

Priority Conservation Area Evaluation

El Dorado Preserve – Black Pond Wildlife Management Area

Contents

Introduction	1
About this PCA – El Dorado Preserve – Black Pond Wildlife Management Area (WMA).....	2
By The Numbers	3
Invasive Species Management Progress	3
Conservation Significance and Natural Features.....	4
Terrestrial Resilience.....	4
Carbon Benefits.....	5
Rare Native Species and Communities	6
Invasive Species Abundance and Management.....	7
Invasive Species Surveys.....	7
Approaching Species.....	8
Invasive Species Management.....	9
Pale Swallow-wort	10
Common Reed Grass	11
Partner Management Efforts.....	12
Recommendations & Future Work	12
References	i
Appendix A: Resilience Definitions.....	ii
Appendix B: Invasive Species Tier Ranking	iii
Appendix C: El Dorado Preserve – Black Pond WMA Full Species Lists.....	iv
Appendix D: Site Specific Management Progress	v
Appendix E: PCA Total Score Formula	vi

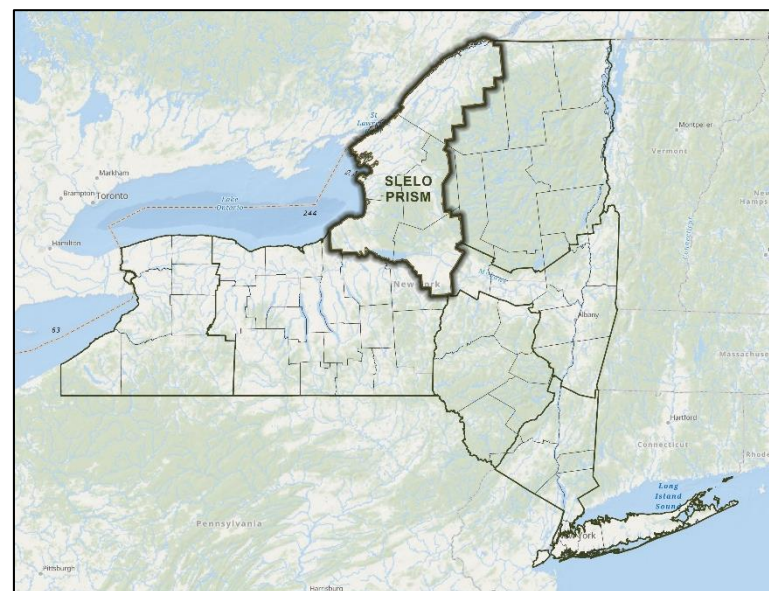
Introduction

The St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) serves as one of New York State's eight PRISMs and is hosted by The Nature Conservancy. The SLELO PRISM region encompasses 7,600 square miles and includes all or part of five counties (Map 1).

The mission of the SLELO PRISM is to protect native habitats, biodiversity, natural areas, parks and refuges, habitats, waterbodies, farmland, and open space by using a collaborative and integrated approach to invasive species management. The emphasis of these activities is on prevention, early detection, rapid response, ecological restoration, and education.

Due to the expansive nature of the PRISM and the high number of invasive species present in the region, SLELO PRISM partners focus invasive species management efforts on sites that are ecologically significant or have a high conservation value. In addition, sites that are seed banks, vectors, or that pose a proximity threat to high-value sites are all factors involved in determining site-based management on both public and private lands. The SLELO partnership has named these sites **Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs)**. Specifically, PCA's are viewed as "sites that have ecological importance such as unique habitat, grassland, Alvar, wetland, dune, freshwater spawning area, fen, bog, etc. and are often host to a rare, threatened or endangered species."

Invasive species survey and management work at PCAs is further refined to areas where human activities or site conditions increase the probability of an invasive species being introduced and/or becoming established – known as **Highly Probable Areas (HPAs)**. Examples for HPAs in aquatic areas include boat launches, fishing access sites, and coves with shallow slow-



Map 1. Location of SLELO PRISM in New York State.

moving waters, while HPAs in terrestrial areas include trailheads, parking areas, and campgrounds.

The purpose of this priority conservation area evaluation is to summarize select measures of conservation significance within the PCA and to objectively assess SLELO's progress toward invasive species prevention, survey, and management goals. The evaluation includes an overview of a respective PCA's conservation significance; a summary of invasive species distribution and abundance, including a quantitative analysis of management progress; and recommendations for future work. Summaries of invasive species distribution and management progress are compiled with data collected by SLELO PRISM staff and contractors, supplemented by public data from the iMapInvasives database. Survey and management activities conducted by partners and not reported to the iMapInvasives database are not included in this assessment.

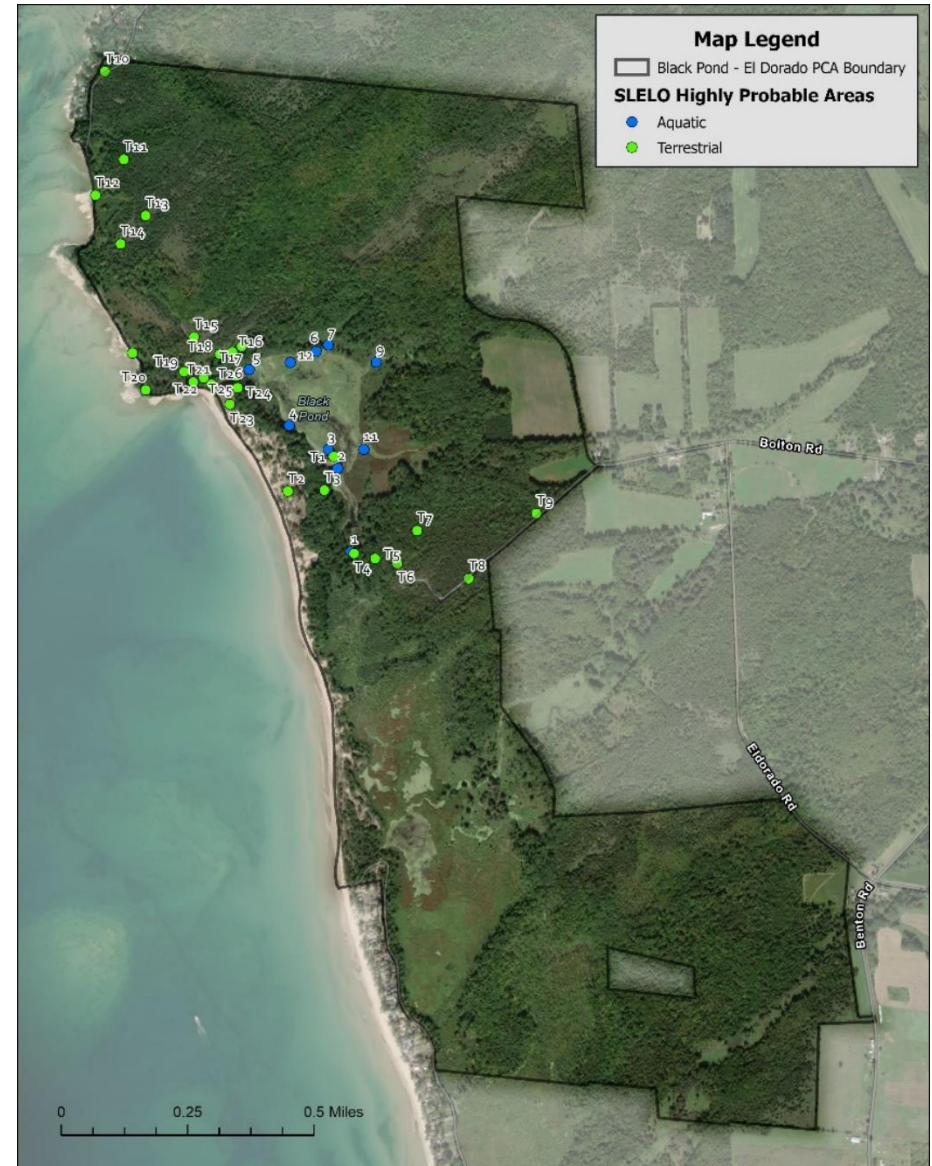
About this PCA – El Dorado Preserve – Black Pond Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

The PCA is comprised of two adjacent parcels: the El Dorado Preserve, owned by The Nature Conservancy and Black Pond Wildlife Management Area, a NYSDEC managed property. The PCA is in the Town of Ellisburg, Jefferson County and totals approximately 900-acres.

The 540-acre Black Pond WMA is a natural wetland complex consisting of a barrier beach, dune, open water, emergent marsh, and wooded/shrub swamp. The WMA has significant breeding and over-wintering habitat for birds (NYSDEC). The 360-acre El Dorado Preserve is one of The Nature Conservancy's first conservation areas in central New York. Inland areas of El Dorado Coastal Preserve are home to formerly grazed alvar, or sparse grassland vegetation. Cedar woods are spotted with smaller grassland openings and seasonal wetlands.

Approximately 99% of the PCA is natural landcover (NLCD, 2019). The mean elevation of El Dorado - Black Pond PCA is 255 feet and most common geophysical settings are sand (60%) and calcareous sedimentary (40%).

El Dorado - Black Pond was nominated as a SLELO PCA in 2012 and includes 26 terrestrial and 10 aquatic HPAs (Map 2). Black Pond WMA site was systematically surveyed by SLELO staff/contractors in 2012 and 2014, and the entire PCA was surveyed in 2018 and 2020.



Map 2. Location of HPAs at El Dorado - Black Pond WMA PCA (2021).

BY THE NUMBERS

PCA STATS	SURVEY STATS	MANAGEMENT STATS
900+ ACRES IN THE PCA	36 HPAs 26 TERRESTRIAL 10 AQUATIC	2 TIER SPECIES UNDER MANAGEMENT
99% NATURAL LANDCOVER	8.3 AVERAGE ACRES SURVEYED PER VISIT	28 TOTAL SLELO MANAGEMENT ACTIONS SINCE 2012
93% OF PCA IN RCN*	26 KNOWN INVASIVE SPECIES (7 AQUATIC + 19 TERRESTRIAL)	5.1 AVERAGE ACRES MANAGED PER VISIT
60,329 mt OF STORED CARBON	13 SLELO TIERED SPECIES (4 AQUATIC + 9 TERRESTRIAL)	56% REDUCTION IN EXTENT AT MANAGED SITES
17 KNOWN RARE SPECIES OR COMMUNITIES		

INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PROGRESS



PCA SCORE	Score is based on the PCA's ecological attributes and current progress towards invasive species management goals. Primary drivers influencing the score at this PCA include:
D+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (-) Swallow-wort management progressing, but much work still needed (-) Unmanaged swallow-wort infestations present near RTE species (+) Common reed grass management goal nearly met (+) Slightly above average terrestrial resilience

* Current score subject to future discretionary restoration adjustment

Conservation Significance and Natural Features

The following section provides an overview of select characteristics – such as terrestrial resilience, carbon storage, and rare species and communities – that lend to this PCA’s conservation value.

Terrestrial Resilience

The Nature Conservancy has identified a network of lands with unique topographies, geologies, and other characteristics that can withstand the impacts of climate change. The **resilient and connected network (RCN)** identifies where plant and animal species have the best chance to adapt in a changing climate (Anderson et al., 2016). Multiple factors contribute to a location’s overall resilience, including:

- **Landscape Diversity** – microhabitats and climate gradients available within a given area. The persistence of species increases in areas with high landscape diversity.
- **Local Connectedness** – the number of barriers and degree of fragmentation within a given area. A permeable (or connected) landscape promotes resilience by facilitating species movements.

The attributes of climate resilient lands can be degraded by invasive plants and/or forest pests and pathogens. Approximately **93%** of the terrestrial environment within El Dorado - Black Pond is included in the resilient and connected land network (Figure 2). El Dorado - Black Pond PCA has **slightly above average terrestrial resilience, average local connectedness, and slightly above landscape diversity**, indicating a high capacity to maintain species diversity, movement, and ecological function as the climate changes (Figure 3). For background information on this data, see Appendix A.

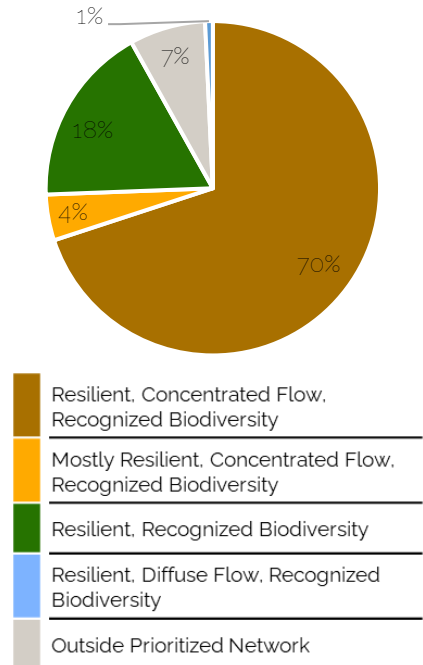


Figure 1. Percent of El Dorado - Black Pond located in The Nature Conservancy's resilient and connected land network.

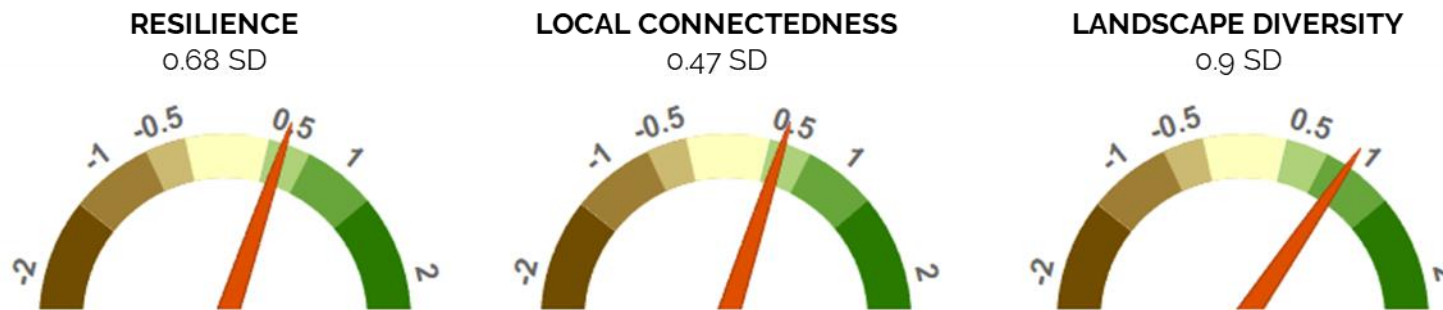
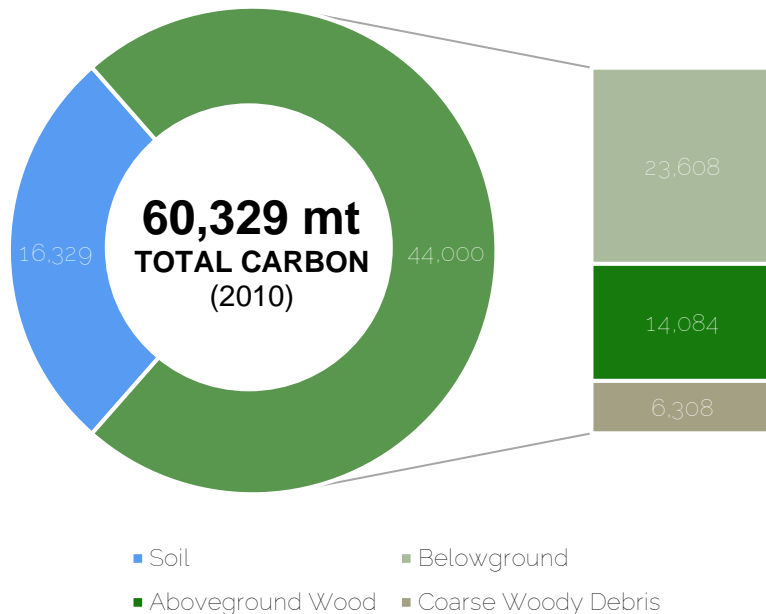


Figure 2. Site resilience, local connectedness, and landscape diversity scores for El Dorado - Black Pond PCA. Scores are expressed as the standard deviation above or below the average score.


Carbon Benefits

Climate change is driven, in part, by increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from human sources. Forests are an effective means to sequester (i.e. store) carbon. Through the process of photosynthesis, trees pull CO² from the air and bind it in their tissues as branches, roots, etc. Forests also sequester and store carbon through their soil. Conservation or improved management actions that aim to increase carbon storage and/or avoid carbon release are an important component of a natural climate solutions strategy. It's estimated that in the United States, conservation, restoration, and management could support sequestration of 21% of net annual emissions (Fargione et al., 2018). Unfortunately, tree damage or death caused by invasive forest pests or diseases can reduce sequestration and storage capacity. Based on an analysis of National Forest Inventory Plots, forests impacted by insect disturbances sequestered 69% less carbon than trees with no disturbance (Quirion et al., 2021). In addition, the presence of terrestrial invasive plants has been documented to reduce forest regeneration success, which can lead to long-term reductions in forest carbon storage (Magdalena & Katharina, 2020).

Models of forest and soil carbon data indicate El Dorado - Black Pond PCA stores an estimated 60,329 metric tonnes (mt) of carbon, including 44,000 mt forest carbon (Williams et al., 2021) and 16,329 mt of soil carbon (Guevara et al., 2020) (Figure 4).




**THE STORED CARBON AT
EL DORADO - BLACK POND PCA
IS EQUIVALENT TO CO₂ EMISSIONS FROM:**



25 MILLION
GALLONS OF
GASOLINE COMSUMED

OR



245 MILLION
POUNDS OF
COAL BURNED

Source: EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator

Figure 3. Sources and quantities of stored carbon at El Dorado - Black Pond PCA.

Rare Native Species and Communities

Approximately 42% of threatened or endangered species are at risk due to invasive species. Invasive species are generally considered one of the greatest causes of endangerment, second only to habitat loss (Pimental et al., 2005). Invasives may impact endangered species through direct predation, disease or competition for space and resources, and more (Duenas, et al., 2021).

Species and communities in New York are assigned a state rank by the NY Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) to reflect their rarity. Conservation status ranks include:

- S1** – Typically 5 or fewer occurrences, very few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream, or some factor of its biology making it especially vulnerable in New York State.
- S2** – Typically 6 to 20 occurrences, few remaining individuals, acres, or miles of stream, or factors demonstrably making it very vulnerable in New York State.
- S3** – Typically 21 to 100 occurrences, limited acreage, or miles of stream in New York State.
- S4** – Apparently secure in New York State
- S5** – Demonstrably secure in New York State

Surveys by NYNHP and other conservation partners have identified **two rare communities** and **15 rare species** at El Dorado - Black Pond PCA (Table 1). Note that some species documented historically may no longer be extant.

Untreated infestations of pale swallow-wort have been documented within 100ft of a historic populations of two (S2) species.

**Lakeview WMA PCA
CONTAINS:**

2

**RARE
COMMUNITIES**

15

**RARE
SPECIES**

Table 1. Count of rare species and communities documented at El Dorado - Black Pond PCA.

State Rank	Functional Group	Count
Critically Imperiled (S1)	Moth	1
	Fish	1
	Vascular Plants	1
	Great Lakes Dunes Community	1
Imperiled (S2)	Birds	1
	Fish	2
	Moth	1
	Vascular Plants	6
	Alvar Pavement Grassland	1
Vulnerable (S3)	Birds	2

Invasive Species Abundance and Management

Invasive Species Surveys

El Dorado - Black Pond WMA was systematically surveyed by SLELO staff/contractors in 2012 and 2014, and the entire PCA was surveyed in 2018 and 2020. Staff focus early detection surveys on 10 aquatic and 26 terrestrial HPAs. Staff surveys focus on tier-ranked species. For more information on the ranking system, see Appendix B. Additional incidental invasive species observations throughout the PCA are submitted by community scientists and other practitioners. According to the iMapInvasives database, the first invasive species observation at El Dorado - Black Pond was reported in 1997. Since that time, the total number of known species has gradually increased, with larger increases observed in 2011 and 2020 (Figure 5a). **These large increases in species observations are not necessarily reflective of new species being introduced to the landscape, but more likely are an indication of increased levels of survey effort and reporting.** As of May 2022, a total of 26 invasive species are known in El Dorado - Black Pond including seven aquatic and 19 terrestrial species (Figures 5a). The majority (n=13) are low to moderate impact species and not tier ranked in the SLELO PRISM. Five known species are ranked as tier 3 and eight are ranked as tier 4 (Figure 5b). The total number of known species at each HPA ranges from one to 13 with an average of 3.9 species per HPA. The total number of SLELO tier species at each HPA ranges from one to eight with an average of 3.6 species per HPA. For a full list of species known at the PCA, see Appendix C.

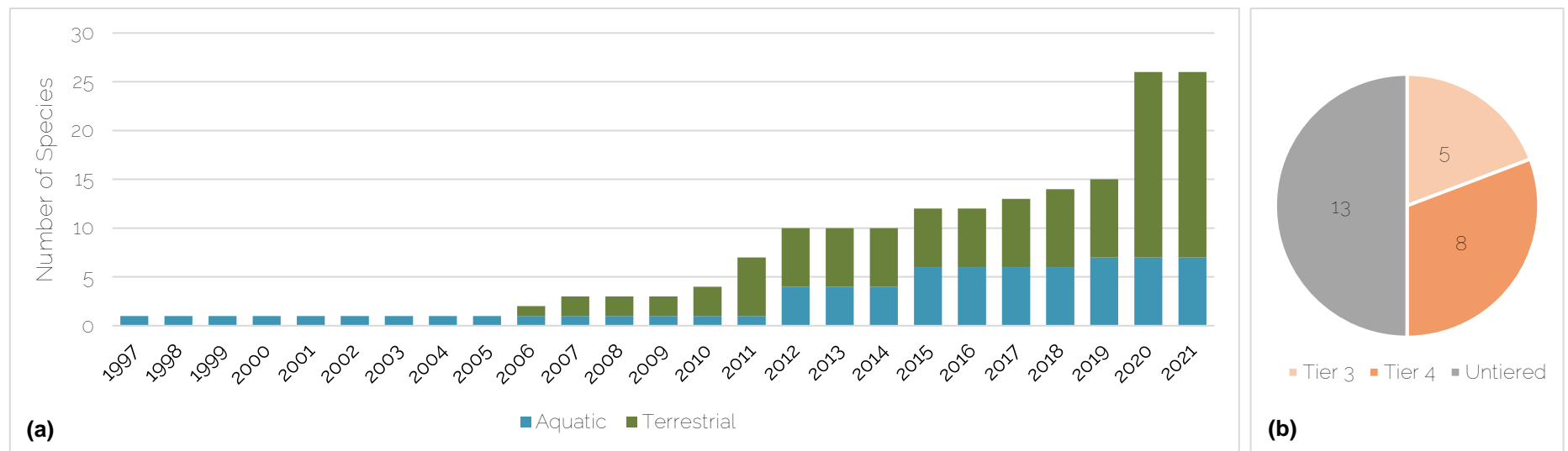


Figure 4. (a) cumulative number of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species documented at El Dorado - Black Pond PCA 1997-2021 (source: SLELO and iMapInvasives). (b) Distribution of known invasive species by SLELO tier classification.

Approaching Species

The following species are not found within the PCA geography but are within five-miles of the PCA boundary and approaching the area. They should be considered for early detection efforts by staff and partners.

Table 2. Species approaching Black Pond WMA – El Dorado Preserve PCA (iMapInvasives, 2022).

Scientific Name	Common Name	SLELO Tier	Observations in Buffer
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental Bittersweet	3	3
<i>Nitellopsis obtusa</i>	Starry Stonewort	3	2
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Glossy Buckthorn	4	56
<i>Neogobius melanostomus</i>	Round Goby	4	10
<i>Artemisia vulgaris var. vulgaris</i>	Mugwort	No Tier	1
<i>Centaurea jacea</i>	Brown knapweed	No Tier	1
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Fullers Teasel	No Tier	1
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground Ivy	No Tier	4
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dame's Rocket	No Tier	12
<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	Butter-and-eggs	No Tier	1
<i>Lycopus europaeus</i>	European Bugleweed	No Tier	2
<i>Najas minor</i>	Brittle Naiad	No Tier	3
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	Meadow Timothy	No Tier	2
<i>Poa compressa</i>	Canada Bluegrass	No Tier	2
<i>Populus alba</i>	White Poplar	No Tier	1
<i>Scardinius erythrophthalmus</i>	Rudd	No Tier	2
<i>Sedum sarmentosum</i>	Stringy Stonecrop	No Tier	1
<i>Vicia cracca ssp. cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	No Tier	1

Invasive Species Management

Known invasive species within the PCA are prioritized for management based on their current or future impacts and the availability of effective control measures and management resources. Because resources are limited, all known invasive species cannot be targeted for management. Some HPAs are not surveyed and/or managed annually. In addition, if a species is present in high abundance within the PCA, only a sub-set of HPAs may be prioritized for management.

Two tier 3 species are targeted for management by SLELO staff and contractors at select HPAs within this PCA: pale swallow-wort and common reed grass. The following section provides an overview of invasive species control efforts conducted by SLELO staff and contractors.

Additional management actions conducted by partners or volunteers and reported to iMapInvasives are summarized under the sub-section “Partner Management Efforts”.

MANAGEMENT TARGETS



PALE SWALLOW-WORT
TIER 3 – SUPPRESSION



COMMON REED GRASS
TIER 3 – SUPPRESSION

Management Goal(s):

Suppress known infestations of target invasive species where they occur at HPAs within Upper Lower Lakes WMA PCA to minimize their spread to uninvaded, interior portions of the property; protect rare, threatened, or endangered species and communities; maintain climate resilience; and promote the establishment and recovery of native species.

Monitoring Plan:

Outcome monitoring will be conducted annually by SLELO staff and/or contractors. Measurements of extent (acres) and invasive plant percent cover will be collected for each infestation to evaluate management progress.

To validate current management goals and objectives, staff will conduct strategic monitoring of interior portions of the PCA at least every three-years to assess the extent of target invasive species outside HPAs. The location and size of all infestations will be recorded.

Restoration Needs:

As part of the annual monitoring process, SLELO staff will evaluate the need for active restoration at each management site. Restoration will be prioritized first for sites that have reached their management objective. Active restoration will utilize a selection of native species appropriate for the PCA and specific site.

Management Objective(s):

Pale Swallow-wort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce swallow-wort density at invaded HPAs to 25% or less by 2028. • Exclude swallow-wort from 500-meter buffer where it occurs near RTE plant populations by 2028.
Common Reed Grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally eradicate common reed grass from HPAs by 2028.

Pale Swallow-wort

Swallow-wort was first documented at the PCA in 2010. The total number of known infestations reached a peak of 155 in 2020 (Figure 7) The majority of known infestations (n=123) are located outside of HPAs, are not under management, and their current extent is unknown. Annual management efforts began in 2012 for 26 infestations located at multiple HPAs. Since 2012, HPAs have been merged and condensed to account for changes in swallow-wort spatial distribution. This has limited the ability to track site-specific management progress by HPA.

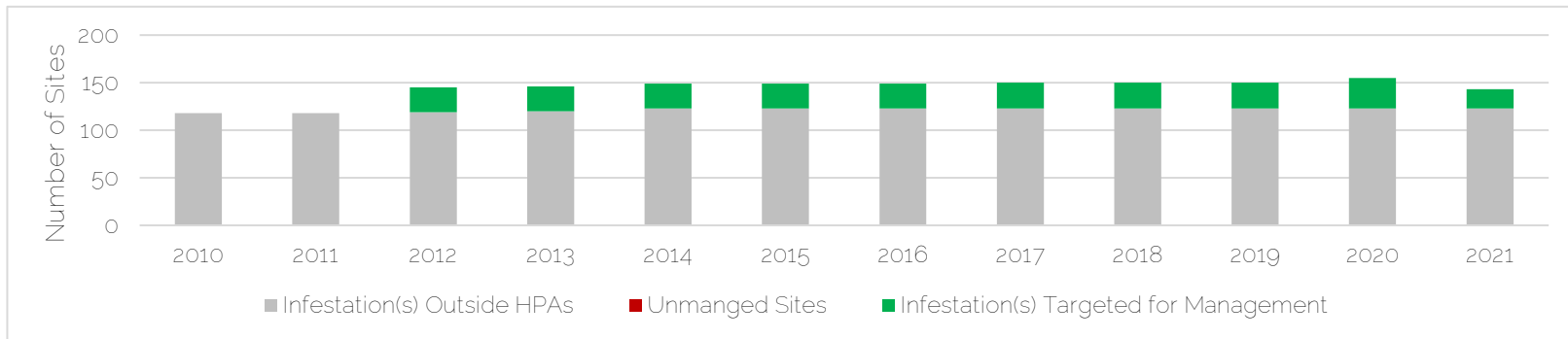


Figure 5. Number of known pale swallow-wort infestations at El Dorado - Black Pond PCA from 2009-2021 by management status.

From 2012-2019, invasive species distribution and management data was collected using handheld GPS and manually transcribed to paper-based maps. The consistent presence and treated area measurements observed from 2012-2019 (Figure 8) reflect this data collection technique and do not indicate unchanging conditions on the ground. Beginning in 2020, SLELO staff and contractors adopted a mobile GIS data collection system to allow for increased spatial mapping detail and accuracy. Based on the best available data, after ten years of chemical control, overall swallow-wort extent at HPAs reached a peak of 9.59 acres in 2020 and declined by approximately 24% to 7.33 acres in 2021.

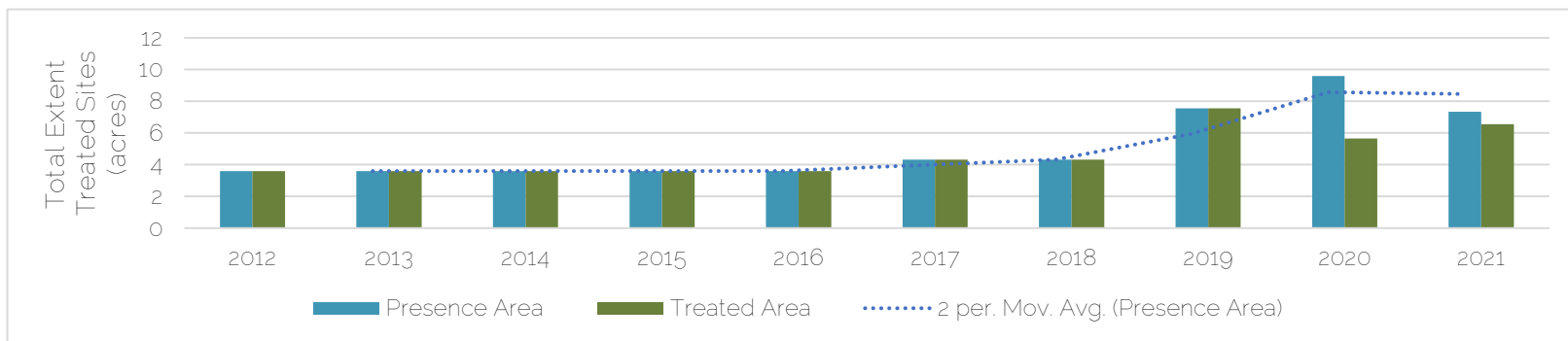


Figure 6. Changes in pale swallow-wort extent (presence area) and total area treated at all HPAs 2012-2021. Trendline represents two-year rolling average of presence area.

Common Reed Grass

Common reed grass was first documented at the PCA in 2015. Three infestations were documented at HPAs within the PCA (Figure 6). Management began in 2015 for all known infestations and has continued annually.

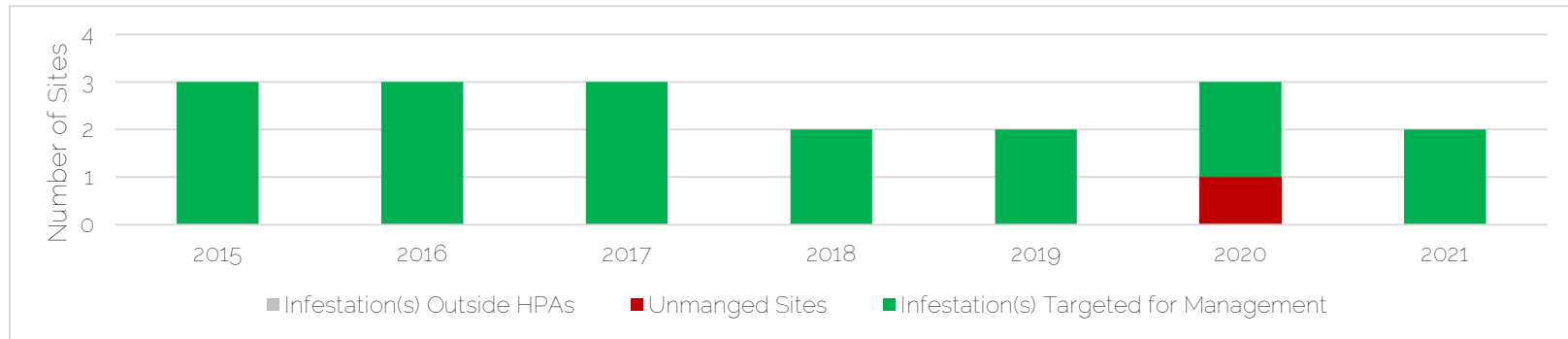


Figure 7. Number of known common reed grass infestations at El Dorado - Black Pond PCA from 2015-2021 by management status.

As described above, invasive species distribution and management data was collected using handheld GPS and manually transcribed to paper-based maps from 2015-2019. The consistent presence and treated area measurements observed from 2015-2019 (Figure 8) reflect this data collection technique and do not indicate unchanging conditions on the ground. Based on the best available data, after seven years of chemical control, overall phragmites extent at HPAs reached a peak of 0.15 acres in 2017 and declined by approximately 93% to 0.01 acres in 2021.

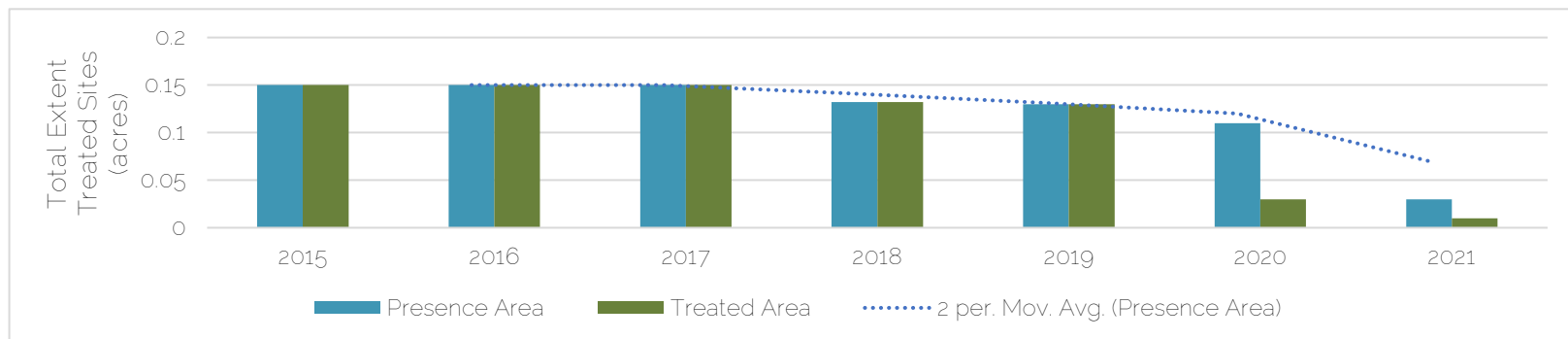


Figure 8. Changes in common reed grass extent (presence area) and total area treated at all HPAs 2015-2021. Trendline represents two-year rolling average of presence area.

Partner Management Efforts

The following sub-section provides an overview of management actions performed by partners and/or volunteers reported to iMapInvasives. Due to data reporting and sharing limitations, a quantitative assessment of management progress cannot be completed for each species. When possible, a summary of acres treated annually is provided. Trends charts are not provided for species managed sporadically.

May 2022: No partner management efforts were recorded in iMapinvasives.

Recommendations & Future Work

- **Assess the distribution of pale swallow-wort in the northeastern portion of the PCA.** The iMapInvasives database contains over 100 confirmed observations of pale swallow-wort in the northeastern portion of the PCA (Map 3). These observations are in close proximity to two native, imperiled (S2) plant species and are within an imperiled ecological community. SLELO staff/contractors should assess the extent of the infestations to evaluate potential chemical or biological control.
- **Selectively manage swallow-wort where it occurs near S2 species.** Confirmed observations of swallow-wort are present within close proximity to historically documented populations of imperiled native plants. SLELO will assess the feasibility of control for infestations around these native plant populations.



Map 3. Location of untreated swallow-wort infestations reported to the iMapInvasives database.

References

- Anderson, M.G., Barnett, A., Clark, M., Prince, J., Olivero Sheldon, A. and Vickery B. 2016. Resilient and Connected Landscapes for Terrestrial Conservation. The Nature Conservancy, Eastern Conservation Science, Eastern Regional Office. Boston, MA. https://easterndivision.s3.amazonaws.com/Resilient_and_Connected_Landscapes_For_Terrestrial_Conservation.pdf
- Dewitz, J., and U.S. Geological Survey, 2021, National Land Cover Database (NLCD) 2019 Products (ver. 2.0, June 2021): U.S. Geological Survey data release, <https://doi.org/10.5066/P9KZCM54>
- Fargione, J. E., Bassett, S., Boucher, T., Bridgham, S. D., Conant, R. T., Cook-Patton, S. C., et al. (2018). Natural climate solutions for the United States. *Sci. Adv.* 4:eaat1869. <https://www.science.org/doi/epdf/10.1126/sciadv.aat1869>
- Guevara, M., C.E. Arroyo-cruz, N. Brunsell, C.O. Cruz-gaistardo, G.M. Domke, J. Equihua, J. Etchevers, D.J. Hayes, T. Hengl, A. Ibelles, K. Johnson, B. de Jong, Z. Libohova, R. Llamas, L. Nave, J.L. Ornelas, F. Paz, R. Ressler, A. Schwartz, S. Wills, and R. Vargas. 2020. Soil Organic Carbon Estimates for 30-cm Depth, Mexico and Conterminous USA, 1991-2011. ORNL DAAC, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA. <https://doi.org/10.3334/ORNLDAAC/1737>
- Langmaier, M., & Lapin, K. (2020). A Systematic Review of the Impact of Invasive Alien Plants on Forest Regeneration in European Temperate Forests. *Frontiers in Plant Science*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpls.2020.524969>
- NYSDEC. (n.d.). Black Pond Wildlife Management Area. Black Pond Wildlife Management Area - NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation. Retrieved March 18, 2022, from <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/46385.html>
- Pimentel, D., Zuniga, R., and D. Morrison. 2005. Update on the environmental and economic cost associated with alien-invasive species in the United States. *Ecological Economics*, 52. pp 273-288. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2004.10.002>.
- Quirion B.R., Domke G.M., Walters B.F., Lovett G.M., Fargione J.E., Greenwood L, Serbesoff-King K., Randall J.M., Fei S. (2021). Insect and Disease Disturbances Correlate With Reduced Carbon Sequestration in Forests of the Contiguous United States. *Frontiers in Forests and Global Change*. 4. doi: <https://10.3389/ffgc.2021.716582>
- Williams, C.A., N. Hasler, H. Gu, and Y. Zhou. 2020. Forest Carbon Stocks and Fluxes from the NFCMS, Conterminous USA, 1990-2010. ORNL DAAC, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA. <https://doi.org/10.3334/ORNLDAAC/1829>

Appendix A: Resilience Definitions

Resilience Score: A site's Resilience Score estimates its capacity to maintain species diversity and ecological function as the climate changes. It was determined by evaluating and quantifying physical characteristics that foster resilience, particularly the site's landscape diversity and local connectedness. The score is calculated within ecoregions based on all cells of the same geophysical setting and is described on a relative basis as above or below the average. For example, cells of granite bedrock were compared with all other cells of granite bedrock, and coastal plain sands were compared with other coastal plain sands. Our goal was to identify the places most resilient to climate change for each geophysical setting within each ecoregion.

Local Connectedness: Refers to the degree of fragmentation and strength of barriers that create resistance to movement within a landscape. A highly connected landscape promotes resilience by allowing species to move through the landscape and find suitable microclimates where they can persist. In this study, we calculate local connectedness by measuring the amount and configuration of human-created barriers like major roads, development, energy infrastructure, and industrial farming and forestry land. Read the methods for your region:

Landscape Diversity: Refers to the microhabitats and climatic gradients available in the immediate neighborhood surrounding any 30-m cell of land. The persistence of species in an area increases in landscapes with a wide variety of microclimates created by the topography (topo-climates), elevation and hydrology. In this study, we measure microclimates by counting the variety of small-scale landforms, measuring elevation range, and evaluating the density and configuration of wetlands in a 100-acre neighborhood around every point on the landscape.

Forest Carbon: Estimates of 2010 forest carbon stock and components (aboveground, coarse woody debris, and soil/other) are from Williams et al. (2021b) following methods described for the Southeast US in Gu et al. (2019). To estimate carbon stock, attributes were determined for all forested 30-m pixels in the continental United States. A forest carbon cycle model trained to match Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data was used to predict carbon stocks for 2010 based on site-level attributes of forest type group, years since disturbance, and site productivity class. Results were iterated backward in time to provide continuous, annual reporting of forest carbon dynamics for each pixel. Most prior studies lacked spatial detail on the age of forest stands that persisted in a forested condition during the satellite data era, but this study used remotely sensed biomass to estimate the stand age condition of these persisting, intact forests, distinguishing relatively young stands (e.g., 30 to 50 years old) from older stands.

Soil Carbon: Estimates of soil organic carbon (SOC) for 0-30 cm topsoil layer at 250-m resolution for the conterminous USA (CONUS) are from Oak Ridge Lab ([Guevara et al. 2020](#)). The estimates are for the period 1991-2010 and were derived using the USDA Rapid Carbon Assessment (RaCA), which used over 6000 field soil samples and multiple environmental variables representative of the soil-forming environment coupled with a machine learning approach (i.e., simulated annealing) and regression tree ensemble modeling for optimized SOC prediction. Across the continental US, nearly 31% of SOC was found in forests, 28% in croplands, and 35% in grasslands and shrublands respectively.

Total Carbon: Estimates for total carbon in the carbon calculator use Forest Carbon 2010 for all cells with forest cover and Soil Carbon 2010 for all cells with non-forest cover. To combine the two datasets, we resampled the SOC data to a 30-m resolution to align with our other data products, and then removed developed lands using the 2016 National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD). Please note that resampling to a higher 30-m resolution introduces false accuracy as the original SOC data was at a lower 250-m resolution.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationByGeography/NorthAmerica/UnitedStates/edc/reportsdata/terrestrial/resilience/Pages/default.aspx>

Appendix B: Invasive Species Tier Ranking

In 2017 the PRISM network, state agencies and the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) formalized official definitions for invasive species tiers based on an invasive species impacts and abundance. The ranking system included four primary tiers (Figure 10):

- **Tier 1 – Early Detection/Prevention:** Highly invasive species located in a buffer around region but not in region itself, targeted for early detection and prevention activities
- **Tier 2 – Eradication:** Highly invasive species with low abundance in the region, management goal of eradication
- **Tier 3 – Containment:** Highly invasive species with medium abundance in the region, management goal of containment
- **Tier 4 – Local Control:** Highly invasive species with great abundance in the region, management goal of local control

SLELO PRISM further prioritizes certain invasive species on the tiers list for management. These species are selected through nomination and agreement with PRISM partners. The SLELO tiered species list is a sub-selection of species ranked at the NYS scale.

		Difficulty of Eradication / Cost of Control Abundance (In PRISM plus Buffer)			
		None in PRISM	Low (Eradication/ Full containment may be feasible)	Medium (Strategic management to contain infestations and slow spread in PRISM)	High (Established/widespread in PRISM; only strategic localized management)
Impact (current and future)	Very High or High	TIER 1 <i>Early Detection/Prevention</i> Highest level of early detection survey efforts. Should conduct delineation surveys and assign to appropriate Tier if detected. a) Inside buffer, but not in PRISM b) Outside PRISM and Buffer, but close (eastern North America) c) Far outside PRISM and buffer (not in east NA), but introduction pathway exists	TIER 2 <i>Eradication</i> Highest level of early detection response efforts. High impact species with low enough abundance and suitable treatment method available to make eradication feasible within the PRISM. Need delineation surveys to determine extent.	TIER 3 <i>Containment</i> Target strategic management to slow the spread, as likely too widespread for eradication, but many surrounding regions could be at risk if left unattended. For plants, use the IPMDAT. Possible eradication candidate only if adequate resources and effective control methods available.	TIER 4 <i>Local Control</i> Eradication from PRISM not feasible; focus on localized management over time to contain, exclude, or suppress to protect high-priority resources like rare species or recreation assets. Be strategic when deciding if / where to control.
	Medium	<i>Evaluate (Medium Impact)</i> Further evaluate impacts and PRISM resources to see if the species should be assigned to one of the other lists. If this species could feasibly become high impact with climatic or other environmental changes, consider moving to the appropriate High Impact row based on abundance. If too little is known, consider moving to "Monitor".			
	Unknown	X	TIER 5 <i>Monitor</i> Species that need more research, mapping, and monitoring to understand their invasiveness. This includes naturalized species and cultivated-only species that are known to be invasive in other regions but are not yet invasive here. Invasiveness may change with environmental or genetic changes. Should monitor populations on a regular basis to see if they are starting to become invasive and assign to appropriate Tier if invasive infestations detected.		

Figure 9. Invasive species tier table developed by the PRISMs, state agencies, and New York Natural Heritage Program.

Tier definitions were formalized in 2017 by the NYS invasive species network of PRISMs, state agencies, and NYNHP.

Buffer: An area chosen by the PRISM that surrounds the PRISM and takes in certain counties, states and provinces. Most PRISMs are using about 100 miles as the buffer.

Impact: Use the PRISM-specific invasiveness rankings if available, or use NYS ranks (see nyls.info for existing ranks). For species that are not ranked yet, or PRISM-specific adjustments of state ranks are deemed necessary, use expert opinion and document justification. Low-impact species not included since cannot justify spending resources to control these.

Abundance: This is left as a qualitative metric, since assigning standardized values to categories is not feasible due to the diversity of species dispersal strategies and data gaps.

This ranking system takes into account populations that have escaped into natural areas, but not intentionally (and legally) distributed individuals. For example, a landscape planting would not be counted.

Appendix C: El Dorado Preserve – Black Pond WMA Full Species Lists

<i>Aquatic Species</i>	SLELO Tier	Source	First Documented
<i>Water Chestnut</i>	3	iMapInvasives	2014
<i>Curly Pondweed</i>	4	iMapInvasives	2014
<i>Eurasian Water-milfoil</i>	4	iMapInvasives	2011
<i>European Frogbit</i>	4	iMapInvasives	2011
<i>Common Carp</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	1997
<i>Mud Bithynia</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2011
<i>Mute Swan</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2018

<i>Terrestrial Species</i>	SLELO Tier	Source	First Detected
<i>Common reed grass</i>	3	iMapInvasives	2011
<i>Japanese knotweed</i>	3	iMapInvasives	2015
<i>Pale Swallowwort</i>	3	iMapInvasives	2010
<i>Yellow Iris</i>	3	iMapInvasives	2020
<i>Common Buckthorn</i>	4	iMapInvasives	2007
<i>Honeysuckle spp.</i>	4	iMMA	2020
<i>Leafy Spurge</i>	4	iMMA	2020
<i>Purple Loosestrife</i>	4	iMapInvasives	2006
<i>Wild Parsnip</i>	4	iMapInvasives	2018
<i>Bittersweet Nightshade</i>	Untiered	iMMA	2020
<i>Blue Cat-tail, Hybrid Cattail</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2011
<i>Common Barberry</i>	Untiered	iMMA	2020
<i>Common mullein</i>	Untiered	iMMA	2020
<i>Common Periwinkle</i>	Untiered	iMMA	2020
<i>Creeping Jenny</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2020
<i>Eastern Helleborine</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2020
<i>Garlic Mustard</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2017
<i>Periwinkle</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2020
<i>Reed canary grass</i>	Untiered	iMapInvasives	2011

Appendix D: Site Specific Management Progress

Pale Swallow-wort				
HPA	Peak Area (Net Invaded Acres)	Current Area - (Net Invaded Acres)	Date Range	Percent Change
EBP 6	0.869208	0.025734	2020 - 2021	97% ▼
EBP 7	0.179316	0.179316	2020 - 2021	No Change
EBP 8	0.265402	0.265402	2020 - 2021	Increasing
EBP 11	0.720845	0.305335	2019 - 2021	58% ▼
EBP 12	4.255101	4.255101	2020 - 2021	Increasing
EBP 13	0.428387	0.428387	2020 - 2021	Increasing
EBP 14	0.004937	0.004937	2021 -	-
EBP 15	1.409336	1.409336	2020 - 2021	Increasing
EBP 16	0.005213	0.005213	2021 -	-
EPB 17	0.081602	0.081602	2020 - 2021	No Change
EBP 18	0.062959	0.062959	2020 - 2021	No Change
EBP 20	0.001361	0.001361	2020 - 2021	No Change
EBP M1	4.320845	0.63079	2012 - 2021	85% ▼
EBP Road 1	0.744037	0.744037	2020 - 2021	No Change
EBP TRAIL	4.18963	4.18963	2019 - 2021	Increasing

Phragmites				
HPA	Peak Area (Net Invaded Acres)	Current Area (Net Invaded Acres)	Date Range	Percent Change
EBP 3*	0.01620753	0.001010101	2015 - 2020*	94% ▼
EBP 4	0.08379247	0.001899046	2015 - 2021	98% ▼
EBP 5	0.077497853	0.077497853	2015 - 2021	Increasing
EBP 14	0.027777744	0.024686676	2020 - 2021	11% ▼

*Site retired

Appendix E: PCA Total Score Formula

The total score for PCA's is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Total Score} = \text{Average}(\text{RCD} + \text{IS}) + \text{DRA}$$

- **RCD = Average(Resilience + Local Connectedness + Landscape Diversity Scores)**
 - Terrestrial resilience data from Anderson et al. (2016) – accessible [here](#).
- **IS = Average(Invasive Species Management Progress Scores)**
 - Invasive species management scores are calculated based on progress achieved toward established PCA and species-specific objectives. Objectives are set using extent or density-based metrics
 - Extent Based Metrics
 - *Example: Reduce net invaded area of all pale swallow-wort infestations at HPAs by 80% by 2025.*
 - “Score” is measured as progress achieved toward the set objective
 - If the objective is 80% and invaded area has currently been reduced to:
 - 55% → 55/80 = 0.69 (69% or D+)
 - 65% → 65/80 = 0.81 (81% or B-)
 - 75% → 75/80 = 0.94 (94% or A)
 - Density Based Metrics
 - *Ex: Reduce swallow-wort density at current HPAs to 5% or less by 2028.*
 - “Score” is measured as the amount change needed between current average invasive species density and goal
 - If the objective is 5% density or less, and current density is:
 - 76-100 – needs to move 4 cover classes = F
 - 51-75 – needs to move 3 cover classes = D
 - 26-50 – needs to move 2 cover classes = C
 - 5-25 – needs to move 1 cover class = B
 - <5% - at goal = A
- **DRA = Discretionary Restoration Adjustment**
 - A discretionary adjustment applied to the total score that reflects restoration progress and/or native species recovery at the PCA
 - Add (+) to Total Score
 - Based on visual field observation, the majority of management sites exhibit an increase in native/desirable vegetation richness or cover
 - No Adjustment
 - Based on visual field observation, the majority of management sites exhibit an increase in native/desirable vegetation richness or cover
 - Add (-) to Total Score
 - Based on visual field observation, the majority of management sites exhibit an increase in non-native or invasive vegetation richness and/or cover