2026 WINTER PARTNER MEETING SUMMARY

JANUARY 29, 2026 - 12:45 PM - 3:00 PM

View the recording on YouTube

Quick Recap

The SLELO PRISM winter partner meeting focused on reviewing 2025 accomplishments and planning for 2026, with team members presenting on various goals including prevention, early detection, and management of invasive species. Partners shared updates on their ongoing work, including hemlock woolly adelgid monitoring and Hemlock Health Monitoring Plots (HHMP), aquatic invasive species management, and restoration efforts. The team discussed upcoming events and encouraged partners to submit their invasive species-related activities for promotion through the SLELO PRISM website and newsletter. The conversation ended with a reminder about two upcoming partner meetings in 2026 and an invitation for partners to participate in a Doodle poll to select the dates.

Action Items

- Upcoming Partner Meetings: *Block your calendars!*
  - Spring Meeting April 23, 2026 (registration coming soon…)
  - Autumn Meeting November 17, 2026
- Let Brittney know if you have a site you'd like to set up Hemlock Health Monitoring Plots (HHMP) so full group can connect with Matt (Hemlock Initiative) to learn more about setting up monitoring plots for next year.
- Request for Thom to share native plant seed list once review is complete
- Share job postings, upcoming events, or report metrics for events, visit www.sleloinvasives.org/report-event-stats/

ATTENDEES (Virtual)

- Brittney Rogers
- Carolyn Koestner
- Megan Pistolese
- Adrien Owens
- Robert Smith
- Adam Bleau
- Alexis Sprague
- Bonnie Parton
- Brian Eshenaur
- Cierra Williams
- Crystal Wixon
- Daniel Bellinger
- DJ Klaczko
- Dylan Cox
- Erik Latremore
- Greg Welter
- Jeremy Collings
- Jillian Lee
- John Souva
- Karen Sime
- Ken Nims
- Kimbrie Cullen
- Kristen Haynes
- Lucas Russell
- Matt Del Buono
- Matthew Swinarski
- Michael Serviss
- Nick Hamilton-Honey
- Payton Reese
- Peter Kinney
- Sarah Trick
- Scott Prindle
- Skye Garrett
- Thom Allgaier
- Thomas Bonoffski
- Tim Pyszczynski
- Todd Keister

SLELO PRISM 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Annual Work Plan Review

- The SLELO PRISM team reviewed their 2025 annual report results, highlighting achievements in all eight strategic plan goals. They discussed their special initiatives, including the Pledge to Protect program and the funded special projects.
- The team outlined their plans for 2026, focusing on prevention, early detection, invasive species management, ecological restoration, education, and outreach. They emphasized collaboration with partners and the importance of maintaining communication across PRISM organizations.
- The annual report and work plans can be found on our website:
    - www.sleloinvasives.org/2025-annual-report
    - www.sleloinvasives.org/2026-annual-work-plan

Partner Presentations:

- Matt Del Buono with NYS Hemlock Initiative presented an overview of the Nature Conservancy's Trees in Peril program, focusing on the Lingering Hemlock Project, and explained protocols for identifying and monitoring hemlocks with genetic resistance. Matt presented updates on the hemlock woolly adelgid monitoring project, which has established 9 sites across New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire with 20 plots. He explained that while currently using paper records, a digital app will be available soon.
- Mike Serviss shared New York State Parks' invasive species management efforts, including HWA treatments at multiple parks and biocontrol releases, with plans to expand treatments under a GLRI grant.
- The iMap team reported over 2,000 invasive species presences and 230 non-detections in the SLELO region, noting staff transitions and an upcoming database migration from NatureServe to Cornell.
- Mallory Broda with the SUNY ESF and NYS Parks program submitted information about 20 open watercraft inspection steward positions across New York State, encouraging partners and constituents to help fill these roles.
- The River Strategy was highlighted for hosting a Thousand Islands regional meeting (which was postponed due to weather) in conjunction with Save the River's Winter Environmental Conference, with Megan and Robert attending and staffing an exhibit.
- A video update from Max of the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust showcased successful invasive species clearing work funded as part of SLELO's special projects, with F&W Forestry conducting the removals.

Roundtable updates from Partners:

The meeting featured updates from various participants on invasive species efforts.

- Brian from Cornell discussed monitoring spotted lanternfly and box tree moth
- Erik shared details on experimental treatments for invasive plants and the success of prescribed burns.
- Greg from the New York Natural Heritage Program outlined ongoing invasive species survey work at Fort Drum, with data being uploaded to iMap.
- Crystal discussed hiring a heavy equipment operator for vegetation management
- Jefferson County CCE highlighted upcoming Master Gardener training sessions.
- Jeremy introduced himself as a new data analyst for the NY Natural Heritage Program, focusing on quantifying invasive species impacts on biodiversity.
- Jillian shared updates on the Tug Hill Commission's partnership with DEC and upcoming winter wildlife webinars.
- Karen discussed Rice Creek Fuel Station's EAB biocontrol and SLF monitoring plans.
- Ken and Spencer from the TILT highlighted ongoing restoration work and upcoming projects.
- Kimbrie introduced the Southwick Beach Nature Center's invasive species education initiatives.

- Lucas from CCE Oneida mentioned HWA monitoring and volunteer recruitment efforts.
- Mike S. provided updates on new staff hires and ongoing projects in the Thousand Islands region.
- Skye introduced as the new AIS outreach coordinator for NYPA.
- Thom discussed the finalization of a native plant seed list and the importance of PRISM involvement in plant health emergency responses, thanking SLELO PRISM for attending.
- Todd introduced the Thousand Islands Divers Alliance, a new non-profit focusing on underwater cleanups and preservation.
- The conversation ended with Megan requesting information on upcoming events and requesting partners fill out a form to have their events, and other opportunities featured.

Upcoming events:

SLELO

- **Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Learning Series: Guided Survey Sessions**
  - 3/5- Forest Park, Camden, NY
  - 3/20- Salmon River Falls, Richland, NY
- Join SLELO staff on HWA Surveys (for individuals who already know how to survey for HWA)
- NYISAW- June 8-14, 2026. ***Let's Collaborate, reach out to Megan!***

THTLT:

- 2/20-Owl Prowl @ Blake Sanctuary

IRLC:

- 2/21: Winter Carnival Hike

Cornell IPM:

- March 3-5th, 2026: Virtual Spotted Lanternfly Summit

Northeastern RISCC:

- March 24th-25th: Virtual Invasive Species & Climate Change Summitt
- www.sleloinvasives.org/event/northeast-riscc-invasive-species-climate-change-symposium/

TILT:

- 3/7: Annual Winter Gathering in Florida
- 4/3: Owls & Outdoor Kids Trek
- https://www.tilandtrust.org/events

Resources and links shared via meeting chat:

- Spotted Lanternfly - https://cals.cornell.edu/integrated-pest-management/outreach-education/whats-bugging-you/spotted-lanternfly
- Box Tree Moth - https://cals.cornell.edu/integrated-pest-management/outreach-education/fact-sheets/box-tree-moth
- Beech Leaf Disease - https://cals.cornell.edu/integrated-pest-management/outreach-education/fact-sheets/beech-leaf-disease
- If anyone is interested in learning more about hemlock health monitoring plots, please feel free to contact Matt Del Buono. me at mjd378@cornell.edu.
- https://tughill.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2025-Black-River-Initiative-Newsletter.pdf
- https://tughill.org/upcoming-workshops/

- Jeremy Collings e-mail is jeremy.collings@dec.ny.gov –happy to chat/discuss ways to learn about invasive species impacts with whatever data you all are collecting
- If you know anyone looking for a heavy equipment operator position or invasive plant technician position at Fort Drum email Crystal Wixon crystal.e.wixon.ctr@army.mil
- Reach out to Nick Hamilton-Honey nh327@cornell.edu if you are interested in exhibiting at Sustainability Day & Green Living Fair in the fall https://sites.google.com/clarkson.edu/sustainabilityday/home

Please note; These meeting notes were initially captured using Zooms AI Function. Notes were then reviewed and updated by the SLELO PRISM Team.