SLELO PRISM

St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Invasive Species Management

"Teaming Up to Stop the Spread of Invasive Species"

2023 Summer Newsletter

6,272 Native Plantings at South Sandy Creek

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About the Cover: Restoring Riparian Areas in SLELO

SLELO-Brittney Rogers

As many are aware, we have completed three phases of a restoration project at South Sandy Creek (SSC) in Lakeview WMA. This has included an initial assessment, management of invasives, monitoring, and in 2023, restoration. Our goal for this project is to suppress the growing monocultures of invasive species occurring within riparian areas, which included invasive knotweed, *phragmites* and goutweed. Another objective is to recover native **biodiversity** to increase the resilience of the ecosystem to external stressors and our changing climate.

Beginning June 23rd, **45 people contributed to over 650 total person hours, 25% of which were volunteer hours. Where 6,272 plants were placed in the ground throughout the riparian areas of South Sandy Creek spanning over nearly 30 acres within the Lakeview WMA.** Volunteers and staff endured hot and rainy weather, and worked hard to install the plants over the course of just five days!

Since the start of management at this site, we have been able to treat nearly 4 acres of invasive species. Following these efforts, we have been working to re-establish native species in the riparian areas with many additional goals including:

Supporting Wildlife – planting specialized native plants supports pollinator species like the monarch butterfly, selecting species that provide an abundance of food for wildlife, so we selected oaks and willows, sedges, and bur reeds.

Sequestering Carbon – Based on the **iTree tools**, we are estimating that in 30 years these plants, at 50% mortality, should sequester over 400,000 pounds of CO_2.

Improving Water Quality – Planting native species in riparian areas will allow for reduced runoff and improved stability of banks, reducing the impact of invasive knotweed leaf litter in the creek as well.

Improving Aesthetic Value – Although not our first priority, by conducting this work we are providing many locals and tourists alike with an improved quality of paddle along SSC. Following these efforts, our goal is to continue the management and suppression of the remaining invasive knotweed and *phragmites* at the sites in addition to long-term plans to continue native and invasive species monitoring at the site.

Protector's Activity

SLELO PRISM-Megan Pistolese-Shaw

Did you know that you can spread invasive species by boating, taking a hike, gardening, moving firewood, and many other activities you may enjoy? There are simple actions you can take to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species while enjoying these activities. Take the Pledge to Protect to get more tips like this at, iPledgeToProtect.org.

Prevention Steps While Boating:

- **Clean:** Clean whatever comes in contact with the water. As soon as you pull your boat out of the water, take a walk around the trailer, and remove any plant debris you can see.
- **Drain:** Drain and empty live wells, bait buckets, and bilge water, and lower your boat motor as you are preparing your trailer before you leave the boat launch area.
- **Dry:** Dry your vessel, equipment, and fishing tackle for a minimum of 5 days before launching in a different body of water. Dry all parts of your boat. Zebra Mussel eggs can live out of the water for 5 days and an adult Zebra mussel can live out of water for 2 weeks. By ensuring proper dry time, you can significantly reduce the likelihood that aquatic invasive species will survive and be spread to other water bodies.

Prevention Steps While Hiking:

- **Use a boot brush** to clean the tread of your shoes before and after hiking. Many trails have installed boot brush stations at their trailheads for public use. Handheld boot brushes can also be purchased from the PlayCleanGo store.
- **Check your pets for seeds** that may have attached and give them a bath after hiking.

Prevention Steps While Using Firewood:

- **Source Local Firewood:** In New York State there are regulations against moving firewood more than 50 miles from where it originated. While camping, be sure to not bring unused firewood home or to bring firewood that was sourced more than 50 miles from where you will use it.
- **Buy Certified Heat-treated Firewood:** To be considered "treated firewood" in New York, a government certified facility must subject the firewood to a heat-treatment process that is hot enough – and for long enough – to kill any pests in the wood (in New York this standard is 71° C (160° F) for 75 minutes). Learn more about firewood regulations and best use practices in this Protector's Activity Blog.

Prevention Steps While Gardening:

Choose Native Alternatives:

- **Growing native plants** helps reduce the spread of invasive plants and supports wildlife.
- **Learn about native alternatives** to common invasive plants in this Protector's Activity Blog.

2023 Early Detection Surveys:

This year's Early Detection Surveys are currently in progress. We have targeted 11 PCAs and 156 HPAs to conduct both aquatic and terrestrial surveys. 29 of these areas have active treatments occurring and we will be evaluating these for post-treatment success. We are also conducting native species surveys at these PCAs to get a better idea of what species we are protecting and which to use in restoration area plantings.

Spathius galinae a biocontrol for Emerald Ash Borer.
© SLELO PRISM/TNC

Giant Hogweed Eradication Efforts:

Giant hogweed management has been completed for this year. We checked 37 sites. 19 of these sites had no germination, 4 of these were giant hogweed free for 9 years, and have been retired as giant hogweed sites. Permission was not granted at 1 site. Giant hogweed was found at 17 sites, 5 were treated using the root cut method and 12 were treated using foliar application. 21 sites were long term monitoring sites and were not due to be monitored for 6 or 9 years free of giant hogweed. Total sites that SLELO is currently responsible for is 58.

Current Biocontrol Releases:

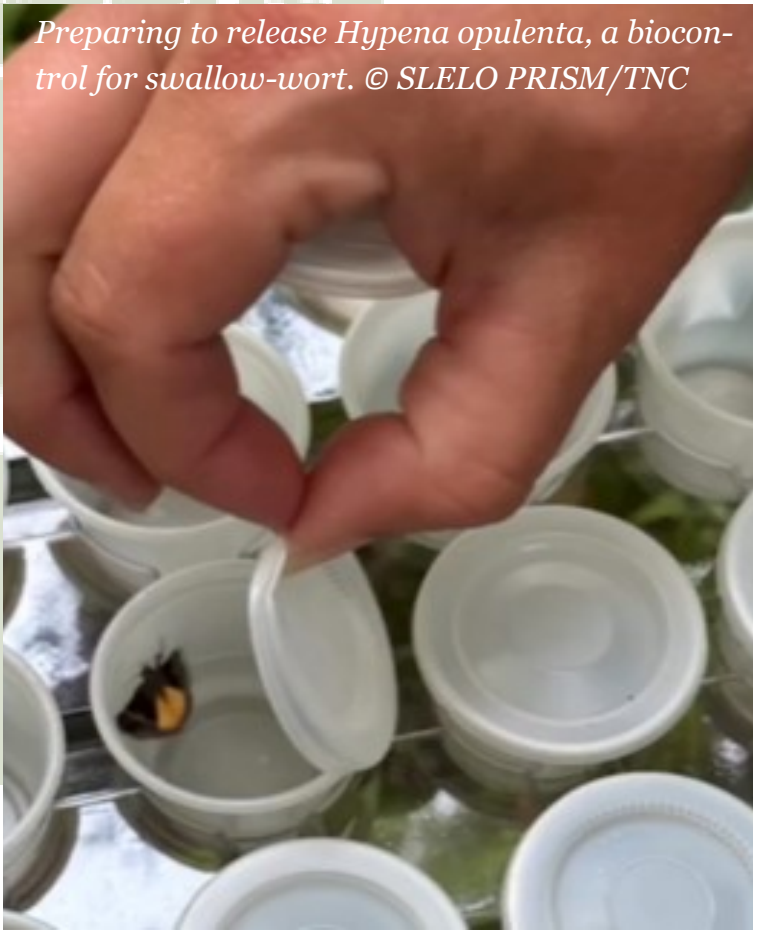
Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Biocontrol: We are currently releasing three species of parasitoid wasps (*Spathius galinae, Tetrastichus planipennisi*, and *Oobius agrili*) that target EAB at Rice Creek Field Station (SUNY Oswego). This is the 2nd year of the USDA's two year release program. Last year, we released a total of 5689 Wasps in 8 releases. So far, this year, we have completed four releases for a total of 2914. We still have four more releases and expect a similar total as last year.

Swallowwort Biocontrol: We have four cages set up for *Hypena opulenta* moths- the biocontrol for swallow-wort; two of these are at Robert Wehle State Park, and two of these are at Grenadier Island. 40 Pupae were placed in each cage on June 6. Unfortunately, only 1 cage had adults emerge. We are not alone in this lack of emergence. Other Hypena Biocontrol Sites also had no emergence. Pupae from different sites were brought to SUNY ESF, where Dylan Parry, an entomologist involved in the biocontrol program is examining them, to determine cause of non-emergence. We will be getting a new shipment of Hypena Moth (larvae, pupae, adult) on July 25. Hopefully, these will do much better than the first release. A June Trail Survey for evidence of overwintering was conducted by SLELO PRISM and OPRHP and did not find evidence of presence. All trails are being surveyed again in July and August. Residents of Grenadier Island have received training on how to identify Hypena and evidence of their presence. They are actively searching for their properties when traveling around the island. So far, no reports of Hypena presence.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) Biocontrol: In May, OPRHP with assistance from SLELO PRISM released 1,347 Silver Flies at Selkirk Shores State Park. There are plans to release Laricobius Beetles at Independence Park this Fall and hopefully, we will be able to release silver flies next spring at Independence Park. There are three species of insects that are used for HWA. These are a beetle (*laricobius nigrinus*) and silver flies (*leucopis argenticollis)* and (*Leucotaraxis piniperda*). The biocontrol insects are provided by the New York State Hemlock Initiative.

Leucotaraxis piniperda *a biocontrol for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. © SLELO PRISM/TNC*

2023 Restoration Sites: Last year, we conducted surveys and plantings at four restoration sites, which were management/treatment sites where natural establishment of native species seemed unlikely. This year, we have added four more sites for a total of 8 restoration sites. Three of the sites were managed for *phragmites*, two sites for yellow iris, two sites for invasive knotweed, and one site for pale swallowwort. Our restoration surveys record the native, nonnative, and target invasive species found in the treatment area and in a 20ft buffer zone around the treatment area. Vegetation plots were also randomly selected and surveyed for the percent cover of trees, shrubs, grasses, sedges/rushes, and forbs. Additional plantings will occur at these restoration sites in the fall and will be based on the results of our surveys. Our goals and objectives include completing the initial site assessment in the 1st year, increasing native species richness of the treatment area to at least 50% of the surrounding region in 3 years, and reducing target invasive species by 95% within 5 years.



Preparing to release Hypena opulenta, a biocontrol for swallow-wort. © SLELO PRISM/TNC

For more information on these or other terrestrial restoration and resiliency projects please reach out to Robert Smith at robert.l.smith@tnc.org

Watercraft Inspection Steward Program:

Total Surveys Recorded: 6,300
- – WISP: 6,008
- – Walk-up: 241
- – Angler: 51

Total Visitor Contacts: 15,115
- – WISP: 14,538
- – Walk-up: 457
- – Angler: 120

Total Inspections: 6,457
- – Launching Watercraft: 3,743
- – Retrieving Watercraft: 2,663
- – Angler Inspections: 51

99% Watercraft Inspection Compliance

Total AIS Interceptions: 1,011
- – 137 upon launch
- – 874 upon retrieval

SLF Monitoring:

Up to 20 traps will be placed at boat launch areas around the SLELO PRISM region to monitor for Spotted Lanternfly. Traps are being monitored on a weekly basis with data being uploaded to Survey123 which is shared with NYS Agriculture and Markets. To date, no SLF have been detected in SLELO's traps. For more information on SLF, visit our website.

AQUATIC FIELD SURVEYS

Field Surveys are well underway this year with the following PCAs with targeted aquatic surveys.

- Black Lake
- Delta Lake
- Fish Creek
- French Creek
- Mud Bay
- South Sandy Creek
- Upper and Lower Lakes
- Whetstone Reservoir
- Mud Lake

Maya W. 2023 WISP ©SLELO/TILT


Alisa T. 2023 WISP©SLELO/TILT

Species Spotlight, Water Soldier — BE ON THE LOOKOUT!

SLELO PRISM and TILT Watercraft Inspection Steward, Freddie Karotz

Water soldier has many colloquial names that point to different features of its morphology: saw tooth, water aloe, and water pineapple all refer to the same species, *Stratiotes aloides*. In the summer, its dark green conical leaves become buoyant, and break the surface of the water to stick up in a rosette that resembles the leaves at the top of a pineapple, complete with serrations along their edges. In midsummer, the plants become waterlogged, and sink below the surface. Flowers are white and have three petals, though budding is rare.

Studies in other areas where water soldier is present, as well as laboratory work, have highlighted the potential detriment caused by the introduction and establishment of water soldier. The plant's serrated leaves can cut skin easily, becoming a danger to anglers and swimmers. Dense growth of water soldier is an obstacle to boaters, and easily outcompetes native species for space and nutrients. It is also shown that water soldier can alter the chemistry of aquatic systems resulting in negative impacts on phytoplankton and other aquatic invertebrates (Ontario.ca). These chemical and microscopic effects are just as important as visible ones; ecosystems are mutable at every trophic level. **A large and sudden change in one species' population can prompt a series of responses from either the environment itself, or other organisms within it.**

Water soldier is native to the UK, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, Siberia, and most of Asia. It was introduced into Ontario's Trent River via an accidental garden escape. As of 2009, the population had grown from just a few samples to 22,000, now invading Red Horse Lake and Black River (InvadingSpecies.com).

Water Soldier is seen as a high-risk plant for invasion of the Great Lakes region and SLELO PRISM waterways, as these waters are all connected. Currently, Water Soldier is a Tier 1 Species in SLELO PRISM.

Recently, Water soldier has been detected by commercial fishers at the outlet of the Bay of Quinte. Due to concern for potential spread, the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources, and Forestry Surveillance Program is expanding to include Eastern Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River in 2023. Since early spring, no significant additional finds have occurred through this surveillance effort. Control efforts within the Bay of Quinte in Belleville and Trenton will be underway starting in August utilizing a trial with ProcellaCOR aquatic herbicide. You can help stop the spread of water soldier and other aquatic invasive species by cleaning, draining, and drying your watercrafts in transit between *all* bodies of water. If you come across water soldier be sure to report it to nyiMapInvasives.org and boat slowly in areas where it is present to reduce its spread. For more information on water solder, visit our website.

Update on Elm Zig-Zag Sawfly in SLELO

By: Liam Somers – NYS DEC

Elm zigzag sawfly (EZS) (*Aproceros leucopoda*), an exotic pest native to east Asia that feeds exclusively on elm species, has been detected in many locations across New York State this season. EZS was first detected in St. Lawrence County in August 2022. Since, it has been found in Allegany, Ontario, Madison, Ulster, Schenectady, Albany, Saratoga, Warren, and Clinton, with new counties being confirmed weekly. Most reported defoliation has been light (2-5%), but a group of Siberian elm in a residential backyard of Niskayuna were severely defoliated. Although EZS are known to be great fliers with the ability to travel up to 56 miles in a year, the rate of new detections indicates that EZS may have been more widespread than initially thought.

Urban forests could endure the worst of EZS damage, as various elm cultivars are widely planted in ornamental landscapes. Open-grown elms with large canopies provide abundant foliage to support multiple generations of EZS within a growing season and are vulnerable to complete defoliation from time to time. Healthy elms, however, may withstand occasional defoliation and treatment may not be necessary. If treatment is desired, general-purpose insecticides labeled for use on trees and shrubs can be used. Spinosad, an insecticidal product derived from a soil bacterium that affects the nervous system of insects and mites, is highly effective against sawfly larvae.

As a newly introduced species, the impact of EZS on our forests is not yet clear. The DEC has partnered with the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry to conduct research on the phenology, damage severity, and associated insect community of EZS.

Elm zig-zag sawfly larvae and adults. ©NYS DEC

This research will help us better understand how EZS interacts with our environment and what, if any, natural controls might be present. The DEC also participates with a working group of practitioners and researchers from all states with EZS present, in order to stay up-to-date on current research and best management practices.

The public can report sightings to **iMap Invasives**, in order to help us better determine the current distribution of EZS in New York. If you'd like to aid in early detection efforts across the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario region, SLELO PRISM has developed an invasive species Volunteer Surveillance Network with partners and community members. To join this effort, please visit the **SLELO Elm Zigzag Sawfly webpage** and fill out the form on the bottom of the page.

Yellow Iris—History, Identification and SLELO Efforts

SLELO PRISM and TILT Watercraft Inspection Steward, Rachel Rowlee

Yellow iris (*Iris Pseudacorus)* is a flowering plant native to North Africa, Europe, and Asia, that is identifiable by its bright yellow flower, which led to its popularity as an ornamental plant. Since it's introduction in the late 1700s, the popularity of the yellow iris throughout history has contributed to its continued spread.

Yellow iris can be identified visually by its showy yellow flower and flat swordlike leaves that have a bluish tint. If you are unsure in your identification, the mid vein of the leaves is very prominent and can be felt. Additionally, the plant has orange to pinkish meaty colored rhizomes, which can be identified by looking at a cross-section. When yellow irises have not yet bloomed, they can be mistaken for native blue flag irises. Blue flag irises are native shoreline stabilizers, therefore, taking extra effort to identify yellow irises is essential. Removal can be done by digging the entire rhizome and all connected rhizomes to prevent regeneration.

Yellow iris flower and rhizome. ©Rachel R. 2023 WISP

Yellow iris outcompetes native species vital to the health of riparian and wetland habitats. They are also known to be toxic to livestock and are not considered to provide a food source for insects. Yellow iris seeds float and can easily spread through waterways. Yellow iris have rhizomes and their networks create a positive feedback loop in environments, as sediment becomes denser, more yellow iris grow. The dense sediment becomes a more ideal habitat for trees and shrubs, creating drier shorelines and nesting habitats for waterfowl and fish are altered/disrupted. (USGS.gov).

Yellow iris is deemed a high-risk invasive species in the New York State Invasive Species Tiers, indicating that management and intervention measures to prevent the spread of the yellow iris are important. SLELO PRISM ranks yellow iris as a tier-three species, which is defined as needing targeted management to suppress the population in priority areas.

To enhance target management efforts, on June 8th, 2023, SLELO PRISM hosted a yellow iris hand-pull event for New York Invasive Species Awareness Week (NYISAW). Approximately 300 yellow iris were removed from the shore of the South Colwell Pond at Montario Point in Ellisburg, New York, which is within the NYS DEC Lakeview Wildlife Management Area. In addition to Montario Point, removal efforts for yellow iris occurred at Black Pond WMA and El Dorado Preserve, totaling to over 800 plants removed in the SLELO Region this summer!

These removals raised awareness and helped to reduced the dense sediment that had developed due to the thick rhizome network of the yellow iris. This will enhance the overall health of these riparian areas and allow the native plants and wildlife to reclaim the habitat. If you find yellow iris please report it to **NYiMapInvasives.org**.

NYISAW 2023 © Brittney Rogers-SLELO

Connected Lands and Waters

SLELO-Rob Williams

Climate change is expected to alter species distributions, modify ecological processes, and exacerbate environmental degradation (Pachauri & Reisinger 2007). To offset these effects, the need is greater than ever for strategic invasive species management and restoration. One way in which to achieve this may be to focus on connected land and waterscapes.

As our climate changes, native plants and animals shift their distributions by colonizing and establishing in new territory, finding suitable conditions including microclimates (riparian areas) that allow them to persist, and produce offspring to continue the process. The problem is that this takes time – generations, perhaps eons and the process is further complicated by landscape fragmentation such as roads, dams, and other human development (Anderson et al 2016). Furthermore, invasive species reduce the overall health and function of natural ecosystems that may further hinder the natural shifts of native flora and fauna, as well as the ability of forests to sequester and store carbon. By reducing the invasives found along connected systems and by reestablishing native plant assemblages we can begin to recover ecosystem resilience and biodiversity on these types of green watershed infrastructures.

SLELO PRISM is taking this concept of focused management and restoration into consideration. One of our recent projects at South Sandy Creek has been referenced as a "*small scale project with large scale outcomes*" (Rogers 2023).

This project achieved 3.5 acres of improved riparian management impacting a 30-acre Priority Conservation Area (PCA). This holds true for our terrestrial sites as well. At our Black Pond PCA 0.5-acres of improved management serves to protect a 526-acre PCA.

By focusing invasive species suppression and habitat rehabilitation on connected areas, both terrestrial and aquatic areas, we can defragment our recovery efforts, preserve the resilience of these systems and augment their natural character to achieve a greater conservation impact.

Black Pond-Eldorado PCA
Google Earth


South Sandy Creek Riparian Corridor
Google Earth

Priority Conservation Area Score Cards—Progress

By: Rob Williams and Zack Simek

Is the health of our Priority Conservation Areas (PCA's) improving, maintaining or worsening as the result of our invasive species management strategies and restoration activities? Answering this important question first requires a benchmark. To achieve this, the SLELO PRISM continues to develop scorecards for each PCA and to date approximately half of our PCA's have been benchmarked.

The first step in the process is to describe the PCA and become oriented with the natural characteristics of the PCA. We describe the acreage, habitat types, terrestrial and aquatic, we map it and if available we mark the boundary and describe the Highly Probable Areas or HPA's where invasives are most likely to occur. We then use The Nature Conservancy's resilient and connected network (or RCN) database that identifies where plant and animals have the best chance to adapt in a changing climate. This compares a sites resilience, connectedness and landscape diversity. We also look at the sources and quantities of carbon stored at the PCA. For example, one of our PCA's (Lakeview WMA) we estimate over 155 metric tons of stored carbon which is equivalent to CO2 emissions from 64 million gallons of gasoline consumed or 629 million pounds of coal burned.

Next using multiple sources including work by New York's Natural Heritage Program, we look at native species communities and their state ranking which reflects their rarity. We then insert our invasive species abundance and management knowledge and we do this for both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species. By comparing resiliency, connectedness and diversity with invasive species extent or density the total score is the average (RCD+IS).

Example:

Lakeview Wildlife Management Area PCA

RCD Score (1.18 + 1.08 + 1.35) = 1.20 = A (95)
IS Density Score (s) – A (95)
Yellow Iris – A (95) & Swallow-wort – A (95)
TOTAL Score = (95+95) /2 = 95 = A

The scorer can then add a positive or negative to the score based on successful ecological restoration activities taking place at the PCA. This is known as Discretionary Restoration Adjustment or DRA. The overall score then becomes: A+.

Outputs

If target invasives are being reduced then forest health, carbon and biodiversity are presumably sustained. If new invasive species (IS), such as an insect, enter the system or if the abundance of an invasive plant increases, then the site might be "regressing". If IS are reducing, there are no new introductions and native species continue to thrive, then the PCA is likely to be improving. This becomes our (Health Profile or Benchmark Score). At Lakeview PCA we are now seeing after 11 years of treatment – a 33% reduction in the extent of sites managed for swallowwort, which indicates we are progressing in a favorable direction. To view completed scores go to: sleloinvasives.org—***Field Reports***—*Select a PCA—scroll down to PCA Score Card.*

Lakeview WMA ©SLELO PRISM

How You Can Help Conserve Ash With MaMA

Johnathon Rosenthal-Ecological Research Institute

The Monitoring and Managing Ash (MaMA) program of the Ecological Research Institute (ERI) has made considerable progress in its efforts to detect "lingering ash", trees that likely have some resistance to emerald ash borer (EAB) and from which material can be used to breed highly EAB-resistant trees. Already, in the Hudson Valley and Catskills, where EAB has long been established, MaMA has enabled detection of over 30 lingering ash.

As EAB's invasion expands in the SLELO region, participation in MaMA needs to expand as well, so locally adapted lingering ash can be found. Through efforts of partner institutions and citizen-scientists, we are already receiving data from several MaMA Monitoring Plots Network plots across the region. The data are crucial because lingering ash can only be found after 95% of the ash in an area have been killed by EAB, and the plots tell us when this threshold is reached.

Monitoring a plot is just one way you can help find lingering trees, which provide great hope for the future of native ash species. ERI has just unveiled a new MaMA component, the Rapid Ash Mortality Assessment (RAMA) project, which takes less time than monitoring plots. An even easier way to participate is using the MaMA Ash/EAB Surveys project to report sites where you do or do not find EAB, enabling us to track EAB's spread. Finally, after the 95% mortality threshold has been reached, you'll be able to use the MaMA Lingering Ash Search project to report lingering ash.

Lingering ash in area with almost 100% ash mortality. © R. Wildova, ERI

Lingering ash are rare for all the native ash – white, green and black. Therefore, if you manage ash, instead of proactively cutting all of them, enough trees should be left standing that there will be a chance one or more will turn out to be lingering trees.

Now, MaMA plays a prominent role in the Tree Species in Peril Collaborative Initiative led by The Nature Conservancy in collaboration with the US Forest Service, through which its implementation is being extended throughout New England.

For more information on the MaMA program please visit www.MonitoringAsh.org, where updated training videos and a SLELO MaMA Action Map prioritizing particular actions for different areas in the region will be posted, or email, outreach@monitoringash.org.

Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteers along with seasonal staff from our partners with NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation helped to remove sparse populations of target invasive species at some of our Priority Conservation Areas this summer. Below are the sites we've visited this year and the estimated number of target species removed. Thanks to all our volunteers and partners for your support!

- South Colwell Pond Lakeveiw WMA (300 Yellow Iris)
- El Dorado Preserve (363 Swallow-wort, 80 Yellow Iris)
- Black Pond WMA (487 Yellow Iris)

Volunteers assisting terrestrial invasive Species removal efforts ©SLELO/TNC.

Volunteer Experience Showcase

When I volunteered with SLELO PRISM, I loaded up my kayak and set out for a water chestnut pull held on the Oswegatchie River in Heuvelton, NY this July. I received a friendly and very helpful welcome from the SLELO PRISM staff and their many volunteers.

It was a perfect day for a leisurely paddle down the placid river. My fellow paddlers were respectful of the earth and grounded in her, which made them all easy companions- *and most interesting companions too*. This was definitely a highlight of my summer! I am hoping to do another paddle with them soon and would recommend volunteering with SLELO to anyone!

~ Laurie Gilbert, new SLELO volunteer

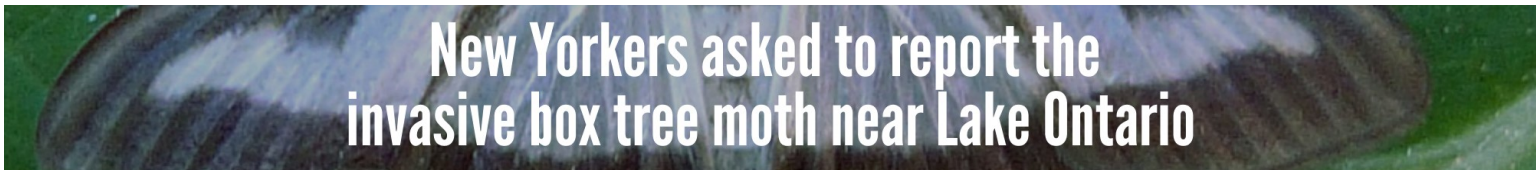
Laurie Gilbert on the Oswegatchie River. ©Megan Pistolese-Shaw, SLELO PRISM

Volunteer with Us!

EVENT DETAILS

EVENT DETAILS

- Schedule a Virtual SLELO VSN Training
- August 7th, 9 AM-11 AM Guided Watershed Tour: Aquatic Plant Puddle on Lake Placid
- August 8th, 1 PM-3:30 PM Lake Protectors In-Person Training
- September 24th-26th, SLELO PRISM will be providing exhibits and presentations at the Invasive Species Expo
- October 6th, 12-12:30 PM Jumping Worms webinar with Cornell's What's Bugging You First Friday Series
- Volunteer opportunities in SLELO PRISM
- September 14th, 1-2PM Native Alternatives to Common Invasive Garden Plants Webinar



Read the Article

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From Our Director

'It's more than just ecological restoration'

Our work is more than restoration - it's about sustaining biodiversity, improving carbon sequestration and wildlife habitat by reducing invasive plant monocultures and increasing native plant establishment. Often, invasive plants create monocultures on the landscape thereby reducing native plant diversity. These same 'disturbed' areas can often reduce the healthy sequestration of carbon – as is the case with forest pests. By suppressing invasive plants and promoting native plant recovery, either through natural succession or through intentional ecological restoration, we can increase biodiversity on these sites. As a result, we can improve carbon uptakes and wildlife habitat making these biologically diverse areas more resilient to external stressors such as a changing climate.

In the Eastern Lake Ontario region, we have Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) consisting of both terrestrial and riparian systems. Areas surrounding these land/water interfaces have conservation value worthy of our focus. Our team has established an approach towards protecting and improving these PCAs which begins with native and invasive plant assessments, invasive plant suppression and finally native plant augmentation. Projects along the Salmon River, the Eastern Lake Ontario Dunes, South Sandy Creek Lakeveiw WMA, combined with eight terrestrial Priority Conservation Areas, have demonstrated the opportunity to restore and rehabilitate these systems to make them healthier and more resilient to stressors. Our team continues to develop and practice this model approach towards sustaining biodiversity, improving carbon sequestration, and wildlife habitat.

~Rob Williams

SLELO PRISM Partner List

- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- The Nature Conservancy in New York
- Cornell Cooperative Extension Offices
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
- NYS Department of Transportation
- NY Natural Heritage Program
- Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- Fort Drum Military Installation
- CNY Regional Planning & Development Board
- NY Power Authority
- Tug Hill Commission
- Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust
- Thousand Islands Land Trust
- Indian River Lakes Conservancy
- Save The River
- NY Sea Grant
- Ducks Unlimited
- Onondaga Audubon
- US Coast Guard Auxiliary
- St. Regis Mohawk Tribe-Environmental Unit
- Algonquin to Adirondack Collaborative

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Articles contributed by SLELO partners

SLELO PRISM

The Nature Conservancy — *SLELO PRISM Host Organization*

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Department of Environmental Conservation

Eastern Lake Ontario Swallow-wort collaborative