

## WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**COMMITTEE: INVASIVE SPECIES SUB-COMMITTEE**

**DATE: OCTOBER 29, 2013**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS DICKINSON  
CONOVER  
MONROE  
BENTLEY  
MASON  
FRASIER

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISORS GIRARD  
KENNY  
MERLINO  
MONTESI  
TAYLOR  
VANSELOW  
WESTCOTT  
WOOD  
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER  
BRENDAN QUIRION, TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE PLANT COORDINATOR,  
ADIRONDACK PARK INVASIVE PLANT PROGRAM  
JOHN STROUGH, DEPUTY SUPERVISOR, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY  
DEAN BOECHER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY  
RACHEL SEEBER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY  
MATTHEW SIMPSON, TOWN OF HORICON  
JANE B. SMITH, TOWN OF HORICON  
BILL MCGEE, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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**COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

SUPERVISOR LOEB

Mr. Dickinson called the meeting of the Invasive Species Sub-Committee to order at 10:16 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the agenda were distributed to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Mr. Dickinson suggested the Committee start with item number 2, as the guest presenter was not yet in attendance. He noted item number 2 pertained to a discussion regarding allocation of \$300,000 in the 2014 County Budget for invasive species. He advised some of the funds would be allocated to water bodies in Warren County, other than Lake George. He added there were a great number of water bodies in Warren County with various invasive species issues. Mr. Conover inquired about the \$150,000 in the 2013 County Budget for invasive species. He asked if any remaining funds would be rolled over to the same line item in the 2014 County Budget. Mr. Mason asked if the Lake George Park Commission (LGPC) would continue to complete remediation efforts of the Asian Clams. He noted his understanding was that Asian Clams had been discovered in Sandy Bay and he believed the LGPC would require all of the \$150,000 to complete these efforts. Mr. Montesi referred to an email from Dave Wick, Executive Director of the LGPC, indicating they would not be matting Sandy Bay because the existing Asian Clams were juveniles. Mr. Monroe stated it was his understanding that juveniles were discovered outside of the matted areas and quickly repopulated underneath the mats. A discussion ensued.

Pertaining to the \$300,000 in the 2014 County Budget for invasive species, Mr. Bentley commented he would like to see \$150,000 allocated to Lake George and the remaining \$150,000 divided equally (\$25,000 each) between Lake Luzerne; Lake Sunnyside; Glen Lake; Loon Lake; Brant Lake; and Schroon Lake. Mr. Conover asked if the funding would be for remediation and/or inspection and Mr. Bentley replied affirmatively. Mr. Monroe stated it was important to consider the costs involved with the RFP (Requests for Proposals) for consultant services relating to a local law for mandatory boat washing and inspections on all bodies of water in Warren County. He said the cost would most likely be substantial; however, he added, this would be critical to the process of adopting a local law. Mr. Dickinson reported the RFP had been released and proposals were due by November 14, 2013. He added there had been several responses from qualified organizations. He suggested they determine if the LGPC would expend the \$150,000 this year and if not, then the funding should be added to the \$300,000 for invasive species in the 2014 County Budget.

Mr. Montesi pointed out taxing districts had been formed for Glen Lake and Lake Sunnyside in the Town of Queensbury. He said Glen Lake was doing a good job of maintaining the spread, as they were able to treat one third of the lake each year with the funds collected through the taxing district. He advised the Lake Sunnyside taxing district only generated about \$17,000 a year and at that rate would need to wait an additional two years in order to afford chemical treatment. He apprised Lake Sunnyside would like to complete some hand harvesting next year and were looking for \$10,000 to \$15,000 in funding in order to complete the efforts. Mr. Bentley mentioned the need for a boat washing station on Glen Lake once the local law was adopted. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Mason stated he envisioned the boat wash stations would not be at individual lakes but would be located on roads coming into the area. He gave the example of a boat wash station on the Northway coming from the north and another coming from the south which would issue tags to the boaters following inspection and/or washing. He stated when the boater showed up at the lake, the marina or boat launch would be required to ensure the boat had been properly inspected and if necessary washed, by verifying the tag had been issued at the boat wash. He said this system would take time to put into place but would be effective. He added cooperation from the State and Federal Governments would be necessary to put the system into place. Mr. Dickinson agreed and noted currently boat washing was not mandatory, requiring the Lake Stewards to convince the boat owners to utilize the boat wash. If boat washing was mandatory, he continued, the boat owners would look for the appropriate wash stations. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Mason said he agreed with Mr. Bentley's suggestion for dispersing the \$300,000 in funding earmarked for invasive species in the 2014 County Budget; however, he added, he would like to see some discretionary funds available preferably on a matching funds basis. Mr. Monroe agreed the funds should only be available on a matching funds basis to support ongoing eradication efforts. Mr. Montesi asked if the remainder of the \$150,000 appropriated for invasive species in 2013 could be rolled over to the 2014 County Budget and Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, responded the funds had already been paid to the Village of Lake George.

Mr. Merlino advised Lake Luzerne had been the first lake in New York State to receive Adirondack Park Association (APA) approval to use chemicals to treat milfoil on one quarter of the lake which had been 99% effective. He noted due to budget constraints in the last four years the necessary maintenance had not been completed in order to keep the milfoil under control in the treated area. He opined hand harvesting was a waste of money and he pointed out the cost of hand harvesting Lake Luzerne in 2014 would be approximately \$100,000. Mr. Merlino asked Mr. Monroe about the effectiveness of the efforts on Loon Lake and Mr. Monroe replied they had been extremely effective; however, he added, they had gone \$40,000 over budget between renovating, hand harvesting,

matting and establishing the boat wash. He opined the matting and hand harvesting worked well but the efforts were continuous. He stated prevention efforts were the best solution as the cost of eradication efforts were significant.

Mr. Conover stated he would like to see the Lake George Associations's (LGA) 2013 Lake Steward Report and Mr. Dickinson responded he would request Walt Lender, Executive Director of the LGA, and Mr. Wick to attend the next Committee meeting to provide updates.

Continuing with the agenda review, Mr. Dickinson stated the next item pertained to a request for a letter of support from the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to Governor Cuomo; NYS DEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation) Commissioner Martens; Assemblyman Sweeney, Chair of the Conservation Committee; Senator Little; and Assemblyman Stec requesting EPF (Environmental Protection Fund) funding assistance for invasive species. Mr. Monroe advised this request had come from a SAVE (Stop Aquatic Invasives from Entering) Lake George meeting which had been attended by Assemblyman Sweeney and the Deputy Commissioner of the NYS DEC. He said they had met with Assemblyman Sweeney's staff council and program specialist and had been informed that NYS DEC was unlikely to request the EPF funding unless the line item was also included in Governor Cuomo's budget. Mr. Dickinson asked Mr. Monroe if he would draft the letter for the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign and Mr. Monroe replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter of support requesting EPF funding assistance for invasive species to be forwarded to Governor Cuomo; NYS DEC Commissioner Martens; Assemblyman Sweeney, Chair of the Conservation Committee; Senator Little; and Assemblyman Stec. *The necessary resolution was authorized for the November 15, 2013 Board Meeting.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Brendan Quirion, Terrestrial Invasive Plant Coordinator for the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP), who gave a Power Point Presentation on Terrestrial Invasive Plants of the Adirondacks; *a copy of the Power Point Presentation is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Quirion explained the APIPP had been founded in 1998 and their mission was to protect the Adirondack Region from the negative impacts of non-native, invasive plant species. He said the APIPP's goals were to prevent new introductions; to rapidly detect and eradicate new infestations; and to manage existing priority infestations to mitigate impacts. He placed plant species into the following four categories:

1. Native Species - species which were indigenous to the Region at the time of European settlement;
2. Non-native Species - the accidental or purposeful introduction of a species outside of its historic range;
3. Invasive Species (noxious) - non-native species that rapidly reproduce, displace native species and cause ecological, economic or societal harm; and
4. Nuisance Species (weed) - species that interfere with human activities.

Mr. Quirion listed the target terrestrial invasive plant of the Adirondacks as: Common Reed Grass; Purple Loosestrife; Garlic Mustard; Giant Hogweed; Japanese Knotweed; Yellow Iris; and Swallowwort Species. He advised Common Reed Grass was also referred to by its Latin name Phragmites Australis. Mr. Monroe pointed out that Phragmites was present up and down the Northway between here and Albany and Mr. Quirion agreed and added it was also in Western New York and on parts of the New York State Thruway.

Mr. Quirion displayed a photograph of a small Japanese Knotweed plant and stated the most common misconception was that the plant looked harmless; however, he pointed out Japanese Knotweed could degrade infrastructure and he displayed photographs of Japanese Knotweed growing through sidewalks and the foundations of buildings. He apprised that in the 1900's the United Kingdom had only two reported infestation sites of Japanese Knotweed but now it was a very large problem. He said Japanese Knotweed was the biggest problem facing the construction industry today. He explained Japanese Knotweed spread by fragmentation, meaning any parts of the plant (roots, stems, leaves) which were broken off and carried away, had the potential to form a new plant elsewhere. He noted Japanese Knotweed infestations near river banks could potentially irreversibly alter the river corridor. He commented the Town of Bolton had one of the worst Japanese Knotweed problems in the entire Adirondack Park.

Mr. Quirion displayed a photo of Common Reed Grass, *Phragmites Australis*, in Montreal, Quebec. He said Canada had ranked *Phragmites* as its worst invasive plant last year. He explained *Phragmites* was a wetland invader and any wetland habitat with *Phragmites* would be overtaken eventually. He said the largest infestation in the world was 7,000 acres in New Jersey. Mr. Quirion displayed a photo of a *Phragmites* infestation in Lower Cherry Patch, Lake Placid in 2003, followed by a photo of the same location in 2010, in order to explain how fast the infestation spread without treatment. He noted the original infestation had been .6 acres which had grown to .75 acres within one year. He stated the total size of the Lower Cherry Patch wetland area was approximately 35 acres and if nothing was done to treat the *Phragmites* there would eventually be a 35 acre *Phragmites* infestation. Mr. Dickinson asked the origin of *Phragmites* and Mr. Quirion replied it was from Europe. Mr. Quirion displayed a map of the Adirondack Park and noted there were approximately 600,000 wetlands within the Adirondack Park.

Mr. Quirion explained Giant Hogweed was not an ecological threat but was a threat to human health, as contact with the sap caused phytophotodermatitis resulting in severe burns on the skin. He displayed a photo of a child who had held a Giant Hogweed stem to his eye as a mock telescope which had resulted in severe burns around his eye. Mr. Monroe asked if the plant could cause blindness and Mr. Quirion replied affirmatively.

Mr. Quirion stated Japanese Knotweed, Common Reed Grass and Giant Hogweed had all originally been transported to the area as ornamental plants sold by nurseries. He said invasive plants were also transported by roadways, waterways, wildlife, contaminated fill and firewood transport. He mentioned that for the past few years he had coordinated the Terrestrial Regional Response Team which was funded by a private donation in order to detect and respond to invasive plant threats. He displayed another photo of Lower Cherry Patch after four consecutive years of treatment by the APIPP. He noted an infestation was considered to be eliminated after three consecutive years of no invasive plants. He pointed out that of all the *Phragmites* sites treated by the APIPP since 2010, 47% had no plants observed as of 2013. He attributed the success of the APIPP eradicating invasive plants to the size of the infestations. He added in California they discovered that eradication of infestation of less than 2.5 acres had the highest level of success. He noted the average size of a plant infestation within the Adirondack Park was .082 acres. He attributed the small size of plant infestation to the fewer number of major State routes within Adirondack Park and the fact that the majority of the land was forest preserve.

Mr. Quirion apprised the APIPP was involved in education and outreach efforts. He said each year he tried to give at least three land owner management training seminars to the general public. He pointed out there were other organizations, such as the Regional Inlet Invasive Plant (RIIP) Program, that complimented the work completed by the APIPP. He mentioned the collaboration

efforts with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) in order to educate them on the invasive plant species in the area to ensure that they were not unintentionally spread. He stated it was important to familiarize ourselves with the invasive plant species in the area and to identify and eliminate the pathways that caused the spread of the plants. He listed the resources for assistance and education of invasive plant species as: APIPP; RIIP; Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District; and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Mr. Conover stated the Town of Bolton had partnered with RIIP who contributed 80 hours of effort towards the eradication of Japanese Knotweed. He noted there were a lot of property owners who were willing allies and he felt it was important to assist private property owners in addressing the invasive plant species in a manner which would result in elimination.

Mr. Merlino said the presentation had been impressive and he felt the APIPP was doing a great job of controlling the spread. He noted the APIPP used chemicals and he reiterated his comment that hand harvesting the milfoil in the lakes was a waste of time because if even one pod was dropped the milfoil would grow again. Mr. Quirion asked if the APA had a mandate about chemicals which he was not aware of and Mr. Merlino replied they were allowing the APIPP to use the chemicals because they were injected and not sprayed. Mr. Quirion stated the general public could use any general use herbicide, such as Roundup. He added more harmful herbicides required a certified pesticide applicator. He noted the products they recommended to the general public could be used by anyone. Mr. Montesi stated the problem with using chemicals in the lakes was that most of the Warren County lakes were drinking water sources.

Mr. Dickinson asked about the spread of the Giant Hogweed and Mr. Quirion replied it was very lightly distributed throughout the Adirondack Park, with 10 known occurrences near the Essex and Westport areas of New York State. He added the spread potential for Giant Hogweed was very low. A brief discussion ensued.

As there was no further business to come before the Invasive Species Sub-Committee, on motion made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mr. Mason, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist