

Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program Year-End Report

CONTRACT C011280
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Acknowledgements

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13,411 – Individuals Educated



8,475 - Boat Inspections

346 - AIS intercepted

2.34% - Boats Carrying AIS

166 - Unique Previous Waterbodies

18 - Watercraft Inspection Stewards

23 - Boat Launches

39.7% - NY Registered Boats

14 – States as Origin Points

Abstract

The following report encapsulates data and overall highlights for the 2019 Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program (AISSPP), Contract Number C011280 as administered by Capital Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM). The AISSPP program was made possible through funding from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Environmental Protection Fund.

In 2018, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation solicited an Invitation for Bid on the AISSPP program for the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys. The Capital Mohawk PRISM, hosted by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County, applied and was awarded the bid after careful consideration from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. This program is designed to provide voluntary watercraft inspections at launch locations to minimize the harm and slow the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) throughout the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys of New York State.

The Hudson River is inhabited by over 120 known aquatic invasive species (AIS) and is directly linked to the Mohawk River and Erie Canal as well as indirectly linked to many lakes and ponds through recreationist movement (New York State Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan, NYS DEC, July 2015). These waterways are a vector for many AIS across New York State. Through the placement of watercraft inspection stewards at launch locations along both the Hudson and the Mohawk Rivers, these species can be contained and prevented from being transported to other recreational waterbodies. The AISSPP contract allows the Capital Mohawk PRISM to place 26 watercraft inspection stewards at 29 designated launch sites along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers from 2019 – 2021 during the Friday before Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day. The designated window of time encompasses the entirety of New York State's primary boating season for each year of the contract.

In 2019, the Capital Mohawk PRISM hired 18 watercraft inspection stewards who were placed at 23 of the designated launch locations in the geographic area of the contract. Watercraft inspection stewards helped prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species by delivering AIS spread prevention education and outreach awareness to boaters. Stewards delivered clean, drain, and dry programming as outlined in the "New York State Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Handbook" Publication ID: NYSGI-H-14-001 and recommended by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Watercraft inspection stewards conducted courtesy boat, trailer, and equipment inspections. Stewards also surveyed boats launching and retrieving at sites while showing boaters how to inspect and remove plants and organisms from their equipment. In total, the Capital Mohawk PRISM's watercraft inspection stewards educated 13,411 individuals while inspecting 8,475 watercraft. Stewards removed 346 confirmed AIS during inspections, which encompassed 2.34% of all watercraft inspected. 77.2% of individuals surveyed utilized clean, drain, dry practices.

Based on a number of factors, there were noticeable differences between launch sites in terms of types of watercraft launching, transport rates of AIS, participation in inspections, and percentage of recreational users taking spread prevention measures. This report reviews all data collected from the 23 launch locations watercraft inspection stewards covered during the 2019 boating season.



Kristopher Williams and Robert Merritt at Amsterdam Boat Launch.

Introduction

What is Capital Mohawk PRISM?

The Capital Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) exists to fight the threat of invasive species in and around the Capital Region of New York State (NYS). NYS Environmental Conservation Law [9-1703 (1)] defines invasive species as non-native species that can cause significant harm to the environment, economy, or to human health. Invasive species are a form of biological pollution that come from around the world. Invasion rates are growing rapidly due to the increase of international trade and climate change. In response to this growing problem, NYS established an Invasive Species Task Force in 2003. The NYS Invasive Species Task Force recommended building and funding a network of invasive species partnerships to prevent or minimize the harm caused by invasive species to New York's environment in its 2005 report to the Governor and legislature. To act on that recommendation, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) contracted the administration of eight PRISMs across the state.

About the PRISM

The Capital Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) is hosted by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County. Capital Mohawk PRISM is financially supported through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation via the Environmental Protection Fund. The organization was fully funded in 2018 with a five-year contract continuing until 2022.

Capital Mohawk PRISM is a not-for-profit quasi-government agency. The office is staffed with a full time Terrestrial, Aquatics, and Lead Coordinator. Seasonal staff includes part time educators and interns from affiliated colleges and universities in the Capital Region. The PRISM provides services in eleven counties in the New York State Capital Region: Albany, Columbia, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Schenectady, and portions of Fulton, Greene, Herkimer, Saratoga, Warren, and Washington.

The Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and the Threat of Aquatic Invasive Species

Both the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers are critically important waterbodies for the Capital Region. The two rivers support a multitude of native species, both aquatic and terrestrial, and provide numerous recreational opportunities for the general public. The Hudson, in particular, boasts a unique brackish ecosystem as a tidal estuary, making it an important component for our ecosystems throughout the Capital Region.

Unfortunately, over the past few decades, invasive species have plagued both waterways and have caused numerous issues for our native species. Currently, over 120 aquatic nonnative and invasive species have been found within the Hudson River estuary (New York State Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan, NYS DEC, July 2015). The Mohawk River has not been spared either, boasting numerous species found within the Hudson River, Great Lakes, Schoharie Creek, and West Canada Creek due to the river's connection with each waterbody.

With the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers acting as navigable commercial waterways for New York State, the spread of invasive species to other waterbodies throughout the state from these rivers is all but guaranteed. Thus, the implementation of a boat steward program that actively engages and educates the public regarding spread prevention measures is imperative. By placing watercraft inspection stewards at launch locations along both the Hudson and the Mohawk Rivers, aquatic non-native and invasive species can be contained and prevented from being transported to other recreational waterbodies.



Cora Delucia at Waterford Boat Ramp on the Hudson River.

Program Description and Methods

Program Background

The Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program exists to provide education and outreach to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species within New York State and the surrounding region. In 2018, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation put out an Invitation for Bid (IFB) for this program and the Capital Mohawk PRISM applied. After careful consideration from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation of all bidders and factors, the Capital Mohawk PRISM was awarded the contract. This program began on March 1, 2019 and is anticipated to end on December 31, 2021.

The Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program has great value to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation due to Environmental Conservation Law Article 9, Title 117. With respect to the authority of the Department of Environmental Conservation, it states that *“wherever practical and where consistent with watershed and/or, regional invasive species management plans, prohibiting and actively eliminating invasive species at project sites funded or regulated by the state.”* It also states that *“No person shall launch a watercraft or floating dock unless it can be demonstrated that reasonable precautions such as removal of any visible plant or animal matter, washing, draining or drying as defined by the department pursuant to rules and regulations, have been taken.”* Thus, there is regulation in place to prevent individuals from intentionally spreading aquatic invasive species throughout New York State.

This is not the first watercraft inspection steward program implemented within New York State. Multiple agencies such as the Adirondack Watershed Institute, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, the Finger Lakes PRISM, as well as many others, have been using watercraft inspection steward programs for years to help educate the general public regarding spread prevention measures for aquatic invasive species. Methods for the delivery of clean, drain, dry protocol are based on prior practices within these agencies. In addition, the numbers gathered by these agencies at the Capital Mohawk PRISM demonstrate the effectiveness of these programs.

In 2019, the Capital Mohawk PRISM placed 18 stewards at 23 launch locations along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers. These stewards ranged in coverage based on how busy each location was. Stewards were stationed full-time at 15 locations that were considered to be high traffic launch sites. A smaller portion of watercraft inspection stewards shared time at multiple launch locations due to lower volumes of traffic. In Table 1, for example, this is indicated by the designation of 0.33 for a third of the season and 0.5 for half of the season.



Luke Klein at Nelliston Boat Launch.

In Table 1, some steward coverage is noted as being 2-3 days/week. This is a result of a steward covering both locations throughout the entirety of the season, rather than covering one location for a half season or a third season. For these locations, a steward would move between launch locations midway between their work week or would work one day at one launch, then switch to the other launch the next day.

Days covered encapsulates the number of days a steward was on-site at a particular launch location.

Table 1: Covered launch Locations along the Hudson River and days covered at each, 2019.

2019 Launch Locations (Hudson River)	Days Covered	Steward Coverage	Number of stewards
Athens Boat Launch, Greene County	44	5 days/week	0.5
Battery Park Boat Launch, Saratoga County	58	5 days/week	1
Charles Rider Park, Ulster County	30	5 days/week	1
Coeymans Boat Launch, Albany County	62	5 days/week	1
Dutchman's Landing, Greene County	67	5 days/week	1.5
Echo Boat Launch, Westchester County	16	5 days/week	0.33
Germantown Boat Launch, Columbia County	26	5 days/week	0.5
Henry Hudson Park, Albany County	80	5 days/week	1
Highland Landing Park, Ulster County	23	5 days/week	1
Kingston Point Park, Ulster County	13	2-3 days/week	0.5
Kowawese State Unique Area, Orange County	57	5 days/week	1
Mills-Norrie State Park, Dutchess County	12	2-3 days/week	0.5
Ossining Boat Launch, Westchester County	18	5 days/week	0.33
Senasqua Boat Launch, Westchester County	8	5 days/week	0.33

Table 2: Covered launch locations along the Mohawk River and days covered at each, 2019.

2019 Launch Locations (Mohawk River)	Days Covered	Steward Coverage	Number of stewards
Amsterdam Boat Launch, Montgomery County	32	5 days/week	1
Canajoharie Boat Launch, Montgomery County	48	5 days/week	1
Freeman's Bridge Boat Launch, Schenectady County	56	5 days/week	1
Nelliston Boat Launch, Montgomery County	31	5 days/week	1
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site, Montgomery County	64	5 days/week	1
Village of Ilion Marina, Herkimer County	1	-	1

Table 3: Covered launch locations at lakes across the region and days covered at each, 2019.

2019 Launch Locations (Lakes)	Days Covered	Steward Coverage	Number of stewards
Chodikee Lake Boat Launch, Ulster County	82	5 days/week	1
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park, Orange County	45	5 days/week	1
Round Lake Boat Launch, Saratoga County	82	5 days/week	1

Watercraft Inspection Steward Training

Watercraft inspection stewards participated in a three day staff training program in order to familiarize themselves with data collection protocol for the Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Application, inspection methods utilized throughout New York State, AIS identification and phenology of plant species, spread prevention measures, education of the general public, and important safety measures. The Capital Mohawk PRISM hosted a watercraft inspection steward training at Norrie Point Environmental Center. As a collaboration, the PRISM invited

members from other organizations to participate and share in the training. Lower Hudson PRISM, through Teatown Lake Reservation, brought their seasonal stewards up for the training. In addition, Francis McParland, the Environmental Education Assistant for NYS DEC Region 1, was in attendance in order to gather training information for a steward that was to be stationed in Long Island. Training protocol was standardized as outlined in the “New York State Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Handbook” Publication ID: NYSGI-H-14-001 for Clean, Drain, Dry practices as recommended by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Participating agencies included the Capital Mohawk PRISM Coordinator, Kristopher Williams, and Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, Gwendolyn Temple. Luke Gervase, the former Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Long Island Invasive Species Management Area (LIISMA), came to the training to provide the AIS identification and phenology portion to all watercraft inspection stewards. John Marino and Forest Swaciak from the New York Natural Heritage Program attended the training to provide information regarding the Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Application (WISPA). In addition, Lindsay Yoder, the Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for the Lower Hudson PRISM, also attended the training with her stewards and provided a portion of the safety training to all participants.

The Capital Mohawk PRISM stewards also participated in a separate HR training for the Cornell Cooperative Extension before other participants arrived. This HR training covered standard materials required under Cornell Cooperative Extension’s policies as well as a stronger emphasis on sexual harassment to prepare stewards for working with the general public.

Watercraft Inspection Steward Methods

Stewards educated individuals while inspecting watercraft at 18 launch locations which covered 5 separate waterbodies. Watercraft inspection stewards covered launch locations from 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. with 1 hour off for breaks and lunch from Thursday – Monday each week. Some stewards elected to cover locations from 6:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. in order to reach out to different audiences such as fishermen who are often out fishing in the early hours of the morning.

Launch locations were chosen by the Department of Environmental Conservation prior to putting out the Invitation for Bid (IFB) for the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program. Stewards were instructed under their training to gather metrics through the WISP application. These metrics included type of watercraft, primary activity performed, group size, state of boat registration, time of arrival, whether the group was launching or retrieving, what waterbody the boat had been in within the past 2 weeks, and what spread prevention measures the boater took. On holiday weekends, the stewards were also requested to ask boaters, “*Can we count on you to clean, drain, and dry when there is no boat steward present?*” This was asked as part of a behavioral change campaign that is currently taking place across the state in order to gather information on whether boaters will, without the guidance of a steward at a launch location, take measures to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Watercraft inspection stewards were also provided equipment for their launch locations. Each steward was given a folding card table, canopy chair, 8 inch tablet with an Android operating system, brochures, first aid kit, plastic bin, binder of steward materials, Tupperware with lids for samples, hand towel, rake, laminated posters noting “Steward on Duty”, and multiple handouts provided by the Department of Environmental Conservation for boaters. Stewards were instructed to set up their workstations away from any traffic and in a highly visible area in order to reduce safety concerns.

Beginning on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, Capital Mohawk PRISM had partial coverage for 15 weeks from May 24th to September 2nd along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, then minimal coverage for 2 weeks following the end of boating season until September 16th. Given that many watercraft inspection stewards were college students, coverage shifted towards the end of August.

During inspections while launching and retrieving, stewards would ask boaters to remove visible material from their boats and drain all water from their watercraft. This minimized the amount of species being introduced into

waterbodies throughout New York State while also teaching boaters where to look for plant and/or animal materials. All stewards were highly visible as they wore a bright blue shirt noting that they worked for Capital Mohawk PRISM each day they were at their launch locations as well as a safety vest provided by the Department of Environmental Conservation.

While this was not a metric that was recorded under the WISP application, stewards also provided education and outreach to patrons of the launch locations they were stationed at that were not boating.



Echo Boat Launch in Croton-on-Hudson.

Comprehensive Summary of Results

While the Capital Mohawk PRISM has utilized boat stewards in the past to gather spread metrics of aquatic invasive species, 2019 is the first year where the organization has administered a full-scale watercraft inspection steward program across both the Hudson and Mohawk River regions.

In 2018, Capital Mohawk PRISM housed two SUNY ESF interns who gathered spread metrics of aquatic invasive species at 5 launch sites throughout the Capital Region. In 2019, 18 stewards under the AISSP program covered 23 launch locations along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers as well as local waterbodies. This is a substantial increase in boat launch coverage and offers a host of new information for both Capital Mohawk PRISM and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regarding spread prevention measures used by patrons as well as potential new introductions of AIS to the Hudson River, Mohawk River, and local waterbodies.

Comprehensive Findings

The 2019 field season for Capital Mohawk PRISM stewards ran for 15 weeks (17 weeks in some launch locations) from the Friday before Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day (May 24th – September 2nd). Some stewards continued at their designated launch locations until September 16th in order to collect metrics regarding patron use of boat launches beyond the standard boating season. In total, 18 stewards performed 8,475 inspections and educated 13,411 individuals regarding spread prevention measures (i.e. clean, drain, dry) for aquatic invasive species. Various factors played in to how many patrons visited each site during the season including location, weather, accessibility of the launch, and steward coverage.

As noted in Table 4, during the 2019 boating season, stewards observed every boat type except for barges. Kayaks were the most observed boat (51.67%) with motorboats following (37.29%). Personal watercraft were third (4.54%), canoes were fourth (3.98%), stand-up paddleboards were fifth (1.29%), rowboats were sixth (0.82%), sailboats were seventh (0.36%), and windsurfers were last (0.05%). In total, across 23 launch locations, 8,475 boats were inspected along the Hudson River, Mohawk River, and local waterbodies.

Table 4: Comprehensive data summary of boat types at each launch location, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	Boat Type									Total # boats
	Barge	Canoe	Kayak	Motor	PWC	Row	Sail	SUP	Wind	
Amsterdam	0	1	5	12	0	0	0	0	0	18
Athens	0	0	23	49	11	0	1	2	0	86
Battery Park	0	26	389	74	13	13	0	1	0	516
Canajoharie	0	1	30	73	11	0	0	0	0	115
Charles Rider Park	0	1	14	102	18	0	4	0	0	139
Chodikee Lake	0	116	793	140	0	14	0	7	0	1070
Coeymans	0	3	19	105	6	0	0	0	0	133
Dutchman's Landing	0	14	283	685	88	4	7	2	3	1086
Echo	0	26	366	3	0	0	0	28	0	423
Freeman's Bridge	0	19	408	414	47	4	0	4	0	896
Germantown	0	2	12	62	12	1	1	0	0	90
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	0	12	56	0	0	4	0	4	0	76
Henry Hudson Park	0	9	100	625	68	1	3	3	0	809
Highland Landing Park	0	5	1	43	12	0	0	0	0	61
Kingston Point Park	0	1	100	5	29	0	0	13	0	148
Kowawese State Unique Area	0	1	83	0	0	0	0	0	1	85
Mills-Norrie State Park	0	2	26	13	2	16	0	0	0	59
Nelliston	0	5	4	19	1	0	0	0	0	29
Ossining	0	2	5	7	24	0	0	0	0	38
Round Lake	0	72	1290	414	23	13	15	44	0	1871
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	0	19	348	314	19	0	0	1	0	701
Senasqua	0	0	24	0	1	0	0	0	0	25
Village of Ilion Marina	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Grand Total	0	337	4379	3160	385	70	31	109	4	8475
% of all watercraft	0.0%	3.98%	51.67%	37.29%	4.54%	0.82%	0.36%	1.29%	0.05%	100%

*PWC = personal watercraft (jet ski); SUP = stand-up paddleboard; Wind = windsurfer.



Ralph Green performing a mock inspection at Norrie Point Environmental Center.

Table 5 defines the level of boat operator awareness regarding spread prevention measures. Under the Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Application, boaters were asked “Do you take any steps intentionally to prevent the spread of AIS?” In response across 23 launch locations, 77.2% of boaters said yes, they take steps to prevent AIS spread (4007 groups of individuals). Of those who said yes, 44.1% stated that they wash their boats, 36.7% said they dry their boat, 19.9% stated they inspect their boat, 18.5% said they drained their boat, 14.4% stated this was the first launch of the season or the boat had been frozen previously, 9.0% said the launch location was the same waterbody they previously launched from, 6.6% stated they drained their livewell, 5.7% said they dumped their bait buckets, and 0.6% stated they decontaminate their boat. 504 individuals were not asked this question, which may have been due to the time an inspection would have taken during peak hours of launch and retrieval traffic. 102 individuals also said they did not know if they took intentional steps to prevent the spread of AIS. A small number of individuals (33) refused to answer the question when asked.



Table 5: Comprehensive summary of boat operators’ awareness of AIS and spread prevention, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	# groups showing AIS spread prevention awareness												# groups asked
	Yes	Yes %	Inspect	Wash	Drain	Bait	Livewell	Dry	Decon	Same Wtr	First/Frozen	Didn't ask	
Amsterdam	7	43.8%	3	5	4	0	0	7	2	1	8	0	16
Athens	55	74.3%	5	44	3	0	0	3	3	11	8	0	74
Battery Park	199	67.0%	85	162	4	0	1	69	1	11	26	9	297
Canajoharie	47	49.0%	25	36	13	12	8	13	0	9	38	1	96
Charles Rider Park	123	98.4%	0	123	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	125
Chodikee Lake	516	76.3%	1	502	2	1	1	261	1	65	57	4	672
Coeymans	74	58.7%	17	58	29	9	10	34	3	31	13	3	123
Dutchman’s Landing	530	79.2%	193	429	247	87	101	166	3	73	30	253	669
Echo	54	26.2%	1	41	0	0	0	37	0	41	98	53	206
Freeman’s Bridge	577	88.5%	20	153	10	1	1	559	1	9	53	24	652
Germantown	50	61.7%	9	39	2	1	3	1	1	16	16	7	81
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	20	38.5%	3	5	1	0	0	17	0	2	7	4	52
Henry Hudson Park	521	70.6%	295	241	475	172	197	352	8	71	97	32	738
Highland Landing Park	46	78.0%	4	40	1	0	0	11	0	9	4	0	59
Kingston Point Park	53	59.6%	0	52	2	4	2	6	0	19	2	0	89
Kowawese State Unique Area	13	48.1%	1	3	6	0	1	8	0	5	3	0	27
Mills-Norrie State Park	15	55.5%	2	13	3	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	27
Nelliston	22	78.6%	18	17	15	4	5	18	0	0	5	0	28
Ossining	12	44.4%	0	11	3	0	0	5	0	6	7	2	27
Round Lake	739	62.9%	151	392	118	17	5	364	7	89	222	101	1174
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	329	63.6%	311	170	127	18	44	183	7	47	132	5	517
Senasqua	4	66.7%	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	6
Village of Ilion Marina	1	100%	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Grand Total	4007	77.2%	1144	2541	1066	326	379	2115	37	516	831	504	5891
% of groups taking active measures			19.9%	44.1%	18.5%	5.7%	6.6%	36.7%	0.6%	9.0%	14.4%		

*102 individuals said they if they took intentional steps to prevent the spread of AIS (this number is included in the total under # groups asked).

* 33 individuals refused to answer the question of whether they took spread prevention measures (number included in the total under # groups asked).

During a watercraft inspection survey, boaters are asked what primary activity they are performing at the launch they are located at as represented by Table 6 below. At all launch locations covered across the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys in 2019, the largest activity performed was recreation (68.52%) which was followed by fishing (29.46%), commercial (0.86%), government (0.69%), and research (0.47%). Commercial is defined as shipping materials or goods, government is defined as police enforcement and/or border patrol, and research is defined as surveys or experiments performed.

Table 6: Comprehensive summary of the main activity of watercraft operators, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	Primary Activity Performed				
	Commercial	Fishing	Recreation	Government	Research
Amsterdam	2	1	13	0	0
Athens	0	18	56	0	0
Battery Park	6	57	237	4	2
Canajoharie	0	48	50	1	0
Charles Rider Park	0	18	105	1	1
Chodikee Lake	0	314	353	1	5
Coeymans	2	19	104	0	1
Dutchman's Landing	31	143	739	7	1
Echo	1	17	236	2	0
Freeman's Bridge	0	312	352	3	9
Germantown	0	37	51	0	0
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	0	9	47	0	0
Henry Hudson Park	6	170	577	12	5
Highland Landing Park	0	0	58	1	0
Kingston Point Park	0	2	87	0	0
Kowawese State Unique Area	0	1	26	0	0
Mills-Norrie State Park	0	4	23	0	0
Nelliston	0	10	18	0	0
Ossining	0	0	29	0	0
Round Lake	3	475	783	7	4
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	3	186	328	4	1
Senasqua	0	0	12	0	0
Village of Ilion Marina	0	1	0	0	0
Grand Total	54	1842	4284	43	29



AIS disposal station at Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site.

Table 7 provides a summary of the species observed and identified on watercraft at launch locations covered in 2019. Species noted below the table are species that were not included under WISPA in 2019. A large percentage of the species observed by watercraft inspection stewards this year were non-invasive or native. The most common invasive species found on watercraft was Eurasian watermilfoil (152), followed by curly leaf pondweed (60), water chestnut (56), Carolina fanwort (48), zebra mussel (15), brittle naiad (12), rusty crayfish (1), variable leaf watermilfoil (1), and Chinese mystery snail (1). 2.34% of boats inspected had aquatic invasive species visibly observed on them. In total, 346 AIS were intercepted by watercraft inspection stewards.

Table 7: Comprehensive summary of observation/identification of plant and animal materials on watercraft, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	Organism type																Total AIS	% of inspected boats with AIS
	Non-invasive	S/F WF	AC	QM	ZM	BE	RC	H	EFB	VLM	EWM	BN	SS	CLP	WC	Deb.		
Amsterdam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0.0%
Athens	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.2%
Battery Park	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	8	1.6%
Canajoharie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0.0%
Charles Rider Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.7%
Chodikee Lake	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	7	6.5%
Coeymans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0.0%
Dutchman's Landing	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	17	1	23	2.1%
Echo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Freeman's Bridge	17	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	20	0	0	0	12	2	39	4.4%
Germantown	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8	8.8%
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	6	5.3%
Henry Hudson Park	111	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	10	125	19	1.5%
Highland Landing Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0.0%
Kingston Point Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.0%
Kowawese State Unique Area	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Mills-Norrie State Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.0%
Nelliston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	3.4%
Ossining	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	5.3%
Round Lake	106	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	117	10	0	48	3	26	224	12.0%
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	6	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	66	7	1.0%
Senasqua	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Village of Ilion Marina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Grand Total	263	0	0	0	15	0	1	0	0	1	152	12	0	60	56	250	346	2.34%

*4 reports of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Freeman's Bridge (included under Total AIS for boat launch site).

*1 report of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Greenwood Lake (included under Total AIS for boat launch site).

*1 report of Chinese mystery snail (*Cipangopaludina chinensis*) from Round Lake (included under Total AIS for boat launch site).

*43 counts of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Round Lake (included under Total AIS for boat launch site).

Most species that were found on watercraft were found upon retrieval, rather than launching. The following invasive species specimens were observed and collected as outlined in Table 8. 14 water chestnut were found upon launching, 11 Eurasian watermilfoil were observed, 7 zebra mussel were found, 6 curly leaf pondweed were observed, 1 Chinese mystery snail was discovered, and 1 brittle naiad was found on a launching watercraft.

Chinese mystery snail should be included under WISPA as a species for observation in the future as stewards observed an individual while launching.

Table 8: Comprehensive summary of AIS removed launching based on species observed, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	ZM	RC	VLM	EWM	BN	CLP	WC	Total AIS removed
Amsterdam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Athens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Battery Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Canajoharie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charles Rider Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chodikee Lake	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Coeymans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dutchman's Landing	1	0	0	1	0	0	7	9
Echo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Freeman's Bridge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germantown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Henry Hudson Park	2	0	0	0	1	0	5	8
Highland Landing Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kingston Point Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kowawese State Unique Area	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mills-Norrie State Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nelliston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ossining	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Round Lake	2	0	0	9	0	2	2	20
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	5
Senasqua	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Village of Ilion Marina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	7	0	0	11	1	6	14	44

*1 report of Chinese mystery snail (*Cipangopaludina chinensis*) from Round Lake (included under Total AIS removed).

*4 counts of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Round Lake (included under Total AIS removed).



Eurasian watermilfoil.



Chinese mystery snail.



Curly leaf pondweed.

Far more species were observed upon retrieval compared to launching as noted in Table 9, which is not surprising. As both the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers are considered source points for many aquatic invasive species across New York State, it is common to find aquatic invasive species on watercraft upon retrieval. 141 Eurasian watermilfoil fragments were observed, 54 curly leaf pondweed fragments were found, 44 fragments of Carolina fanwort were discovered, 42 water chestnut were observed, 11 brittle naiad fragments were found, 8 zebra mussels were observed, 1 rusty crayfish was found, and 1 fragment of variable leaf watermilfoil was observed. Interestingly, the largest observations of Eurasian watermilfoil and curly leaf pondweed were found upon retrieval from Round Lake (a landlocked waterbody), which is relatively close to the Adirondack Blue Line as well as Saratoga Lake. As such, an increase in the number of staff at this launch location is required in order to reduce the potential for spread of this species to uninvaded waterways.

Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) should also be included under WISPA as a species for observation as stewards observed a significant amount of it throughout the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys. While most observations were found within the Capital Region, one observation was found by the border of New York and New Jersey. Thus, it is a species to be on the watch for across New York State.

Table 9: Comprehensive summary of AIS removed retrieving based on species observed, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	ZM	RC	VLM	EWM	BN	CLP	WC	Total AIS removed
Amsterdam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Athens	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Battery Park	0	0	0	4	0	0	3	7
Canajoharie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charles Rider Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Chodikee Lake	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	6
Coeymans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dutchman's Landing	2	0	0	2	0	0	10	14
Echo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Freeman's Bridge	2	0	1	20	0	0	12	39
Germantown	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	6
Henry Hudson Park	4	0	0	1	1	0	5	11
Highland Landing Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kingston Point Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kowawese State Unique Area	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mills-Norrie State Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nelliston	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ossining	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Round Lake	0	0	0	108	10	46	1	204
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Senasqua	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Village of Ilion Marina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	8	1	1	141	11	54	42	302

*4 reports of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Freeman's Bridge (included under Total AIS removed).

*1 report of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Greenwood Lake (included under Total AIS removed).

*39 counts of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Round Lake (included under Total AIS removed).

All species observed on launching watercraft were present in the waterbodies they were launching into except two species at one location as shown in Table 10. As noted previously, both the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers are considered source points for many aquatic invasive species. Thus, it is a rare occurrence to find a new aquatic invasive species that has not yet invaded these two major waterways. However, Round Lake, a landlocked waterbody, had 2 new possible invasions in 2019.

While it is not included in the table above due to it not being a species observed under WISPA, there was 1 report of Chinese mystery snail at Round Lake on a launching watercraft. No iMapInvasives records exist for this species in Round Lake, so it is considered not present within this waterbody as of 2019. Similarly, 4 reports of Carolina fanwort were noted from Round Lake on a launching watercraft with no iMapInvasives records noting that this species exists in this waterbody. Thus, it is considered not present within this waterbody as of 2019. Due to the fact that 2 new aquatic invasive species not previously noted within Round Lake were found on launching watercraft this year, a stronger presence at this launch location is warranted.

Carolina fanwort was observed at three locations (Freeman’s Bridge, Mohawk River; Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park, Greenwood Lake; Round Lake) in 2019 based on watercraft inspection steward data collected. These locations may now be considered vectors for transmission of this AIS.

Table 10: Comprehensive summary of AIS present in water body where launching boats arrived, 2019.

Boat Launch Site	ZM	RC	VLM	EWM	BN	CLP	WC
Amsterdam	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Athens	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Battery Park	P	--	--	--	--	--	--
Canajoharie	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Charles Rider Park	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Chodikee Lake	--	--	--	--	--	P	--
Coeymans	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dutchman’s Landing	P	--	--	P	--	--	P
Echo	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Freeman’s Bridge	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Germantown	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Greenwood Lake, Thomas P. Morahan Waterfront Park	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Henry Hudson Park	P	--	--	--	P	--	P
Highland Landing Park	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Kingston Point Park	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Kowawese State Unique Area	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mills-Norrie State Park	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nelliston	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ossining	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Round Lake	P	--	--	P	--	P	P
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site	P	--	--	P	--	P	--
Senasqua	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Village of Ilion Marina	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

*1 report of Chinese mystery snail (*Cipangopaludina chinensis*) from Round Lake found on a launching watercraft (no iMapInvasives record exists for this species in Round Lake, so it is considered not present).

*4 reports of Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from Round Lake found on a launching watercraft (no iMapInvasives record exists for this species in Round Lake, so it is considered not present).

Table 11 provides information regarding boaters' responses when asked what previous waterbody their boat was in within the past two weeks. In total, 166 unique waterbodies were visited prior to the five waterbodies covered under the 23 launch locations.

Table 11: Comprehensive summary of waterbodies visited within the past two weeks by boaters, 2019.

Previously Visited Waterbody	Number of Visits from Patrons
Great Sacandaga Lake (Fulton/Saratoga Counties)	57
Saratoga Lake (Saratoga County)	56
Mohawk River	41
Lake George (Essex/Warren/Washington Counties)	32
Ballston Lake (Saratoga County)	16
Wallkill River	12
Hudson River (Unknown County)	11
Rondout Creek	10
Lake Champlain (Unknown County)	8
Sacandaga Lake, Moffitt Beach (Hamilton County)	8
Thompsons Lake (Albany County)	8
Hudson River (Albany County)	7
Schroon Lake (Essex/Warren Counties)	7
Adirondacks (unspecified)	6
Canadarago Lake (Otsego County)	6
Dunham Reservoir (Rensselaer County)	5
Atlantic Ocean	4
Canandaigua Lake (Ontario/Yates Counties)	4
Candlewood Lake (Brookfield)	4
Copake Lake (Columbia County)	4
Cossayuna Lake (Washington County)	4
Moreau Lake (Saratoga County)	4
Grafton Lake (Rensselaer County)	4
Esopus Creek	4
Collins Lake	4
Round Lake (Essex County)	4
Round Lake (Saratoga County)	4
Sacandaga River	4
Schoharie Creek	4
Hudson River (Saratoga County)	3
Hudson River (Ulster County)	3
Lake Saint Catherine (Poultney)	3
Long Lake (Hamilton County)	3
Tillson Lake	3
Paradox Lake (Essex County)	3
Rondout Reservoir (Sullivan/Ulster Counties)	3
St. Lawrence River (St. Lawrence County)	3
Burden Lake (Rensselaer County)	2
Canajoharie Falls (Montgomery County)	2
Caroga Lake (Fulton County)	2
Cassadaga Lakes (Chataqua County)	2
Fish Creek Ponds (Franklin County)	2

Good Luck Lake (Hamilton County)	2
Horseshoe Lake (Franklin County)	2
Indian Lake (Dutchess County)	2
Indian Lake (Hamilton County)	2
Kayaderoseras Creek (Saratoga County)	2
Kinderhook Lake (Columbia County)	2
Lake Lonely (Saratoga County)	2
Lake Mahopac (Putnam County)	2
Long Island Sound	2
Lower Saranac Lake (Franklin County)	2
Mason Lake (Hamilton County)	2
Oneida Lake (Madison/Oneida/Onondaga/Oswego Counties)	2
Onteora Lake	2
Stockport Creek	2
Basha Kill Marsh	2
Conaway Lake	2
Silven Lake	2
Lake Desolation	2
Otsego Lake (Otsego County)	2
Piseco Lake (Hamilton County)	2
Racquette Lake (Hamilton County)	2
Salmon River Reservoir (Oneida County)	2
Saranac Chain of Lakes, unspecified (Essex/Franklin Counties)	2
Snyders Lake (Rensselaer County)	2
Upper Saranac Lake (Franklin County)	2
Ashmere Lake (Hinsdale)	1
Ashokan Reservoir, East Basin (Ulster County)	1
Battenkill River	1
Bear Lake (St. Lawrence County)	1
Blenheim Gilboa Reservoir (Schoharie County)	1
Bog Brook Reservoir (Putnam County)	1
Brant Lake (Warren County)	1
Canada Lake (Fulton County)	1
Canadice Lake (Ontario County)	1
Cayuga Lake (Cayuga/Seneca/Tompkins Counties)	1
Cedar River Flow (Hamilton County)	1
Chateaugay Lake (Clinton/Franklin Counties)	1
Chenango Lake (Chenango County)	1
Connecticut River	1
Croton Falls Reservoir (Putnam County)	1
Delaware River	1
East Branch Reservoir (Putnam County)	1
Glen Lake (Warren County)	1
Glenmere Lake (Orange County)	1
Harriman Reservoir (Windham County)	1
Harrisburg Lake (Warren County)	1
Hoosic River	1
Hudson River (Dutchess County)	1

Hudson River (Essex County)	1
Hudson River (Greene County)	1
Hudson River (Hamilton County)	1
Hudson River (Orange County)	1
Hudson River (Putnam County)	1
Hudson River (Rensselaer County)	1
Hudson River (Warren County)	1
Hudson River (Westchester County)	1
Hunt Lake (Saratoga County)	1
Hyde Lake (Jefferson County)	1
Indian Lake (Franklin County)	1
Ireland Vly (Saratoga County)	1
Jabe Pond (Warren County)	1
Keuka Lake (Steuben/Yates Counties)	1
Lake Algonquin (Hamilton County)	1
Lake Champlain (Essex County)	1
Lake Durant (Hamilton County)	1
Lake Erie (Unknown County)	1
Lake Kanawauke (Orange/Rockland Counties)	1
Lake Kushaqua (Franklin County)	1
Lake Lillinonah (Brookfield)	1
Lake Ontario (Unknown County)	1
Lake Pleasant (Hamilton County)	1
Lake Sidney (Lanier)	1
Lake Taghkanic (Columbia County)	1
Lake Winnepesaukee (Alton)	1
Lake Winola (Overfield Township)	1
Lake Zoar (Fairfield)	1
Lincoln Pond (Essex County)	1
Long Pond (Rensselaer County)	1
Loon Lake (Warren County)	1
Monksville Reservoir (Passaic County)	1
Mountain Pond (Franklin County)	1
Neversink Reservoir (Sullivan County)	1
North Lake (Herkimer County)	1
North-South Lake (Greene County)	1
Onota Lake (Pittsfield)	1
Oscawana Lake (Putnam County)	1
6 Mile Waterworks (Albany County)	1
Cape Cod (Unspecified)	1
Five Mile Waterway	1
Stony Point (Unspecified)	1
Norrie Point	1
Coldgate Lake	1
Batterson Pond	1
Fall Kill Park	1
West Point	1
Kenneth Wilson State Park	1

Rudd Pond	1
Berean Pond	1
Fourth Lake (Rosendale)	1
Lake Walton	1
Lake Meahagh	1
Green Lake	1
Great Vly	1
Black Creek	1
Wynantskill Reservoir	1
Okapeak River	1
Simonson Lake	1
Emmadine Pond	1
Panther Pond (Raymond)	1
Lake Ontoro	1
Bronx River	1
Coxsackie	1
Racquet Lake	1
Lyons Lake	1
Laurel Lake	1
Beersly Reservoir	1
Lewy Lake	1
Owasco Lake (Cayuga County)	1
Pleasant Lake (Fulton County)	1
Pyramid Lake (Essex County)	1
Rich Lake (Essex County)	1
Rio Reservoir (Orange/Sullivan Counties)	1
Rockwood Lake (Fulton County)	1
Sagamore Lake (Hamilton County)	1
Saratoga River	1
Schoharie Reservoir (Delaware/Greene/Schoharie Counties)	1
Schuylkill River	1
Somerset Reservoir (Stratton)	1
Susquehanna River	1
Swan Lake (Sullivan County)	1
Thirteenth Lake (Warren County)	1
Waterbury Reservoir (Waterbury)	1
Wawayanda Lake (Vernon Township)	1
West Lake (Hamilton County)	1
White Pond (Putnam County)	1
Wickham Lake (Orange County)	1

Recommendations and Conclusion

There were a number of marked successes for the 2019 Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program. Watercraft inspection stewards educated 13,411 individuals, which was a 308% increase in the number of individuals stewards educated in 2018 under Capital Mohawk PRISM's own boat steward program. Stewards intercepted 346 aquatic invasive species, representing 2.34% of boats that had visible AIS on them during surveying. 77.2% of individuals stated that they take intentional steps to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout New York State. As the first full-fledged year of the AISSP program, Capital Mohawk PRISM is proud of these metrics as well as what they mean for AIS spread prevention throughout the region and are anticipating a marked increase in years two and three.

Some launch locations covered this year have limited viability with public presence and may not be cost effective to station a watercraft inspection steward. Prior to the writing of this report, a meeting was held between the Capital Mohawk PRISM and the Department's point of contact for the Hudson and Mohawk River Valleys Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention Program. During this meeting, a discussion regarding the launch locations that are not viable was had and new locations were agreed upon between both the Capital Mohawk PRISM and the Department's point of contact (see appendix). These launch location changes will help retain staff as well as allow the Capital Mohawk PRISM to educate the general public at busier launch locations regarding spread prevention measures.

Some launch locations require additional staff in order to support the number of patrons visiting per day. In particular, Round Lake (Saratoga County), Echo Boat Launch (Hudson River, Westchester County), Henry Hudson Park (Hudson River, Albany County), and Dutchman's Landing (Hudson River, Greene County) require additional staff in order to reduce potential introductions of aquatic invasive species and educate the general public regarding clean, drain, dry practices. These locations were also discussed during the meeting with the Department's point of contact and will be changed accordingly in 2020. It is also recommended that these launch locations, due to the high ecological threat of particular species within their waterbodies (ex. Hydrilla at Echo Boat Launch, Carolina fanwort at Round Lake) and the significant amount of traffic they receive, should have decontamination stations on their premises.

Hiring stewards was a difficult process this year due to multiple agencies looking for similar hires within the same time span as well as staffing rural locations such as the Village of Ilion Marina. However, a change in the position description for the watercraft inspection stewards allowing for individuals 18 years or older to work as a watercraft inspection steward would alleviate some concerns associated with staffing. These individuals would have to have experience, knowledge, coursework, or an interest in a career in a natural resource or education field in order to be considered for a position with the Capital Mohawk PRISM. However, only individuals with at least two years of college experience in a natural resource or education field are eligible to be lead stewards for the Capital Mohawk PRISM.

The Capital Mohawk PRISM continued to recruit, hire, and train throughout the season, reducing some of these concerns. Hiring and providing supervision to 18 stewards is a task that requires trained full-time staff both during the boating season and during the off-season. As such, stronger training for both supervisors and the stewards will be necessary moving forward with this program.

In sum, the Capital Mohawk PRISM completed its first full-scale watercraft inspection steward program year. Without the strength, enthusiasm, and support of the stewards, this program would not be what it is today. Stewards are the first line of defense against the spread of aquatic invasive species. The Capital Mohawk PRISM is proud to have had 18 outstanding staff this past year that help continue to define for the general public what it means to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.



Kyle Walter at Canaioharie Boat Launch.

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AIS Disposal Station and Protect Your Waters Sign.