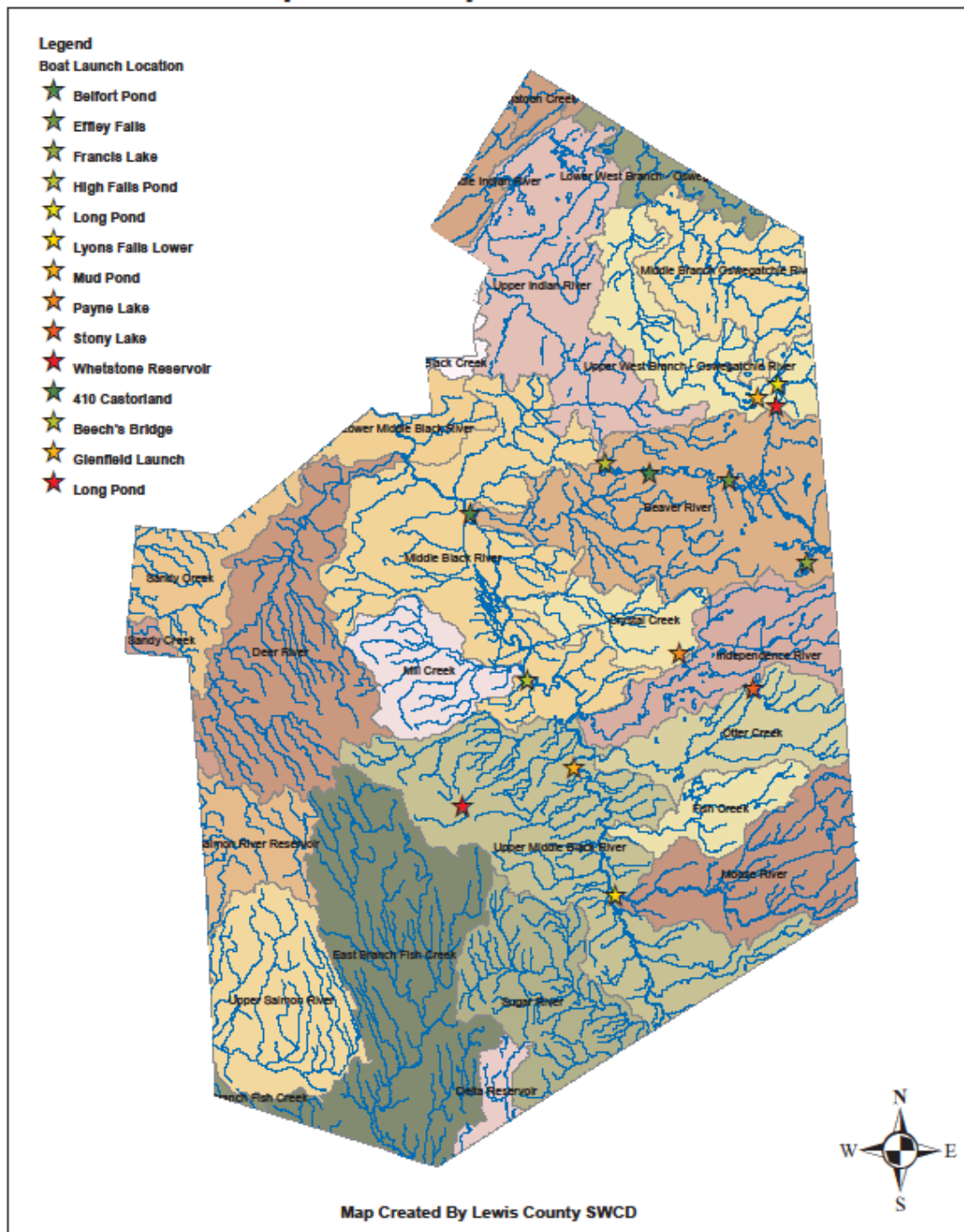
The District designed and constructed 77 interpretive signs for recreational trail users. The county ATV trail system is quite extensive and could serve as a significant method of transport for invasives species from different regions of the state and/or country. Seeds can get trapped in soil and mud that stick on the wheels and underside of an all-terrain vehicles (ATV) or on the footwear and clothing of the recreationalist. Signage was designated at the beginning and end of each trailhead demonstrating what invasive species to look for, contact information to report an invasive species and instructions on how to clean an ATV before moving to another region. In addition, county reforestation land has signage installed at log landings and road access points to inform loggers of the importance of equipment cleaning to prevent the spread of invasive species.

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c/o The Nature Conservancy
269 Ouderkirk Road. Pulaski, NY 13142
Rob Williams, PRISM Coordinator

Budget Category	Actual Total	Requesting	Match*
Personal Service: Staff Time	13,920.00	<i>4,096.00</i>	9,824.00
Materials and Supplies	6,829.95	<i>6,353.00</i>	476.95
Contractual Services	2,556.40	<i>1,500.00</i>	1,056.40
Printing and Postage			
Travel	452.00	<i>0.00</i>	452.00
Other (please detail below)			
	23,758.35	<i>11,949.00</i>	11,809.35

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Invasive Species Disposal Station Locations



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HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF THESE INVASIVE SPECIES !

What is an Invasive Species ?

An invasive species is a non-native plant, animal, or other organism that has the ability to invade natural areas and proliferate. They will often dominate an ecosystem to the detriment, and sometimes the exclusion, of native species. If you see or suspect any of these invasive species on the trail please avoid contact with them and call the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District at: (315)-376-6122.

Garlic Mustard



Height: 1-3 ft tall, its stem is usually smooth with 1-2 stems per plant. **Leaves:** Kidney-shaped $\frac{3}{4}$ - 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in long, arranged in a basal rosette and the upper leaves are alternate, triangular, and toothed. **Flowers:** White $\frac{1}{4}$ in, 4-petaled flowers bloom in late April – June. Most cluster at the top of the stalk but some may occur in leaf axils. ; Dark brown to black seeds, enclosed in 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in capsules, dispersed in late summer. Crushed leaves and stems have a garlic-like odor. **THREATS /DAMAGE:** Garlic mustard occurs in a range of moist to dry habitats and common in areas disturbed by human activities. Garlic mustard is one of the few plants that invades and dominates the understory of forested areas in North America.

Giant Hogweed



Appearance: 7-16 ft. tall. **Stem:** Often purple-mottled, up to 4 in. in diameter, hollow and ridged. **Leaves:** Alternate, 3-parted and pinnate leaves are up to 10 ft. long with fine hairs underneath. Upper leaves become gradually smaller. **Flowers:** 50-150 small, white flowers.

THREATS /DAMAGE
Suppresses growth of native plants. In addition, direct skin contact with giant hogweed induces extreme photosensitivity, which can lead to severe, slow to heal burns and scarring. Costs are incurred for both medical treatment and efforts to keep the plant under control. Over 100,000 seeds per plant are dispersed annually by water, wind, or humans.



This project was made possible through support provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Nature Conservancy. The content and opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the position or the policy of the NYS DEC or The Nature Conservancy, and no official endorsement should be inferred. Funding was provided through the NYS Environmental Protection Fund.

How You Can Help!

- Clean vehicles, equipment, boots before entering a new trail
- STAY ON TRAILS!
- Avoid riding through wet or muddy areas
- Don't travel from an infested area in to and un-infested area

Gear Cleaning Methods

- Clean all equipment before leaving home
- Steam clean
- Pressure wash
- Use compressed air
- Sweep/scrape/brush off soil and seeds



Swallow - Wort



Height: 2-6 ft with stems unbranched. **Leaves:** Opposite, oval to wedge-shaped, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in long and 2-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in wide with pointed tips, glossy and medium-green in color. **Flowers:** Small, fleshy, pink to maroon flowers with 5 petals are in loose clusters and visible in late May-mid July. **Fruit:** Smooth, slender, pointed, light green pods often in pairs and are abundant during July/August and, like milkweed, open in late summer, disseminating large numbers of downy seeds.

THREATS /DAMAGE
Swallow-wort is a very aggressive invader of Christmas tree plantations, crops, pastures, roadsides, disturbed and natural areas. It is drought tolerant and will thrive in a wide range of soil, moisture and light conditions, but it does not grow in wet areas. The wind dispersed seeds are produced in large numbers and can travel a great distance. Swallow-wort can interfere with forest regeneration and change the microbial composition of the soil. It is toxic, so deer and other grazers will not eat it.

Japanese Knotweed



Height: 10 ft. or taller. **Leaves:** Round, sometimes ridged, often mottled and simple and alternate, 3-6 in. long and 2-5 in. wide, with abruptly pointed tips. **Flowers:** Thousands of greenish-white flowers $\frac{1}{8}$ in. wide appear in mid to late summer. **Fruit:** $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{8}$ in. fruits have 3 wings that are easily dispersed by wind and water.

Threats /Damage: Aggressive invader in riparian areas, spreads quickly and forms dense thickets that exclude native plants, alters the ecosystem and interferes with activities such as fishing because it is too dense to walk through easily. All of the dead stems and leaves can create a fire hazard during the dormant season.

Purple Loosestrife



Height: <4 ft. tall, square woody stem covered by downy hair. **Leaves:** Lance shaped and rounded to heart-shaped at the base, arranged in pairs or whorls around the stem. **Flowers:** Numerous magenta or purple colored flowers, 5-7 petals grow on spikes, throughout much of the summer.

THREATS/DAMAGE: Invades variety of wetland habitats, prefers moist soil but once established it can exist in a wide range of soil types. Disturbed areas are more prone to invasion because exposed soil is ideal for germination. It can quickly form dense stands that displace native vegetation.



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Protecting nature. Preserving life.

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