

Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention In Eastern Lake Ontario

2016 Annual Report

2016 marks the first season of an intense effort to reduce the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). Through a \$100k grant from the NYS DEC Invasive Species Spread Prevention Grants Program (NYS Environmental Protection Fund) four AIS stewardship specialists were strategically placed at high use/high priority boat launches along Eastern Lake Ontario and the data collected tells a real story.



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Protecting nature. Preserving life.



Our 2016 Team

In 2016, four aquatic invasive species Stewardship Specialists served as Boat Launch Stewards for a 12 week period, June through August and worked Wednesdays through Sundays to maximize boater engagement.

Stewards were placed at four strategic locations along Eastern Lake Ontario to include: Oswego Harbor, Henderson

Harbor, Sackets Harbor and at Cape Vincent.

Photo—clockwise from top left: Kaitlyn Linerode, Jacqueline Novak, Shannon Malone and Bryna Daykin.

“Four strategic boat launch sites along Eastern Lake Ontario were selected”



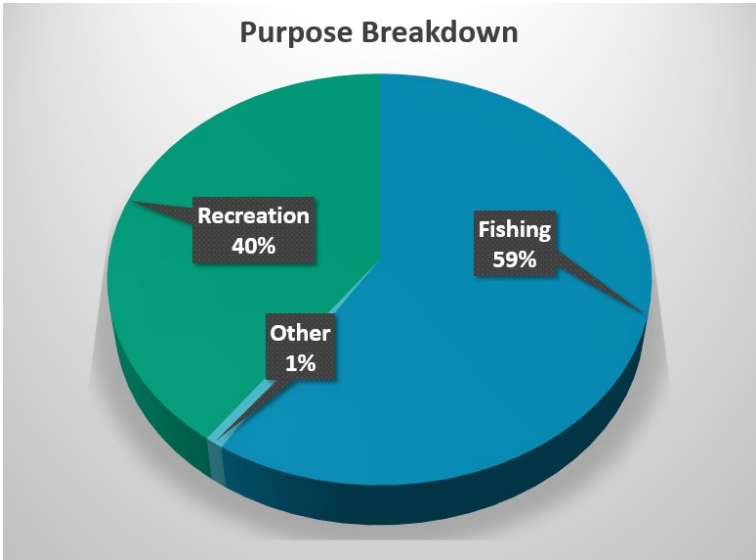
2016 Statistics

- ◆ 1,031 boaters engaged.
- ◆ 14% from out of state/country.
- ◆ Aquatic organisms found on 26% of boats (early season), 41% (late season).
- ◆ 92% of all participants received AIS “Clean-Drain-Dry” literature.
- ◆ Top 3 travel routes identified: Route 3, Route 81, Route 12-E.
- ◆ Areas recently boated: Canada, Florida Keys, Alabama, Louisiana, Finger Lakes, Adirondack Lakes, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Texas, Hudson River, Ohio River.

Season Summary for Eastern Lake Ontario

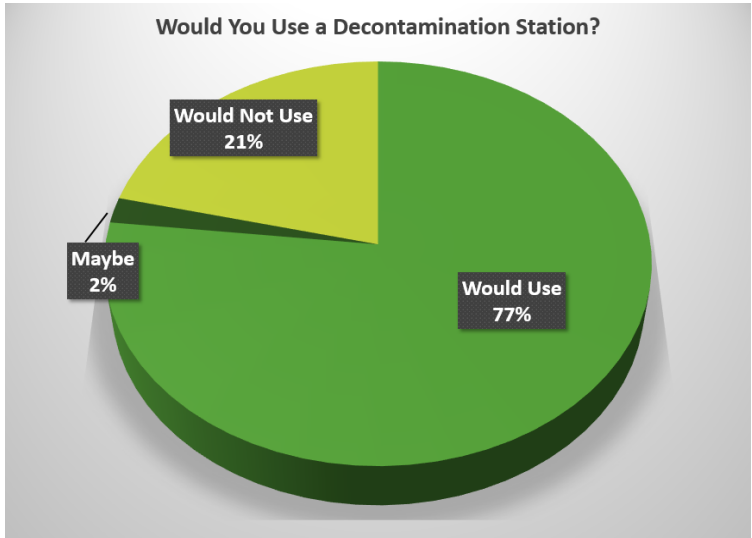


Purpose for Boating



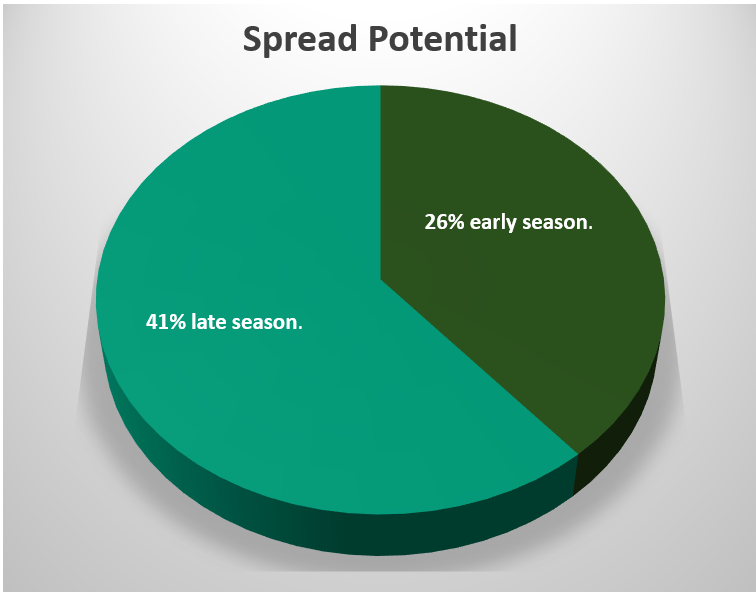
One question on the field data forms asks for the purpose of the watercraft’s outing. In 2016, 59% of boaters engaged were for the purpose of fishing, 40% were for the purpose of recreation and 1% were grouped into “other” category. Other refers to such purposes as work boats, barges, marine repair.

Decontamination Stations



When asked if they would use a decontamination station: 21% stated they would not, 2% stated maybe and 77% stated that they would use a decontamination station if available.

Spread Potential



26% of all watercraft (launching or retrieving) have plant materials/organisms on them during the early season which increases to 41% during the late season. A seasonal average of only 33% of all watercraft entering ELO or leaving ELO have no visible organisms or plant materials.

Collecting Information

The field data forms that our stewards populate during their conversations with boaters have 14 questions designed not only to learn about boater habits, but to collect data that can be used to evaluate invasive species prevention efforts.

Questions include:

- ◇ Boat type, motor, personal watercraft, sailboat, canoe, kayak, rowboat.
- ◇ Group size
- ◇ State of Registration
- ◇ Launching/retrieving
- ◇ Time of inspection
- ◇ Prior contact with steward
- ◇ Does the visitor take spread prevention steps?
- ◇ Aquatic organisms found
- ◇ Species identification
- ◇ Educational materials offered
- ◇ Waterbodies visited in last two weeks
- ◇ Waterbody the visitor will go to next
- ◇ Travel route to be taken.
- ◇ Would visitor use a decontamination station.

Pertinent information is then extracted and used to make determinations as to the spread of aquatic invasive species in the decision making process.

Common Species Observed

Round Goby—Zebra Mussel
Quagga Mussel—Milfoil(s)
Elodea Spp.—Chara— Eel-
grass—Curly Pondweed—
Coontail—Water Chest-
nut—Spiny Waterflea

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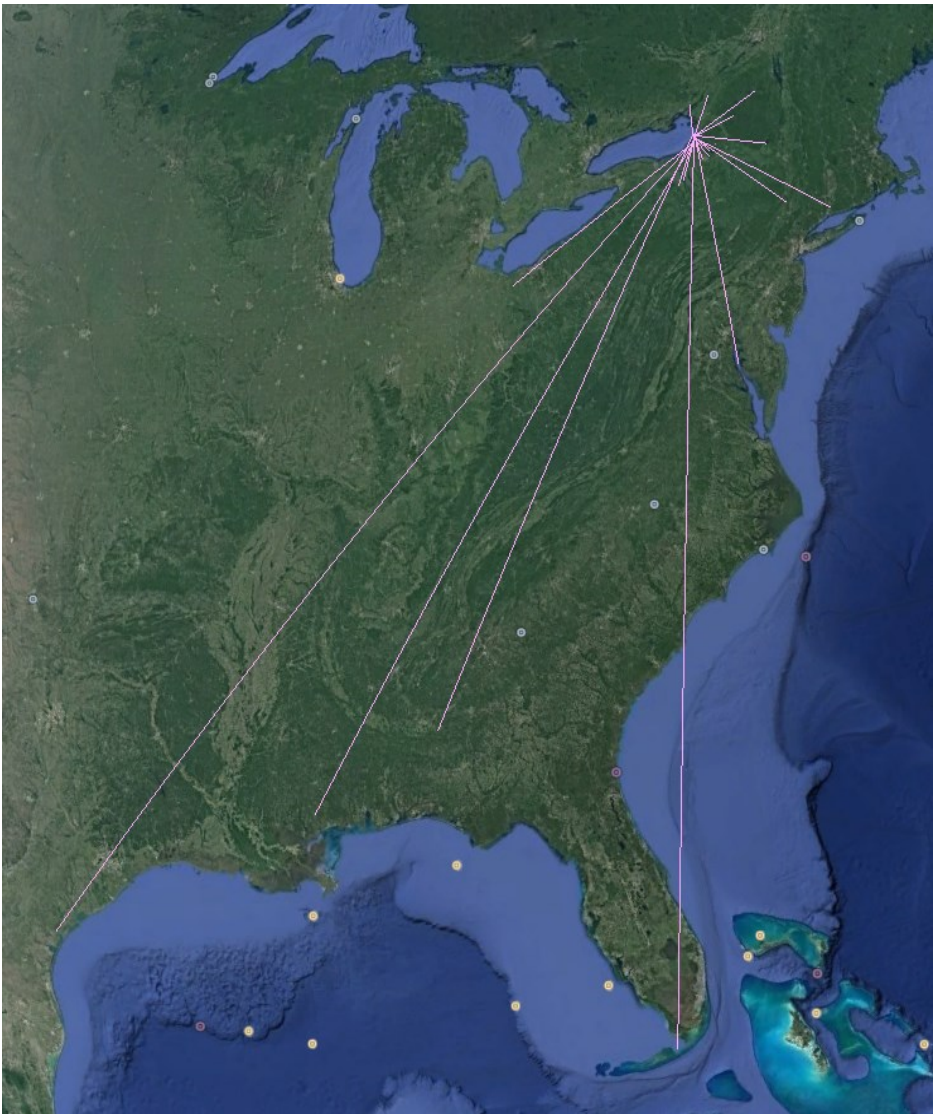
The SLELO PRISM Program is part of a much larger program throughout New York State. Other partners are also promoting AIS spread prevention via boat launch stewards. As a whole these combined efforts should significantly slow the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout New York State waters.

In the SLELO PRISM Region this effort is implemented as a partnership between the partners of the PRISM and The Nature Conservancy CWNy. Funded in part by a grant from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Invasive Species Spread Prevention Grants Program through appropriations from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

Report prepared by: Rob Williams, Invasive Species Program Coordinator, SLELO PRISM ©



Spread Potential on a Larger Scale



Spread Potential on a Larger Scale

Lake Ontario has always been a destination for fishing enthusiasts as well as recreational boating. Professional anglers participate in competitions from all over the east coast . The Salmon River in Pulaski attracts anglers on a global scale. Recreational travel-boating is also a significant activity with boaters traveling the Great Lakes, Erie Canal, Hudson River and even the so called “loop” which takes vessels from the Great Lakes down through the Mississippi River around the Florida peninsula up the Atlantic and back into the Great Lakes.

During the 2016 season when asked what waterbody the boater visited last or where they intend to go to next revealed the following locations/areas:

Canada	Florida Keys	Alabama	Louisiana	Finger Lakes
Adirondacks	Pennsylvania	New Jersey	Connecticut	Texas
New Hampshire	Hudson River	Ohio River		