

Adirondack Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee

2008 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Introduction

In 2002 an ad-hoc group of interested agencies and organizations came together to undertake actions that would raise awareness of water quality issues in the Adirondack Park. This effort led to a series of conferences that included information and discussion of aquatic nuisance species and culminated in the development of the Adirondack Park Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Management Plan in 2005. Upon the plan's completion in 2006, the ad-hoc group of interests determined to add other key interests and formalize their association as an Adirondack Park Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee to increase the overall effectiveness of the implementation of the plan. In 2007, seventeen organizations signed a cooperative agreement establishing the Adirondack Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee. The committee oversees the execution of the actions within the plan, evaluates its implementation, and ensures that the plan is continuously improved with information provided by research and monitoring and through input from various stakeholders. This document serves as the third annual report of progress on the plan's implementation.

Management Plan

The Adirondack Park Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan follows the US Fish and Wildlife guidelines for state aquatic nuisance species management plans. The Adirondack plan identifies the following goals: 1) prevent new introductions of ANS into waters of the Adirondack Park; 2) limit the spread of established populations of ANS into uninfested waters of the Adirondack Park; and, 3) abate negative ecological, socioeconomic, and public health and safety impacts resulting from infestations of ANS within the Adirondack Park. Plan implementers are achieving these goals through a combination of specific objectives, strategies, and actions described in the plan that include: coordination, enforcement and legislation, education and outreach, early detection and monitoring, management, restoration, and research. The plan can be accessed online and periodically will be updated:
<http://www.adkinvasives.com/Aquatic/Resources/documents/ADKANSFINAL.pdf> .

Meetings

The committee aims to meet monthly, as needed, at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) in Ray Brook. Meetings are generally held on Friday afternoons from 1-3 pm following the monthly Adirondack Park Agency (APA) meeting. The committee held seven meetings in 2008.

Regional Coordinating Framework

The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) serves as the Adirondack Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM), one of eight PRISMs in New York. APIPP coordinates the Terrestrial Invasive Species Working Group and the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee.

Significant Achievements

Coordination: Members communicated the committee's regional accomplishments in a 2007 ANS Committee Annual Report. The committee continued to meet monthly throughout 2008 to sustain routine involvement in ANS issues. Through its membership, the committee also kept informed of the activities of the NYS Invasive Species Task Force (now the NYS Invasive Species Council). In July, APIPP hired an Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, Tyler Smith. Relevant Plan Actions: A1a, A1c, A1e.

Awareness Building: The committee participated in a variety of education and outreach opportunities throughout the year. This spring, committee members and cooperators planned for an aquatic invasive species and didymo informational meeting with tri-lakes areas businesses and outfitters; due to insufficient attendance registration, the meeting was postponed until a later date. In July, numerous groups organized activities to celebrate the 3rd annual Adirondack Invasive Species Awareness Week. More information about this annual event can be found online at <http://adkinvasives.com/InvasiveSpeciesAwarenessWeek.html>. In September, members provided information to participants of the 90-Miler and collaborated with race organizers and the Blue Mountain Lake Property Owners Association to provide courtesy boat inspections at the Marion River Carry Pit Stop. This fall, the Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator organized two scoping meetings: the first meeting was among cooperators to discuss ideas for outreach to marinas, outfitters and businesses. The second meeting was with the NY Conservation Coordinator of BASS to discuss opportunities for outreach to its members in 2009. Relevant Plan Actions: C1a, C1m, C1j.

Signage: The committee worked with the Department of Environmental Conservation to design, print, and post signage designating infected waterways. The sign reads, "ATTENTION! Invasive Species Are Present In This Waterbody. Please clean your boat and equipment before leaving to stop their spread." Relevant Plan Action: C1b.

Spread Prevention: Committee member organizations began preparing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points Plans (HACCP) to ensure that staff take necessary precautions to reduce the likelihood of transporting invasive species during their daily course of work. The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program and Rainbow Lake Association have completed plans for aquatic invasive species. Another significant achievement in spread prevention was the watershed stewardship program. The lake stewards/boat launch stewards program reached an all-time high in 2008. Led by Paul Smiths College Adirondack Watershed Institute and joined by the Lake Champlain Basin Program and the Lake George Watershed Conference (via Lake George Association), they coordinated efforts among 16 paid stewards and 25 volunteer stewards. The committee also continued working draft language for an aquatic invasive species spread prevention law, using other state's laws as models. Relevant Plan Actions: C1c, C1k, B2a.

Funding: The committee successfully pursued several funding opportunities. The Federal ANS Task Force / US Fish and Wildlife Service awarded \$43,134 to implement priority actions in the Adirondack Park ANS Management Plan, which included boat inspection and stewardship at boat launches. Also, the FY08/09 New York State budget included \$5 million (reduced to \$4 million after the State Deficit Reduction Bill was passed) to be used to implement recommendations of the NYS Invasive Species Task Force, some of which will be directed to the Park to support the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program. Relevant Plan Actions: C1c, A.

NEW Aquatic Invasive Species Introduced into Adirondack Waters in 2008

Spiny waterflea, *Bythotrephes longimanus*, reported in Great Sacandaga Lake

Significant New Introductions Elsewhere with Implications for the Adirondacks

Hydrilla, *Hydrilla verticillata*, Orange County and Suffolk County

Asian clam, *Corbicula fluminea*, Champlain Canal Hudson River Drainage

Didymo, *Didymosphenia geminata*, Vermont, Lake Champlain Basin

Snakehead, *Channa micropeltes*, Orange County

Priorities in 2009

The committee discussed priority regional initiatives to promote in 2009:

1. Continuation of the Volunteer Early Detection Monitoring Program
2. Formalization of Rapid Response Teams
3. Delineations of Invasive Species Prevention Zones
4. Improving and expanding spread prevention programs, eg. boat launch stewards, collaboration with agency staff at campgrounds, transport legislation
5. Targeted outreach and education program for key audiences
6. Support for continuation of the Aquatic Invasive Species Eradication Grant Program

Specific action items set forth by the committee will now be reflected within the Adirondack PRISM annual workplan (posted on <http://adkinvasives.com/publications.html>).

Conclusion

The Adirondack Park ANS Management Plan is an important tool to better coordinate existing efforts, identify gaps, and leverage needed resources for an effective prevention and mitigation program. In evaluating its progress in 2008, the committee is pleased with not only meeting monthly to oversee the implementation of the plan, but also securing \$43,134 of federal funds for a third year to continue the plan's implementation. Federal funding received to-date totals \$157,377. The annual cost of plan implementation, however, is estimated at \$8.5 million; so additional resource development will be critical in the coming year(s).

With its ANS plan as a guiding document, the committee will continue the plan's implementation and identify the funding sources, develop the programs, and refine the policies needed to protect the water resources and economies of the region from the negative impacts of aquatic nuisance species.

Adirondack ANS Annual Score-Card

The committee will use the criteria in this score-card to track changes in ANS indicators from year to year.

- 53__ Number of waters infected with aquatic invasive plants
(*This number reflects data contributed by a variety of monitoring and research programs*)
- 216__ Number of waters monitored by APIPP volunteers to-date for aquatic invasive plants
- 182__ Number of waters monitored by APIPP volunteers that are “weed-free”
- 10__ Number of waters with paid stewards at boat launches
Upper St. Regis
Lake Placid
Lake Kushaqua / Rainbow Lake
Lake Pleasant / Lake Sacandaga
Lake George (Norowal Marina, Bolton Landing and Mossy Point State Boat Launch, Ticonderoga)
Lake Champlain (Peru and Wilcox docks)
Long Lake
Raquette Lake
Osgood Pond
Second Pond
- 7__ Number of waters with volunteer stewards at boat launches
Lake Kushaqua / Rainbow Lake
Schroon Lake
Mt. View Lake
Indian Lake
Lake George (Norowal Marina and Mossy Point State Boat Launch)
Osgood Pond
Chateaugay Lakes
- 3__ Number of waters with boat wash stations
Upper St. Regis
Lake Kushaqua
Lake George
- 19__ Approximate number of waters with active control programs (an active control program is defined as a lake-wide strategic approach to contain, reduce, remove aquatic invasive species on an annual basis)
- Augur Lake, Essex
Eagle Lake, Essex
East Caroga Lake, Fulton
Fifth Lake Fulton Chain, Hamilton
Follensby Clear Pond, Franklin
Grasse River, St. Lawrence
Indian Lake, Franklin
Lake Champlain (near Port Henry)

Lake Colby, Franklin
Lake George, Warren
Lake Luzerne, Saratoga
Loon Lake, Warren
Lower Chateauguay Lake, Franklin
Upper & Narrows of Chateauguay Lake, Clinton
Minerva Lake, Essex
Mt. View Lake, Franklin
Schroon Lake, Essex/Warren
Sixth Lake Fulton Chain, Hamilton
Upper Saranac Lake, Franklin

Founding Committee Members

Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages
Adirondack Council
Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program
Franklin County Legislature
Fulton Chain of Lakes Association
Lake Champlain Basin Program
Lake Champlain Sea Grant
Lake George Association
Lake George Park Commission
Lake Placid/Essex County Convention and Visitors Bureau
NYS Adirondack Park Agency
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute
The Nature Conservancy – Adirondack Chapter
Residents Committee to Protect the Adirondacks
Saranac Waterkeeper
Upper Saranac Lake Foundation, Inc.

The committee recognizes that additional interest groups may wish to be represented on the committee, and individuals are invited to participate as they are able.

Additional organizations that participated in the committee in 2008

Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks
Rainbow Lake Association
Osgood Pond Association
Town of Long Lake