

WNY PRISM Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 24 2015; 1:00 – 3:00 pm
WNY PRISM Office – Great Lakes Center

In Attendance: Paul Fuhrmann (E&E), Ba Zan Lin (Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper), Sharon Bachman (CCE Invasive Species Program), Jennifer Dunn (DEC), Shanna Shaw (USDA-NRCS), Chris Pennuto (Buffalo State/WNY PRISM), Janine Shepherd (DOT), Andrea Locke (WNY PRISM)

Steering Committee Partner Updates

Paul Fuhrmann – Discussions have begun for potential coastal wetland restoration at Woodlawn Beach SP. Work at Times Beach has continued with selective plantings and invasive species removals. Removal projects have focused on phragmites, Japanese knotweed and common buckthorn with additional treatments on mugwort. USACE will be treating Eurasian water-milfoil on Unity Island, then opening up the ponds to the river. Ba Zan Lin – Progress has been made with the Niagara Greenway Strategy and their recent river clean-up resulted in 6 tons of trash removed. Working on River Academy with ECC and public participation. Between 18 - 20 students participate. Data collected from Boat Stewards AIS program is being compiled and is expected to be ready for release this fall. Sharon Bachman – CCE Outreach efforts are wrapping up for the season, been working on an app for highway invasive species ID. Shanna Shaw – Continuing with implementation of current contracts, primarily grassland and shrubland work, WRP easements, and wetland delineations. Deadline for EQIP program is October 16th. Jennifer Dunn – Hydrilla project post treatment toss surveys showed native species (and Eurasian water-milfoil) still present in the canal. Additional infestation was found west of treatment area, closer to Niagara River. This area was blocked off and spot treated. Janine Shepherd – Invasive species treatments continue on projects, including 219/Ellicottville, and native plantings have been put in place.

PRISM Updates

- Crew Update
 - ISMA Crew finished up at the end of August. They worked on many invasive species removal projects including phragmites and Japanese knotweed at Tiff Nature Preserve and multiple Land Conservancy sites. They completed 6 iMap mapping projects and participated in over 20 events.
 - Patricia's (E&O Assistant) last day was last Saturday, at the Reinstein Woods Fall Festival.
 - A complete summary of the crew's work will be put together this fall for the Full Partnership Meeting and Annual Report.
- Working Groups
 - Invasive Species Priorities are finalized and will be placed up on the website shortly along with additional information on the identified species.
 - Terrestrial WG has begun work on development of ED/RR protocols and identifying additional ED and Approaching Region Species.
 - Conservation Targets WG is working parallel to the statewide prioritization process to develop model, likely using GIS.
 - Although significant progress has been made (finalization of AIS priorities), it has been more difficult to pull the Aquatics Working Group together for meetings. This is, at least in part, likely due to field season responsibilities, so winter meetings may be better attended. With the upcoming task of development of ED/RR protocols, increased engagement of stakeholders will be necessary. For this, PRISM is looking for suggestions of additional members and ways to better engage current members.

- NFWF PTI Proposal
 - NFWF Pulling Together Initiative grant proposal was submitted. This proposal will provide funds to build a strike team complete with team leader, vehicle and equipment.
 - Awards are expected at the end of the year.
 - IS Profiles will include all priority species, will be updated throughout the fall/winter.

Regional Updates

- NY Sea Grant and NYS Parks are putting together a series of webinars focused on the development of AIS/Boat Stewards Programs. Survey for topics and dates has been distributed through statewide PRISM listservs. Webinars are expected in Oct/Nov.
- Lake Associations have expressed some concern over potential and/or implied responsibility for implementing AIS education and/or boat stewards programs on their lakes and waters without funding to assist in doing so, based on 'train the trainer' focus of statewide efforts. In response to this feedback, DEC has said they may provide some level of funding/funding opportunities for program development. An informal announcement was sent through statewide PRISM listservs.
- No word yet on Statewide AIS/Watercraft Regulations or the General Permit for non-chemical removal of invasive species.

WNY PRISM Work Plan

- Progress on 2015 action items identified in our annual work plan has been significant. PRISM has either completed, currently working on, or addressed nearly all Actions Planned.
- Objectives and/or Actions Planned that are not yet completed or expected to be completed, fall into a couple of categories: PRISM received too little Partner feedback or response to information requests or the necessary building blocks were not in place to take such actions at this point. The latter is likely due to over-reaching during our only our second year of operation. Items were reviewed by Steering Committee Members. Steering Committee Members offered suggestions for improving engagement of Partners on tasks that require increased input, including being more targeted with requests (fewer, more specific questions).
- Work will begin on 2015 Work Plan in October, since we do not have a Steering Committee Meeting until after the plan is due, feedback will be solicited through email.

Listserv

- Steering Committee discussed the current use of the WNY PRISM Listserv and ways to make it more valuable for the region.
- Emails sent through the listserv, in order of most frequent to least, include PRISM Round-ups (events, volunteer opportunities, trainings), additional trainings and webinars, funding opportunities, information requests, Partner information and Press Releases, Job Openings, Volunteer call-outs, PRISM meetings, Regulations/Permits/Mgt. Plans and species specific information.
- Suggestions for additional information include more species specific information, particularly new information/research, innovations, and using more emails like the Round-up where multiple items are placed in a single email.

Next Full Partnership Meeting:

Thursday November 19, 2015; 1:00 – 3:00 pm location: SUNY Fredonia