



## Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management Crew Assistance Program (CAP)

### Introduction

Invasive species are harmful organisms that affect our ecosystems, economy, and way of life. If you are a group or entity seeking to improve the condition of a property, please contact the Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (CR-PRISM). We are proud to offer technical assistance to partners on methodologies and hands-on experiences to make a parcel more ecologically functional and sustainable through the CR-PRISM Crew Assistance Program (CAP).

### Program Purpose

The CR-PRISM Crew Assistance Program exists to help improve invasive species management across the region by assisting partner organizations, through increased capacity, with priority projects involving invasive species identification, delineation, management, and habitat restoration.

### About the Program

The CR-PRISM is seeking partners to train, assist, and engage their staff in an invasive species project. The PRISM will help with management on public, community, and private land holdings (e.g., preserves, parks, easements, etc.) with a crew assistance program. The CAP provides a method and opportunity to share our expertise and experience with groups and entities seeking to control invasive species but don't have the capacity or don't know where to start. Our goal is to increase efficacy and impact of management, protect conservation values, and slow the spread of invasive species while promoting a more sustainable and functioning ecology on a local level. The program is a free service and limited to applicants who have needs well aligned to our framework of response.

### The Partnership

The PRISM works within a network of partner groups to promote prevention, education, and outreach strategies, create detection and management networks, and execute best management practices for invasive species control, including post-treatment monitoring, research and restoration actions. To promote regional cohesiveness and reduce the spread and impact of invasive species, CR-PRISM collaborates with several dozen entities in a Partnership. All are welcome, for more information check out our [Partner Invite and Acknowledgement](#) on our website.

### The CR-PRISM

The PRISM is a not-for-profit quasi-governmental agency, hosted by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County, that strategically operates across [eleven counties](#), and is financially supported by the Environmental Protection Fund as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). The CR-PRISM is one of eight Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs), throughout New York State.





## Services Offered

- Provide additional capacity, through PRISM staff, to support invasive species management actions
- Training of partner staff on:
  - Invasive species identification
  - Documentation and delineation of invasive species for monitoring (using iMapInvasives tools)
  - Provide instruction and demonstration of Integrated Pest Management practices to respond to invasive species
- Provide basic consultation reviews on proposed projects
  - Assist with recommendations to prioritize species and areas for removal and restoration work
- Provide loaner tools and other resources needed to complete desired work actions
- Safety training prior to conducting work
- Share considerations for future delineation, management, or restoration actions and collaboration opportunities, including funding opportunities

## Planning Considerations

When planning an invasive species project, consider the methods that will have the greatest impact over time. The most effective projects are those that have well thought out goals and objectives built around a framework of response. Management goals should include reoccurring treatments over time with post-treatment monitoring and adaptive management.

Core practices of the program:

- Drafting a plan with clear and obtainable objectives
- Collaboration and utilization of partner and PRISM staff
- Commitment to a reoccurring program to ensure a higher likelihood of success for species that are difficult to manage
- Alignment of events coinciding with the phenology of target species as a best management practice
- Proper permits, permissions, and disposal venues will be identified and in place before commencement of an engagement
- CR-PRISM requires a signed waiver of liability before collaborating on a project

## Applications

- Partners should submit the Crew Assistance Program Application to formally request services.
- Participants must be located within the [CR-PRISM](#) boundaries.
- CR-PRISM does not work on private residential properties, unless there is a high-threat invasive species that directly impacts human health.
- Applicants will be required to participate in a pre-meeting to outline the scope of work and project logistics. Partners will be required to meet the crew on their first day of work when they arrive on-site to provide a brief introduction of the project, direct them to the project site(s), and review any site-specific safety concerns.
- Projects must be completed in 2025. Multi-year projects will be considered and may be accepted with a new application each year. Repeated submitted projects, when deemed appropriate, will be contingent upon satisfactory completion of prior projects. Post-treatment actions are encouraged.
- Proposals are ranked based on the Review Criteria included below.

The CR-PRISM is not obligated to accept all requests, based on feasibility of projects and staffing capacity. Please reach out to the CR-PRISM Terrestrial Invasive Species Coordinator, Sam Schultz, ([ss986@cornell.edu](mailto:ss986@cornell.edu)) with any questions pertaining to this application prior to submitting a request for a CAP project.





## 2025 CR-PRISM Crew Assistance Program Review Criteria

Each proposal will be reviewed for consistency with the [CR-PRISM Five-Year Strategic Plan](#). Complete project proposals found to be consistent with the Strategic Plan will be reviewed and ranked by the CR-PRISM staff and Conservation Committee based on the following criteria:

### Program Priorities

#### Invasive Species Targets

- Species priorities are based on the CR-PRISM Tier Rankings and New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) Threat Rankings, where Tier 1 and Tier 2 species are the highest priority, and Tier 4 the lowest. Please see the [NYNHP Tier List](#) for these rankings.
- Species that are new to the property in question and do not have well-established source populations and/or seedbanks present

#### Conservation Targets

- Areas with that protect conservation targets or ecologically significant locations
- Project areas with high conservation value including unique habitats and communities, rare, threatened, and endangered species, and areas with ecological connectivity for wildlife. Sites of high social and/or cultural value will also be considered.
- Project sites with low invasive species cover, and/or areas managed for vector management
- CR-PRISM will favor projects in designated natural areas or significant as indicated on the [NYNHP Prioritization Model](#).

#### Partnership

- CR-PRISM is looking for projects that further strengthen our partnership network in which we work alongside one another towards common goals.
- CR-PRISM seeks projects that may not be possible to implement with current partner resources. Assistance should further the scope of work and improve the efficacy of the project.
- Partners are encouraged to acknowledge CR-PRISM's assistance, and projects that include additional partner-led public recognition efforts such as press releases, volunteer involvement, or education efforts are preferred.

#### Long-Term Project Sustainability

- CR-PRISM will favor projects that demonstrate sustainability of efforts and partner implemented long-term monitoring and management. Partners designating areas local Invasive Species Prevention Zones will be favored for award.
- CR-PRISM supports the use of best management practices and integrated pest management.
- Projects that present a clear plan for how the project will be leveraged with CR-PRISM assistance or used to support further invasive species management efforts will be favored.

#### CR-PRISM Capacity

- Project must fit within CR-PRISM's current capacity. This involves the ability to implement the proposed method of management (equipment, training) but also cost and scheduling limitations. Proposals should be limited to three days of work actions with a fourth day as a rain date.

