



# 2025 SLELO PRISM Early Detection Program Report



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**2025 Highlights: Surveyed 205 Highly Probable Areas within 13 Priority Conservation Areas**  
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Protecting our lands and waters through a changing climate must include a focus on invasive species prevention. Second to prevention is early detection – or the ability to detect new invasive species while in low abundance – which provides land managers an opportunity to limit the species spread and associated impacts to the environment, economy, or human health.



The SLELO PRISM Restoration and Resiliency Coordinators along with volunteers conduct invasive species surveys inside and outside of Priority Conservation Areas (PCA's) on a year-round basis. Various invasive species are more observable at different times of the year making seasonal early detection more efficient.



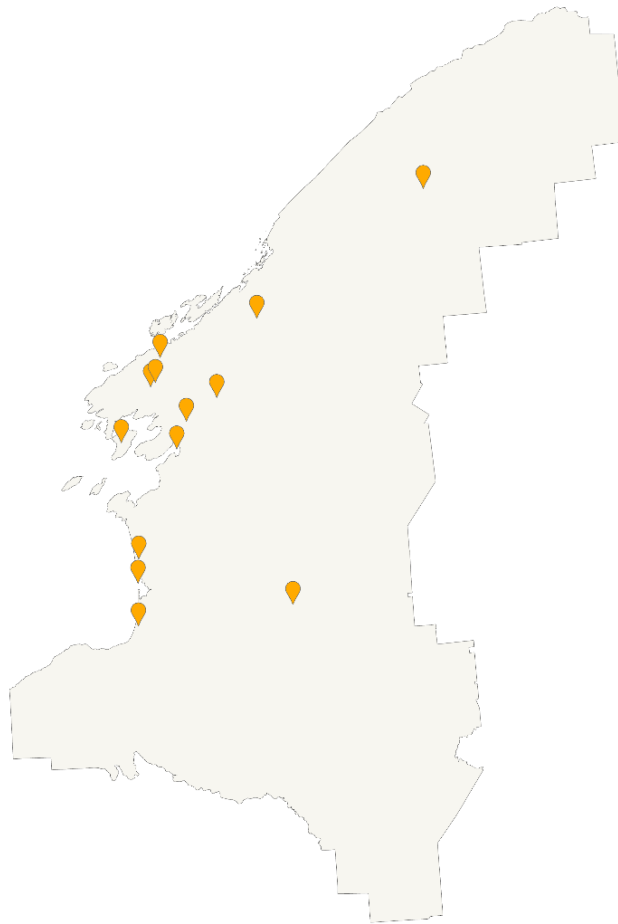
The following report summarizes PCA surveys and findings by the Restoration and Resiliency Coordinators that occurred in 2025. This report may not include all invasive species present at each site, only what was found and reported in 2025.

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# Summary

During the 2025 field season, SLELO staff visited 13 Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) and surveyed approximately 320.2 acres of 205 highly probable areas (HPAs) for aquatic and/or terrestrial invasive species (Map 1). A total of 30 different species were found during the surveys. Overall, common buckthorn was the most reported terrestrial species, present at 42 HPAs, followed by honeysuckle, pale swallowwort and wild parsnip. Eurasian watermilfoil was the most frequently encountered aquatic invasive species, present at 31 HPAs, followed by starry stonewort, water chestnut, and European frogbit. One site with Brown Knapweed (*Centaurea jacea*), a tier 2 species, was found. It appears to be underreported in iMapInvasives, based on iNaturalist observations, and may be considered for Tier 3 status. Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) is not currently on SLELO PRISMs priority tier species list, but is being evaluated for Tier 2 status and may be added to the list as well. No new infestations of tier 1 species were detected in 2025.



Map 1: 2025 SLELO PRISM field survey locations

Funding from  
**New York State**  
**Environmental Protection Fund**



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation



INVASIVE SPECIES  
MANAGEMENT  
SAINT LAWRENCE  
EASTERN LAKE ONTARIO

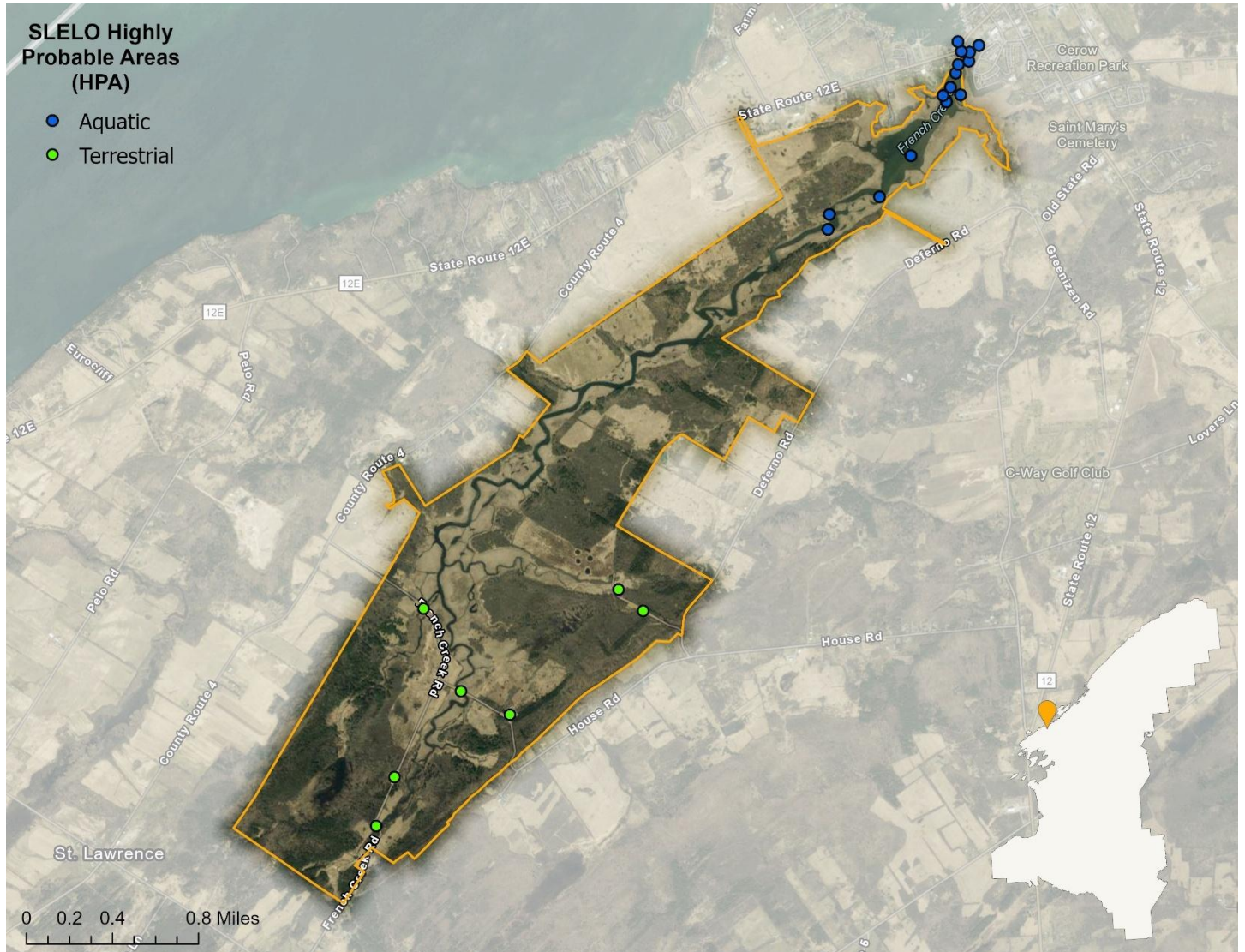
The Nature  
Conservancy

St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management

The Nature Conservancy — 269 Ouderkirk Road — Pulaski, NY 13142

# French Creek WMA

French Creek WMA was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in July and September and for aquatic invasive species in August by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO Staff surveyed 8.5 acres of 7 HPA's for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys. An additional 15 aquatic HPAs were surveyed using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 2). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) and Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) applications.



**Map 2.** Map of French Creek WMA HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Common reed grass, phragmites	3	2
Oriental Bittersweet	3	1
Pale Swallowwort	3	1
Starry Stonewort	3	11
Common Buckthorn	4	5
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	8
European Frogbit	4	2
Glossy Buckthorn	4	1
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	4
Purple Loosestrife	4	1
Spotted Knapweed	4	3
Wild Parsnip	4	3
Bird's Foot Trefoil	*	1
Bittersweet Nightshade	*	1
Bull Thistle	*	1
Canada Thistle	*	1
Chicory	*	2
Common mullein	*	2
Elecampane	*	1
Mugwort	*	1
Orange Daylily	*	1
Tufted vetch	*	2

\* Species is not currently tier ranked

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Limerick Cedars Preserve

Limerick Cedars Preserve was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in June by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO staff surveyed 114.1 acres of 12 HPAs for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys (Map 3). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) application.



**Map 3.** Map of Limerick Cedars Preserve HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

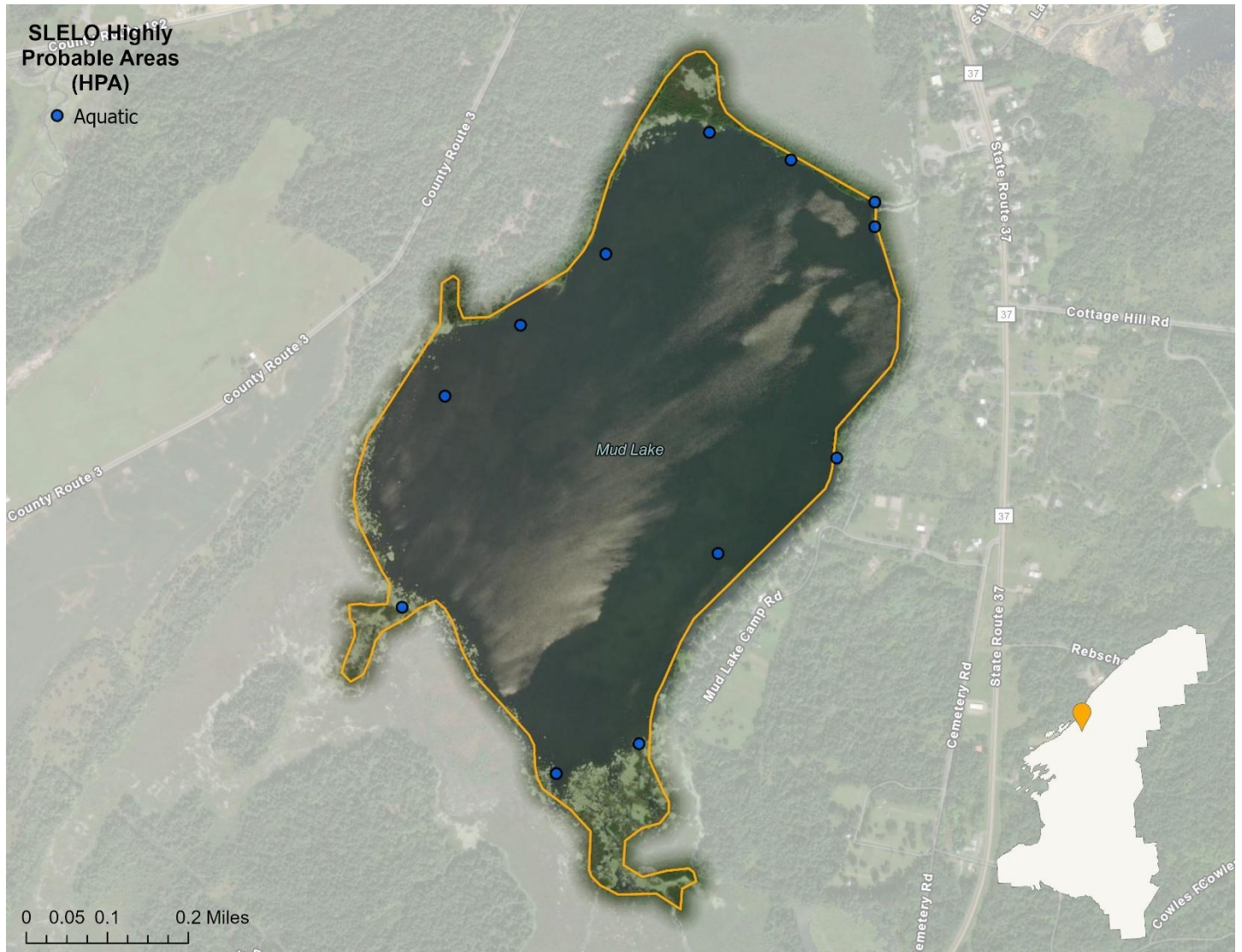
Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Pale Swallowwort	3	7
Common Buckthorn	4	10
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	9
Spotted Knapweed	4	1
Eastern Helleborine	*	1
Leafy Spurge	*	1

\* *Species is not currently tier ranked*

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Mud Lake

Mud Lake was surveyed in July by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO Staff surveyed 12 HPA's for aquatic invasive species using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 4). Data was recorded using the Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) application.



**Map 4.** Map of Mud Lake HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

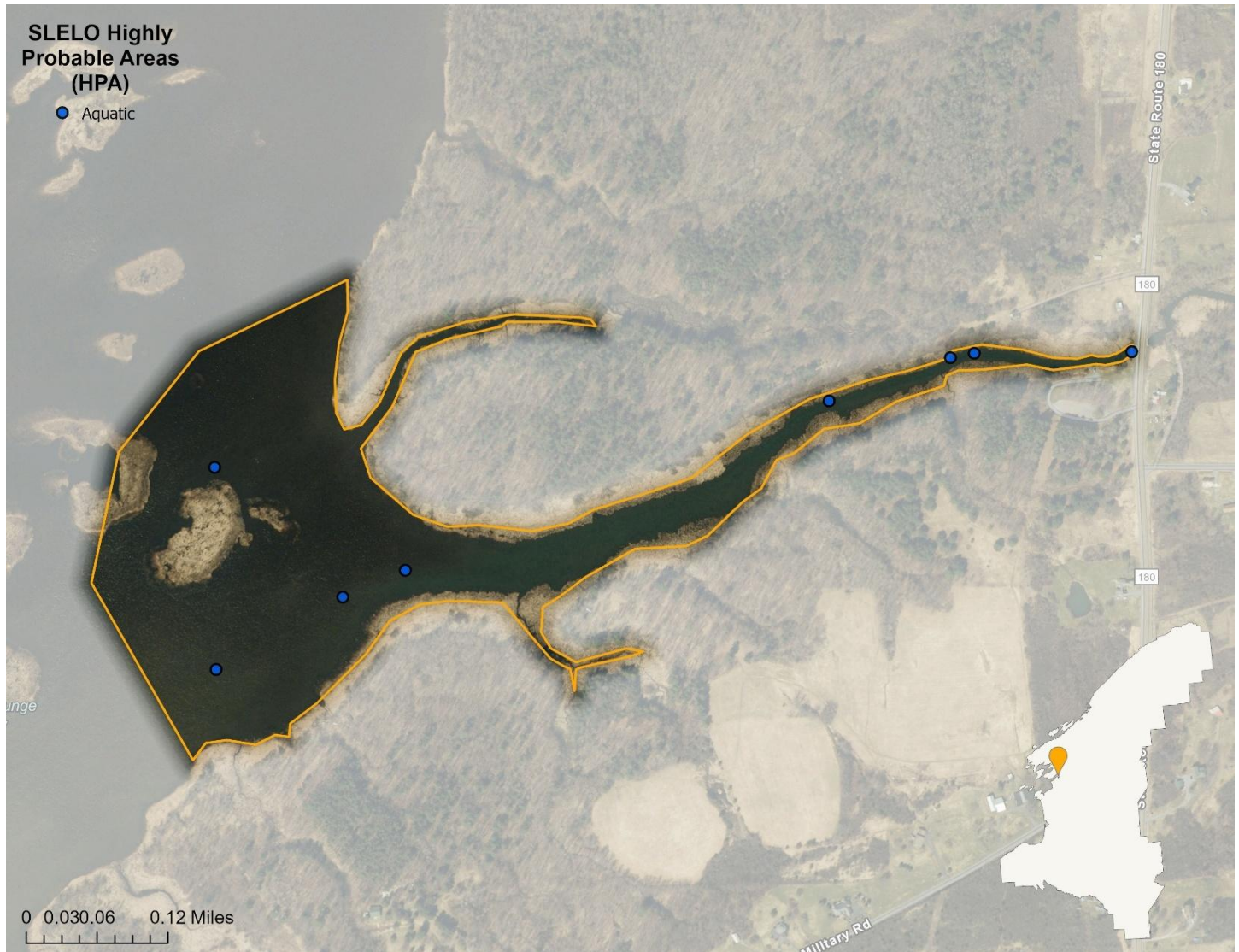
Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	7
Banded Mysterysnail	*	1

\* Species is not currently tier ranked

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Muskellunge Creek

Muskellunge Creek was surveyed in October by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO Staff surveyed 8 HPA's for aquatic invasive species using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 5). Data was recorded using the Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) application.



**Map 5.** Map of Muskellunge Creek HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Starry Stonewort	3	5
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	7
European Frogbit	4	1

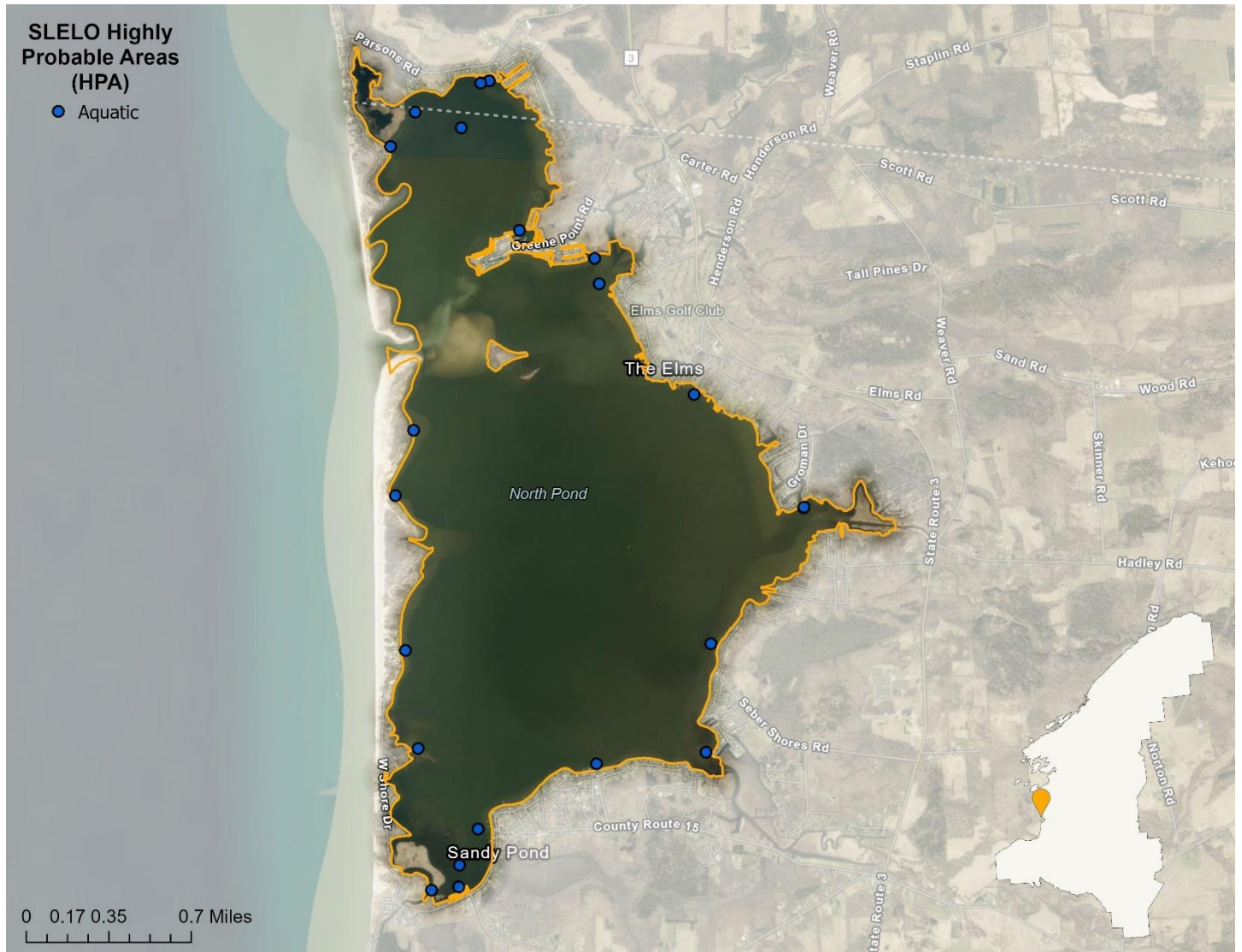
## NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025

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# North Sandy Pond

North Sandy Pond was surveyed in August by Robert Smith, Adrien Owens, Megan Pistoiese-Shaw, and Brittney Rogers. SLELO Staff surveyed 22 HPA's for aquatic invasive species using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 6). Data was recorded using the Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) application.



**Map 6.** Map of North Sandy Pond HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

<b>Invasive Species</b>	<b>Tier Ranking</b>	<b>HPA's Affected</b>
Starry Stonewort	3	7
Water Chestnut	3	2
Curly Pondweed	4	1
European Frogbit	4	1
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	12
Purple Loosestrife	4	2

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Ontario Bay Initiative (OBI)

Ontario Bay Initiative was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in July by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO staff surveyed 40.6 acres of 13 HPA's for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys (Map 7). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) application.



**Map 7.** Map of Ontario Bay Initiative HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

<b>Invasive Species</b>	<b>Tier Ranking</b>	<b>HPA's Affected</b>
Pale Swallowwort	3	11
Common Buckthorn	4	2
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	2
Spotted Knapweed	4	3
Tufted Vetch	*	1

*\* Species is not currently tier ranked*

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Perch River WMA

Perch River WMA was surveyed in August by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO Staff surveyed 9 HPA's for aquatic invasive species using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 8). Data was recorded using the Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) application.



**Map 8.** Map of Ontario Bay Initiative HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

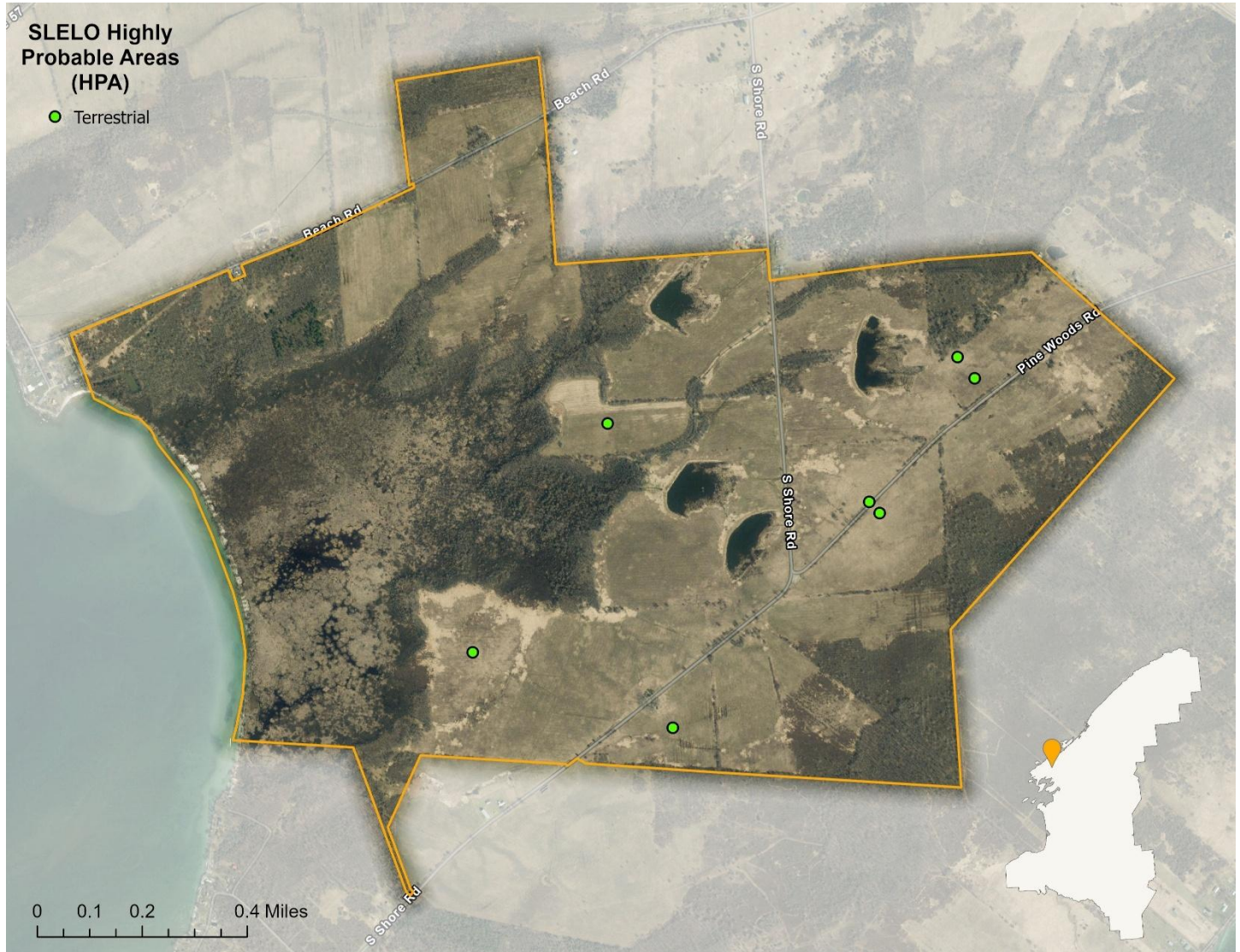
Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Curly Pondweed	4	1
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	1
European Frogbit	4	6
Banded Mysterysnail	*	2

\* Species is not currently tier ranked

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Point Peninsula WMA

Point Peninsula WMA was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in June, July, and September by Robert Smith, Adrien Owens, and Megan Pistolesse-Shaw. SLELO staff surveyed 73.3 acres of 7 HPA's for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys (Map 9). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) application.



**Map 9.** Map of Point Peninsula WMA HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

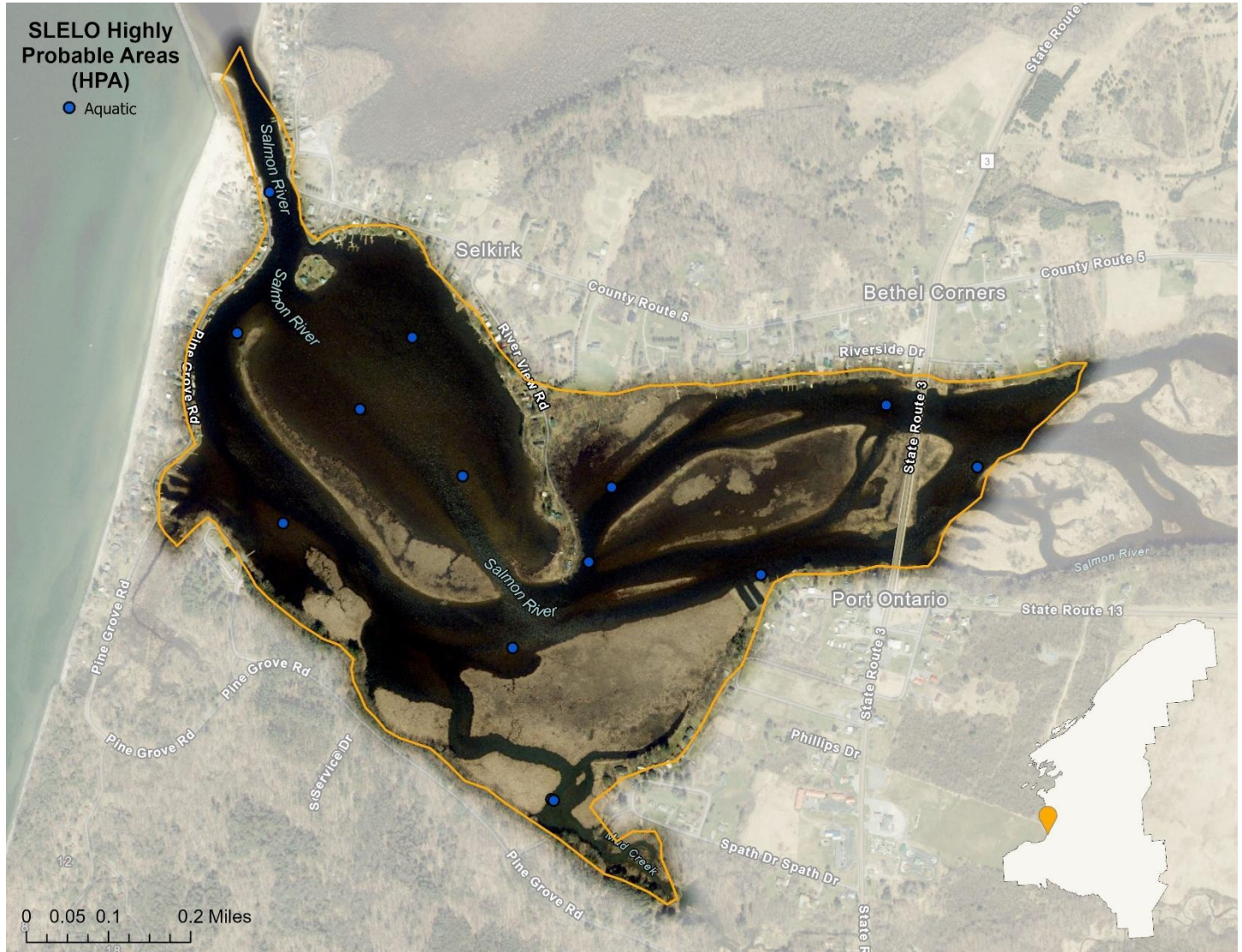
Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Pale Swallowwort	3	4
Common Buckthorn	4	1
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	3
Wild Parsnip	4	2
Bird's Foot Trefoil	*	1
Reed Canarygrass	*	3
Tufted Vetch	*	2
White Poplar	*	1

\* Species is not currently tier ranked

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Salmon River

Salmon River was surveyed in August by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO Staff surveyed 14 HPA's for aquatic invasive species using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 10). Data was recorded using the Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) application.



**Map 10.** Map of Point Peninsula WMA HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Water Chestnut	3	4
Curly Pondweed	4	1
European Frogbit	4	2
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	1

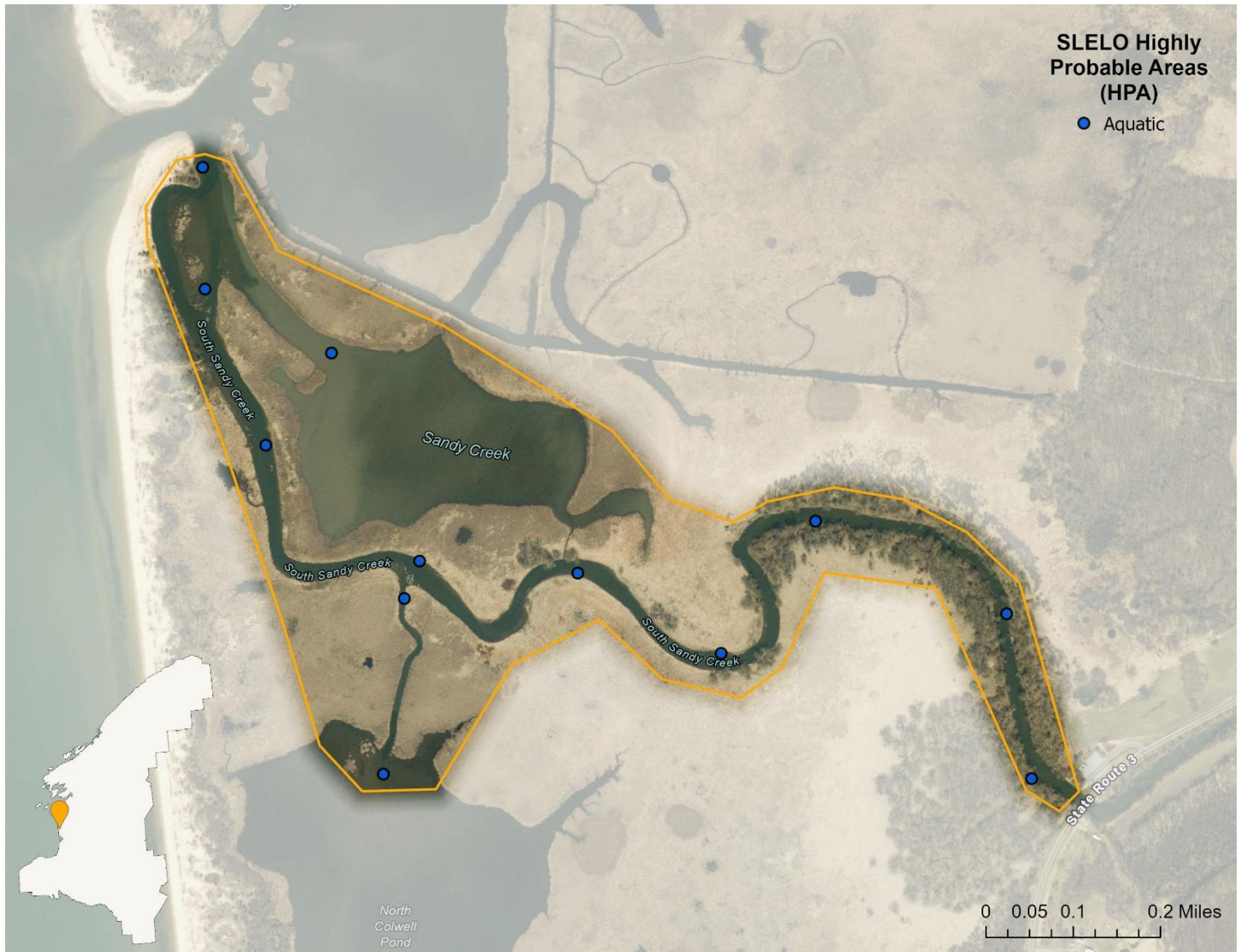
## NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025

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# South Sandy Creek

South Sandy Creek was surveyed in July by Robert Smith and Brittney Rogers. SLELO Staff surveyed 12 HPA's for aquatic invasive species using visual surveys and rake tosses (Map 11). Data was recorded using the Simple Aquatic Survey (SAS) application.



**Map 11.** Map of South Sandy Creek HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

<b>Invasive Species</b>	<b>Tier Ranking</b>	<b>HPA's Affected</b>
Water Chestnut	3	10
Curly Pondweed	4	5
Eurasian Water-milfoil	4	3
European Frogbit	4	1
Brittle Naiad	*	6
Flowering Rush	*	2

*\* Species is not currently tier ranked*

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Three Mile Creek Preserve

Three Mile Creek Preserve was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in July by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO staff surveyed 24.5 acres of 5 HPA's for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys (Map 12). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) application.



Map 12. Map of Three Mile Creek Preserve HPA's examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

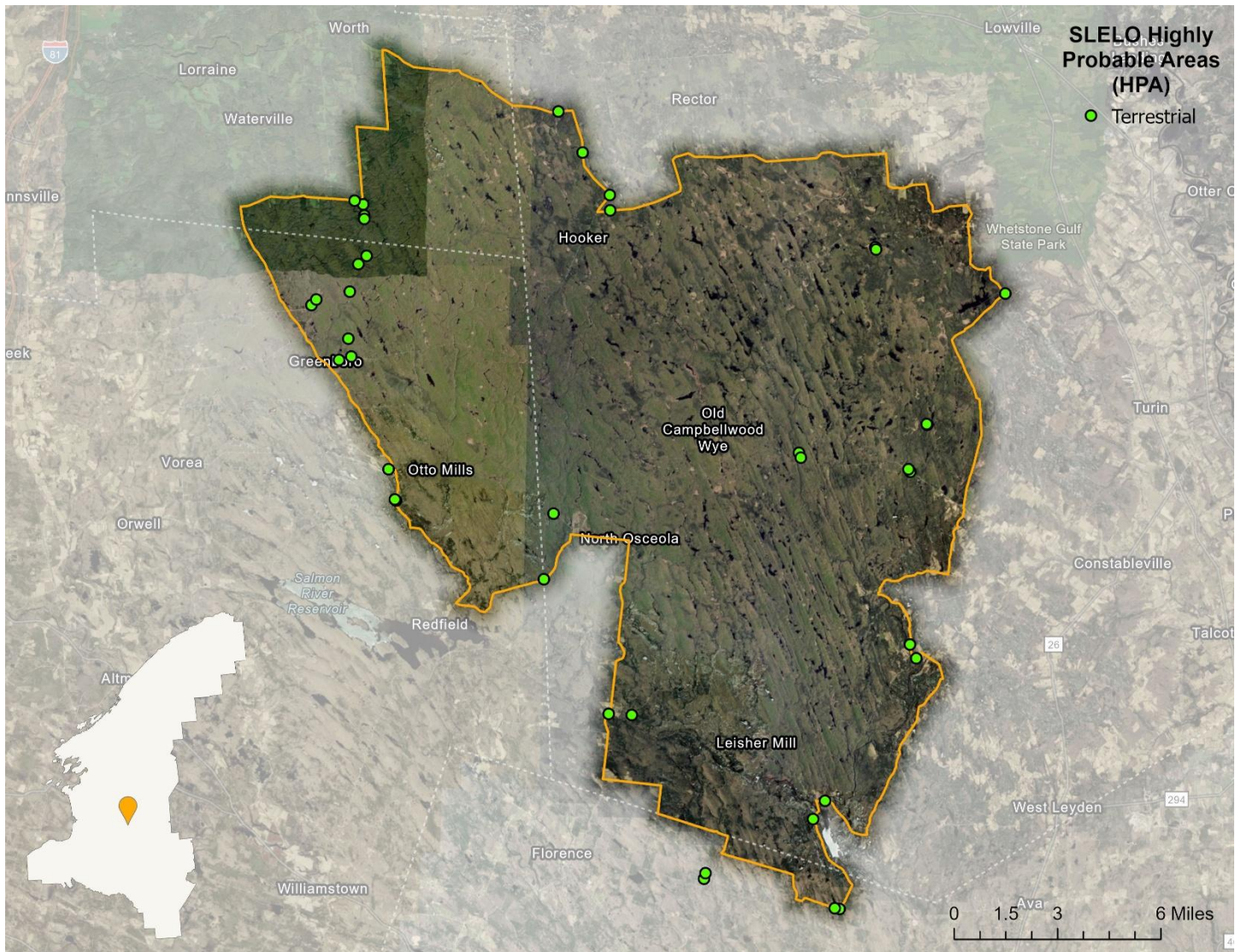
The following **Invasive Species** were found:

Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Pale Swallowwort	3	3
Common Buckthorn	4	1
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	1

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Tug Hill Invasive Species Prevention Zone (ISPZ)

Tug Hill Invasive Species Prevention Zone (ISPZ) was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in July, August, and September by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO staff surveyed 34.5 acres of 40 HPA's for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys (Map 13). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) application. *Brown Knapweed (Centaurea jacea)* is not currently on SLELO PRISMs priority tier species list but is being evaluated for Tier 2 or Tier 3 status. *Himalayan Balsam (Impatiens glandulifera)* is not currently on SLELO PRISMs priority tier species list but is being evaluated for Tier 2 status and may be added to the list as well.



Map 13. Map of Tug Hill ISPZ HPAs examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

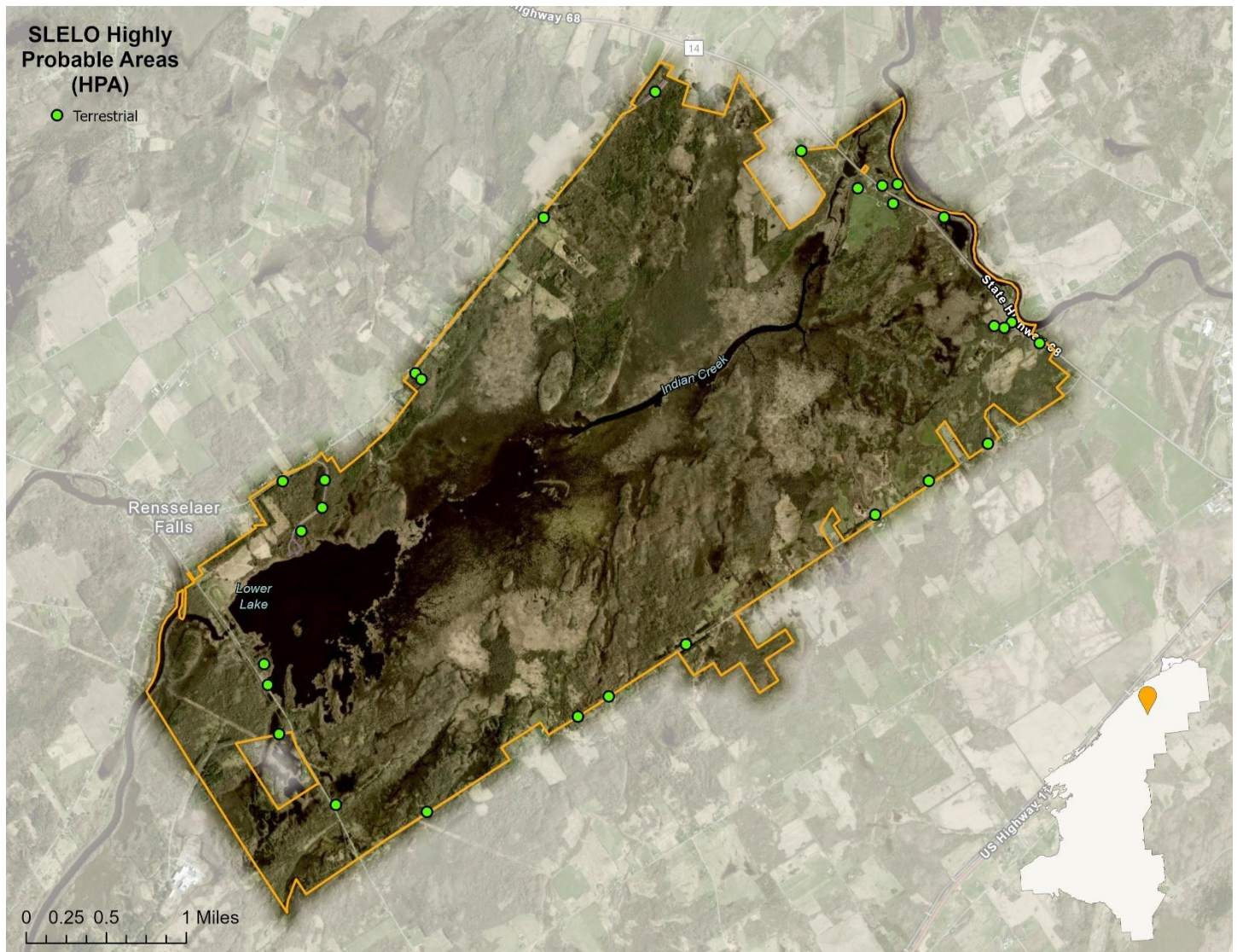
Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Brown Knapweed	2	1
Common reed grass, phragmites	3	3
Japanese Knotweed, Japanese Bamboo	3	6
Common Buckthorn	4	3
Glossy Buckthorn	4	2
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	3
Purple Loosestrife	4	2
Spotted Knapweed	4	10
Wild Parsnip	4	12
Bird's Foot Trefoil	*	2
Bittersweet Nightshade	*	1
Black Locust	*	1
Chicory	*	1
Coltsfoot	*	14
Common mullein	*	2
Crabapple (species unknown)	*	1
Creeping Jenny, Moneywort	*	2
Eastern Helleborine	*	3
Garlic Mustard	*	9
Goutweed	*	2
Himalayan Balsam	*	1
Mugwort	*	10
Orange Daylily	*	1
Reed Canarygrass	*	1
St. Johnswort	*	7

\* Species is not currently tier ranked

**NO NEW TIER 1 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**

# Upper and Lower Lakes WMA

Upper and Lower Lakes WMA was surveyed for terrestrial invasive species in September and October by Robert Smith and Adrien Owens. SLELO staff surveyed 24.7 acres of 29 HPA's for terrestrial invasive species using visual surveys (Map 14). Data was recorded using the iMapInvasives Mobile Advanced (iMMA) application.



Map 14. Map of Upper and Lower Lakes WMA examined by SLELO staff in 2025.

The following **Invasive Species** were found:

Invasive Species	Tier Ranking	HPA's Affected
Common reed grass, phragmites	3	4
Japanese Knotweed, Japanese Bamboo	3	7
Oriental Bittersweet	3	8
Pale Swallowwort	3	2
Common Buckthorn	4	20
Glossy Buckthorn	4	1
Honeysuckle (species unknown)	4	17
Purple Loosestrife	4	3
Spotted Knapweed	4	2
Wild Parsnip	4	10
Bird's Foot Trefoil	*	1
Black Locust	*	2
Climbing Nightshade, Bittersweet Nightshade	*	1
Common mullein	*	1
Creeping Jenny	*	1
Garlic Mustard	*	3
Mugwort	*	1
White Poplar	*	2

\* Species is not currently tier ranked

**NO NEW TIER 1 OR TIER 2 SPECIES WERE DETECTED IN 2025**