

**Request for Quote  
Aquatic and Riparian  
Invasive Species Inventory and Habitat Assessment**

**Background:**

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and riparian invasive plants are non-native organisms whose introduction causes or is likely to cause harm to the environment, economy and/or human health. AIS can negatively impact native ecosystems by disrupting typical processes by limiting food sources, competing with or displacing native species from their habitats. AIS can carry pathogens that are potentially harmful to humans or can cause die-offs in fish and water-dwelling and shoreline bird populations. One major alteration to the Great Lakes ecosystems was the introduction of zebra (1990's) and quagga mussels (2000's). These prolific filter feeders directly compete with desirable plankton that are considered to be the foundation of the food chain, collapsing the non-native and native prey base. Invasive plant species in near shore riparian areas such as Japanese knotweed may further degrade freshwater habitats. A study of the Salmon River Corridor completed in 2012 demonstrated that Japanese knotweed was significantly altering the riparian habitat of this river and suggested that management and restoration would be beneficial to preserve the natural integrity and native diversity of this river system. As a result, nearly 9 acres of knotweed was suppressed or eradicated allowing for the restoration of 51,500 square feet restored to native grass using annual ryegrass, perennial ryegrass and little bluestem mix at 21 locations along the river

It is the desire of the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) to develop an Aquatic Restoration Initiative for 2020-2022. The first project of this initiative will begin in Year 1 with an initial baseline assessment of select aquatic and riparian areas in the Eastern Lake Ontario region. Year 2 may include management and restoration work as/if recommended in Year 1, followed by monitoring in Year 3. To scale-up this initiative, this work will focus on building partnerships with organizations within NYS and the Great Lakes Region and information will be disseminated to any interested parties through outreach and educational resources.

This Request for Quote (RFQ) is for 2020, Phase I assessment and inventory, only. The assessment will focus on select areas that may be impacted by aquatic and riparian invasive species and determine the presence of invasive species such as non-native crayfish, gobies, mussels, didymo and macrophytes such as fanwort and hydrilla and near shore plant species, like Japanese knotweed, phragmites, oriental bittersweet, and swallow-wort that may affect associated habitat. The results of the assessment will identify the most deserving areas in need of eradication/suppression, restoration, and management, and serve as the foundation for this initiative.

**Tasks to be completed by subcontractor:**

- The subcontractor shall work with SLELO PRISM staff to finalize assessment plan, sampling schedule and budget for 2020 project (not to exceed \$30,000) and submit within 30 days of contract award.
- This assessment shall focus on the following Eastern Lake Ontario tributaries and riparian corridors: South Sandy Creek, Sandy Creek, and Stony Creek, beginning at Lake Ontario and to 50 meters beyond the NYS Route 3 bridges. The assessment shall focus first on intermediate riparian areas and species then on aquatic areas and species that may be impacted by invasive species (plant and animal) to determine if control and/or restoration measures may be beneficial. The primary focus shall be on those species listed above with additional field observations as may be warranted.
- The subcontractor shall conduct a basic review of the selected sites based on available historical records and existing literature; including landscape and hydrology; physical and geological conditions, bathymetry, native species composition, water quality, and known invasive species previously reported to *iMapInvasives*. This review will help to better inform the project work and avoid duplication of work that has already been completed.
- The subcontractor shall conduct fieldwork to assess the previously mentioned areas to include; native and invasive species presence (plant and animal), approximate abundance and distribution. During fieldwork, the subcontractor shall use the provided Collector or Survey123 survey tools (ex. SAS Pro), unless otherwise agreed upon. Observations of invasive species collected during surveys must be reported to *iMapInvasives*.
- This work shall be supplemented with the use of innovative technology like underwater cameras, unmanned aerial vehicles, digital surveys and GIS tools. These tools are available for use by the SLELO PRISM as requested by the subcontractor.
- The subcontractor shall submit two reports; mid-contract progress report and final report
  - Final report shall include:
    - Initial review results as outlined in second bullet above;
    - Assessment summary and results for each site, including raw survey data;

- Invasive species found and identified at each site shall be listed using the SLELO PRISM Tiered Species list, which will be provided;
- Suggested or recommended site restoration work to improve habitat impacted by invasive species or as the result of suppression and control work;
- Recommendations should consider impacts from changing climatic conditions, provide baseline data for measuring changes or results of restoration work, lessons learned and potential transferability for other organizations to replicate work; and,
- Digital photos of work throughout the project.

**Tasks to be completed by The Nature Conservancy:**

- The Conservancy shall coordinate with the subcontractor regarding approval of task deliverables.
- The Conservancy shall assist the subcontractor to secure access to the property for the activities specified within the final Scope of Work.
- The Conservancy shall assist with assessment processes as needed during site activities as feasible by providing a boat and operator or a canoe and underwater video equipment if needed and if requested.
- The Conservancy shall conduct eDNA sampling for select non-native and native species using established protocols as part of a separate project.
- The Conservancy shall disseminate the final project report and recommendations to partners as necessary.

**Deliverables:**

The delivery and administration of a comprehensive project and report on managing aquatic and riparian invasive species and restoration recommendations for study areas in the SLELO Region

**Term:**

This engagement should begin approximately April 1, 2020 and shall be completed no later than December 01, 2020.

**Submit:**

Interested parties are requested to submit quotes (PDF or hardcopy), which present detailed information on the proposed project and subcontractor’s qualifications and understanding of the work to be performed.

Quotes shall include the following:

- Detailed quote for services
- Information on similar projects (if any) subcontractor has worked on that will demonstrate the subcontractor’s ability to perform the tasks outlined in this RFQ
- Names, qualifications, and experience of specific members of the project team (*when feasible*)

The Nature Conservancy, as host organization for the SLELO PRISM, will use this information to properly evaluate the 1) subcontractor’s capabilities to conduct the tasks as outlined in this RFQ and 2) whether the proposed quote meets the Aquatic Restoration Initiative’s goals and objectives.

Interested parties should submit a quote no later than March 15, 2020 to Brittney Rogers, [Brittney.Rogers@tnc.org](mailto:Brittney.Rogers@tnc.org)

Brittney Rogers  
SLELO PRISM  
The Nature Conservancy  
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