



**Aquatic Invasive Species
Spread Prevention
In Eastern Lake Ontario
Steward Program Report**

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Change is on the horizon.

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

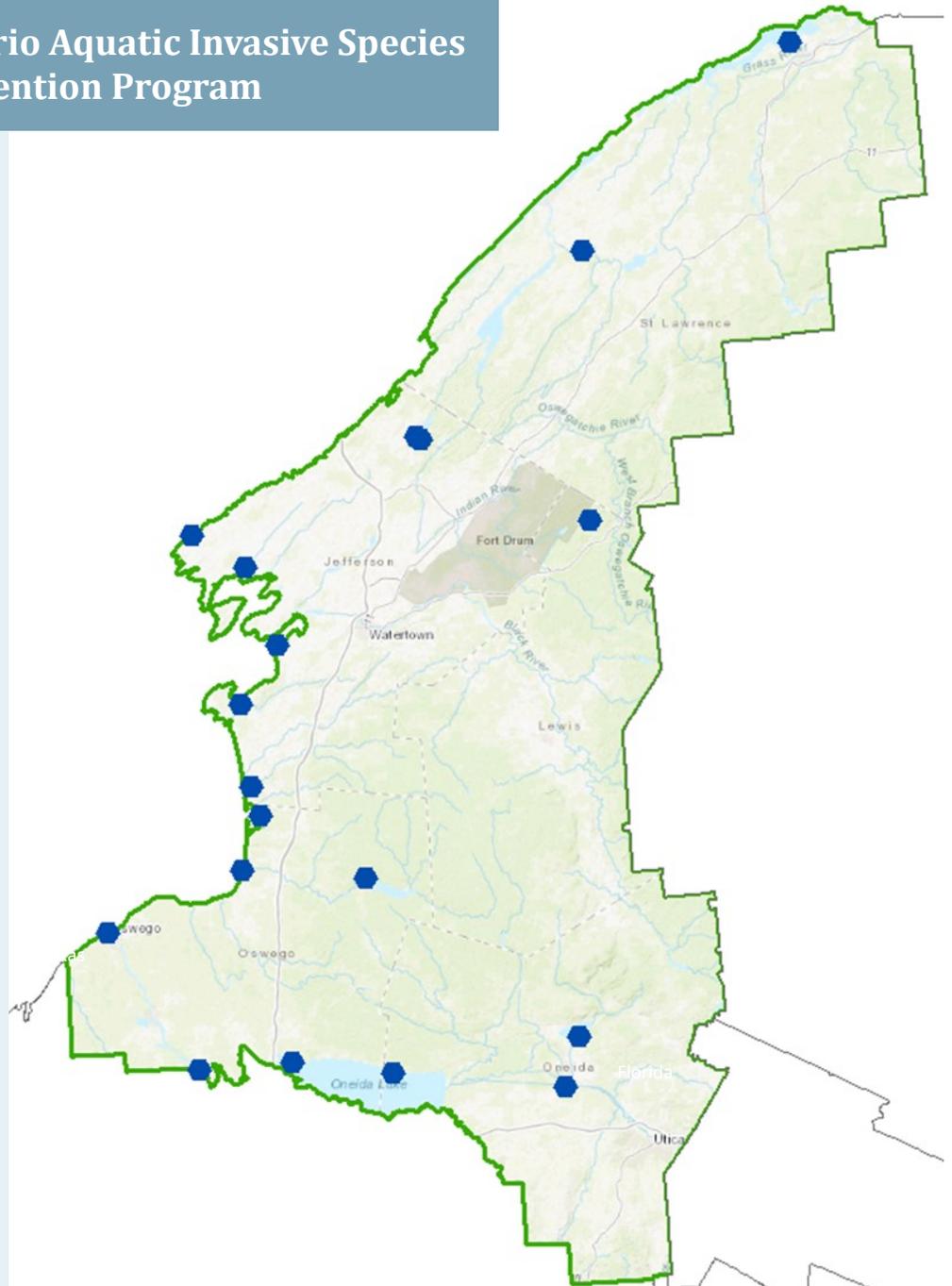
2020 Eastern Lake Ontario Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention Program

Beginning in 2020, SLELO PRISM will be expanding our program to **20 high-use boat launches**, from as far north as Massena and south to Rome. This will more than double the number of stewards previously staffed at launches, to **10 stewards** rotating between sites. We will co-administer this effort through a subcontract with another partner organization.

SLELO PRISM's Program is part of a much larger program throughout New York State. Other partners are also promoting aquatic invasive species spread prevention efforts via watercraft inspection stewards. As a whole these combined efforts should significantly slow the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout New York State waters.

In the SLELO PRISM Region, this effort is implemented as a partnership between the partners of the SLELO PRISM and The Nature Conservancy of NY. This program is funded through appropriations from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

*Report prepared by:
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**tentative launches for 2020, locations are subject to change*

Acknowledgements:

Cover Photo: Lake Ontario Shoreline, ©TNC Brittney Rogers

SLELO PRISM Partners
The Nature Conservancy, New York



Department of
Environmental
Conservation



Partnership For
Regional Invasive
Species Management



2019 Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Team

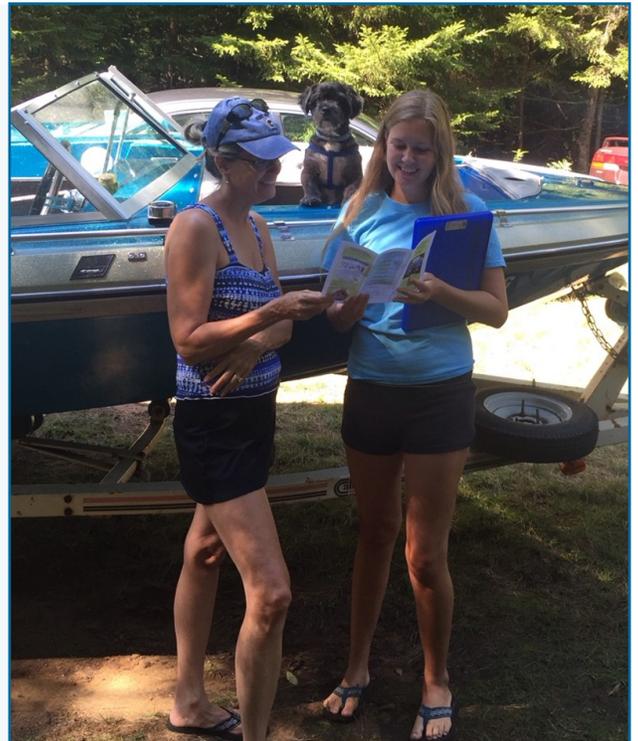
This year marked the fourth season of an intense effort to reduce the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the SLELO PRISM. Through the remaining funding from the NYS DEC Invasive Species Spread Prevention Grants Program and the NYS Environmental Protection Fund, two stewards were strategically placed at high use and high priority boat launches along Eastern Lake Ontario for the 2019 season.

In 2019, SLELO PRISM Watercraft Inspection Stewards, Casey Harkleroad and Alex Linerode (pictured left), worked Wednesdays through Sundays from June through August, to maximize boater engagement in our region.

“Four strategic boat launch sites along Eastern Lake Ontario were staffed over four years; Oswego Harbor, Henderson Harbor, Sackets Harbor and Cape Vincent.”

Total Steward Program Statistics

- ◇ 3,647 boaters engaged through inspections
- ◇ Engaged boaters from 15 states, 2 provinces
- ◇ 280 AIS intercepted on boats
- ◇ 8.3% of region watercraft are contaminated
- ◇ 92.4% of boaters received AIS literature
- ◇ Top 3 travel routes identified:
Route 3, Route 81, Route 12-E
- ◇ Furthest areas recently boated:
Canada, Florida, Texas and Alaska



“8.3% of watercraft entering or leaving the region are contaminated with AIS”

Most frequent hitchhiking AIS:

- Curly leaf pondweed
- Eurasian milfoil
- Zebra mussel
- Brazilian elodea
- Quagga mussel
- Water flea
- European Frogbit

Most active launches in order:

- Henderson Harbor
- Wrights Landing
- Cape Vincent
- Sackets Harbor



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Be A Good Steward.
Clean. Drain. Dry.
StopAquaticHitchhikers.org

Survey Information Collected

The field data forms that our stewards populate during their conversations with boaters have 14 questions designed not only to learn about boater habits, but to collect data that can be used to evaluate invasive species prevention efforts.

Questions include:

Watercraft type

Group size

State of Registration

Launching/retrieving

Time of inspection

Prior contact with steward

Does the visitor take spread prevention steps?

Aquatic organisms found

Species identification

Educational materials offered

Waterbodies visited in last two weeks

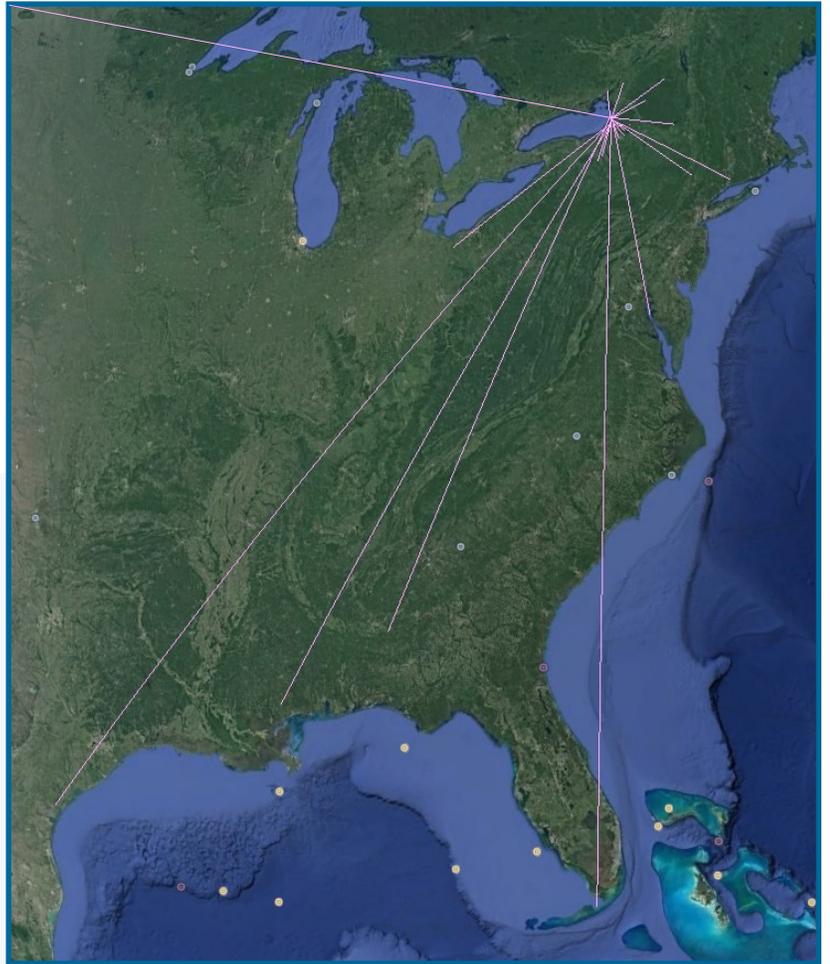
Waterbody the visitor will go to next

Travel route to be taken.

Would visitor use a decontamination station.

Pertinent information is then extracted and used to make determinations as to the spread of aquatic invasive species in the decision making process.

Spread Potential on a Larger Scale



Lake Ontario has always been a destination for fishing enthusiasts as well as recreational boating. Professional anglers participate in competitions from all over the east coast. The Salmon River in Pulaski attracts anglers on a global scale. Recreational travel-boating is also a significant activity with boaters traversing the Great Lakes, Erie Canal, Hudson River and even the “great loop” which takes vessels from the Great Lakes down through the Mississippi River around the Florida peninsula up the Atlantic and back into the Great Lakes.

During the past four years when asked what waterbody the boater visited last or where they intend to go to next visitors were traveling from as far as **Canada, Alaska, Texas, and Florida.**