WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **INVASIVE SPECIES SUB-COMMITTEE**

DATE: **JUNE 11, 2014**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	**OTHERS PRESENT:**
SUPERVISORS DICKINSON	KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
CONOVER	PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MONROE	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRASIER	FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
BEATY	SUPERVISORS BROCK
SIMPSON	SEEBER
STROUGH	TAYLOR
	WESTCOTT
	BILL MCGHIE, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION
	JANE SMITH, EAST SHORE SCHROON LAKE ASSOCIATION
	EMILY DEBOLT, LAKE GEORGE ASSOCIATION
	WALT LENDER, LAKE GEORGE ASSOCIATION
	SARAH MCLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Mr. Dickinson called the Invasive Species Sub-Committee meeting to order at 10:57 a.m.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Conover 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 packet were distributed to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda packet is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Dickinson advised the first Item on the Agenda was a request for authorization to accept a gift/donation from the Fund for Lake George in the amount of $12,731 towards the procurement of five boat washing stations. He explained the five wash stations cost more than what was originally anticipated and the Fund for Lake George offered to provide the additional funds required.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to authorize acceptance of gift/donation as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2014 Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

The second Item on the Agenda, Mr. Dickinson apprised, was a presentation by the LGA (Lake George Association) on the APIPP (Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program). Privilege of the floor was extended to Emily DeBolt of the LGA, who distributed copies of the power point presentation regarding APIPP, as well as a copy of APIPP's summer activities schedule and a brief summary of the Warren County Waterbodies Planning Charette they were participating in to the Committee members; copies of which are on file with the minutes. She explained the Warren County Waterbodies Planning Charette was a project that included all waterbodies within the Lake Champlain Watershed. She said the goal was to identify regional and local water quality impairments and discuss ways in which they could be addressed, as well as create strategies to protect the local and regional water quality and promote community revitalization. She noted it was not specific to invasive species, as it addressed all water quality issues.

Ms. DeBolt stated the LGA had coordinated their Lake Steward Programs with APIPP, Paul Smith's College and the Lake Champlain Basin Program to develop a report that made recommendations for

the Adirondack Region regarding boat inspection and decontamination for prevention of AIS (aquatic invasive species). She said rather than print the entire 60 page report she provided copies of the Title Page, Table of Contents and the Executive Summary to the Committee members; a copy of which is on file with the minutes. She stated they felt this project was warranted because of the additional attention the invasive species issue was gaining due to the work being completed on Lake George. She noted APIPP also had an AIS Committee consisting of a number of other organizations located in the Adirondack Park such as the East Shore Schroon Lake Association, the Brant Lake Association, etc. that assisted with the report, as well.

Ms. DeBolt advised the goal of the report was to use the data that had been collected by these organizations over the years and combine it with scientific literature to make recommendations regarding the boat inspection and decontamination for aquatic invasive species prevention for the Adirondack Region. She emphasized the report provided recommendations to inform through regional discussion. She noted no similar reports had ever been completed that encompassed such a large number of waterbodies across a region. She stated the report included over 67,000 data points from 24 lakes across the Adirondack Region. She said the proposed audience for the report was decision makers from both the State and Local levels, particularly the NYSDEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation). She noted NYSDEC had requested a copy of the report to assist them with prioritizing waterbodies in the region.

The Table of Contents, Ms. DeBolt stated, listed the Executive Summary, Impact and Distribution in the Region, the Inspection and Decontamination Efforts in the Adirondack Region, Inspection and Decontamination Efficacy and Considerations, Landscape-Level Spread Prevention Concepts, Recommendations for the Adirondacks, the Next Steps, Conclusion and Appendices, References and Endnotes. She noted there were a number of lakes within the Adirondack Region that remained free of AIS contamination; therefore, she said, they were hopeful efforts to prevent the spread of AIS would permit them to remain this way. She advised they reviewed the data and provided recommendations based upon combining the data with scientific literature.

Ms. DeBolt apprised there were limitations to the report, as there were not stewards at all of the lakes in the Adirondacks; therefore, she said, a lake may not be represented because they did not have data available for it. She added the report did not include how to implement the recommendations. She noted the report was created to analyze available data for use in the decision making processes. Mr. Monroe questioned why the report did not address the mandatory inspection and Ms. DeBolt replied it did not address this because the report contained recommendations only. She explained mandatory inspection was more of a feasability issue in terms of funding and available resources which did not apply to this report.

As an example of the data collected, Ms. DeBolt stated the report contained a map of Second Pond, New York and the prior waterways the boats there had visited. She pointed out one of the boats had previously visited Cayuga Lake which was infested with hydrilla, one of the most dangerous AIS in the world because it had the ability to spread by a variety of means. She said similar maps were made for the other 23 waterbodies included in the report.

Ms. DeBolt summarized the scientific literature findings as follows:

1) Recreational boating is a primary pathway for spreading AIS;
2) Spread prevention is more cost effective than management;
3) Inspection of boats and hand-removal of plants is effective;
4) Hot water/high pressure washing is effective for removing small-bodies organisms.

Ms. DeBolt apprised boat washing was effective for removal of invasive plants; however, she said, washing with hot high pressure water was required to remove small body organisms. She stated the literature dictated the following was required to slow the landscape-level spread of AIS:

1) Inspect watercraft exiting to limit the spread of aquatic plants;
2) Inspect and decontaminate watercraft with high-pressure, hot water upon exiting waterways with aquatic invasive small-bodied organisms to limit their spread;
3) Inspect and decontaminate watercraft entering and exiting invasion spread hubs to reduce the predicted rate of new invasions.

In order to understand how the Adirondack lakes functioned as an interconnected system, Ms. DeBolt stated they analyzed the combined data from the various programs for the 24 lakes, asked a number of different questions about the data to reveal which waterways demanded particular intervention, assigned risk and identified possible invasion spread hubs and linkage waterways. She said a merged database was created for the 24 lakes that contained how many AIS they had, how many boats per day were inspected, how many of the boats utilizing the lake had AIS on them, the number of different waterbodies the boats had come from, etc. She apprised this data was used to assign a risk; therefore, she said, if a new species was introduced to one of the lakes they could track how it would most likely spread through the Adirondack Park.

Ms. DeBolt advised after analyzing the data they discovered boats seemed to be moving within the individual networks within the Adirondack Park. She said the Northway Network consisted of Lake George, Lake Champlain, Schroon Lake, Sacandaga Lake, and Brant Lake, etc. She pointed out although Saratoga Lake was not part of the Adirondack Park they included it within the Northway Network because they had data from the lake steward there. She said boats were also moving within the High Peaks Network, as well as the Fulton Chain Network.

The next thing they identified, Ms. DeBolt stated were the linkage waterways which linked the networks together. As an example, she apprised, Lake Champlain was considered a linkage waterway because boats would go from there into waterways located within the High Peaks Network.

Ms. DeBolt apprised the following considerations were developed based upon the data that was complied:

1) Invasion spread hub waterways;
2) Linkage waterways;
3) Waterways invaded by small-bodied organisms;
4) Waterways invaded by plants only;
5) Priority uninvaded waterways.

The actions developed based upon the primary considerations, Ms. DeBolt stated, were inspect upon entry, decontaminate upon entry, inspect upon exit and decontaminate upon exit. She explained an invasion spread hub was a waterway infected with invasive species that had high outgoing traffic, especially to waterways with no invasive species. She pointed out they had also developed a table to depict different levels of prevention. She said platinum was the ideal plan to be enacted if unlimited resources were available. She said the gold, silver and bronze levels took into consideration what type of action could be completed if less resources were available.

Ms. DeBolt advised 13 waterways located in the Adirondack Region were recommended for boat launch steward inspections and boat decontamination stations. She said Lake Champlain, Great Sacandaga Lake, Lake George, Saratoga Lake, Chateaugay Lake, Fourth Lake, Lake Flower and Second Pond were all classified as waterways that served as an invasion spread hub. She stated

Lake Champlain, Long Lake and Tupper Lake were branded linkage lakes. She pointed out the waterways with aquatic invasive small-bodied organisms were noted on the chart with a ■ next to them.

Mr. Dickinson questioned how many of the 13 waterways listed had lake stewards and Ms. DeBolt replied she was unsure, but was aware a number of them had lake stewards on them. Mr. Dickinson queried why Schroon Lake was not included on the list and she responded it was because the recommendations were based upon the data they had available and not necessarily waterways with steward programs or lake associations.

Mr. Conover pointed out the report did not take into consideration that Fourth Lake was connected to many other waterways, such as Fifth Lake, and that were not included in the report. Ms. DeBolt interjected the report only contained lakes from which they had data available and was meant to be used as a reference on how to prioritize waterbodies. Jane Smith, of the East Shore Schroon Lake Association, pointed out since the programs at Paul Smith's College and Lake George were the longest standing, most of the steward programs that were active today patterned themselves around them. Ms. DeBolt added when all the different data points were combined they were able to look at more than just an individual lake's data points. As an example, she said, prior to the study they were only able to map where boats came from before they entered Lake George; however, she stated, since the data points were combined they could now pinpoint where boats were going after they exited Lake George, as well.

Ms. DeBolt advised she had included a map of the 13 waterways the report recommended for boat launch steward inspections and boat decontamination stations to illustrate how spread out they were in the Adirondack Park. She apprised the following conclusions were made from the report:

1) Prevention is key;
2) Need landscape-level coordination and approaches;
3) Inspection and decontamination were effective tools;
4) Have guidance on what to do (Hand removal for plants, Decon for animals, Entry and/or exit);
5) Have guidance on where to do it (invasion spread hubs, waterways with small-bodied organisms, etc.).

The recommendations, Ms. DeBolt apprised, were based upon the Adirondack Regions as a larger scale model rather than a plan for a specific waterway. She said the report suggested boat decontamination stations be located at all waterways pinpointed as spread hubs and/or linkage. She added the report also proposed placing decontamination stations at all of the sub-network locations, as well as locations with small-bodied organisms. Waterbodies contaminated with plants only, Ms. DeBolt said, should have a boat lake steward program in place, as should waterways with no AIS present. She stated the full report was available for review on the LGA's website, as well as on APIPP's website. She encouraged the Committee members to contact her should they have any questions and/or comments regarding the report.

Mr. Conover commended all of the organizations involved with developing the report, as he felt this was the first time a comprehensive layered approach had been developed to address the AIS issue Adirondack-wide, if not on a State-wide basis. He pointed out the report included washing boats as they exited waterways, as well which he believed was just as significant as washing them when they entered to prevent the spread of AIS. He continued, if they were going to have an actual prevention program, he thought some level of mandatory boat washing would be required, as there were several waterways located in Warren County infected with some form of AIS. He reiterated he

felt this report would serve as key to the State-wide initiative for dealing with AIS.

Mr. Dickinson concurred with Mr. Conover that this would be a key report and added it was developed during the correct timeframe, as there were a few mandatory boat inspection programs present in Warren County. He said he felt continuing to review the data collected would assist with establishing future plans. He added because they had the scientific data supporting the mandatory boat inspection program on Lake George he felt the program could expand to other waterbodies state-wide in the future.

Mr. Monroe noted the report supported the notion that decontamination for exiting boats was imperative. He advised the data from the LGPC (Lake George Park Commission) indicated there was excessive capacity at the boat washing stations this time of year; however, he said, there were times during the summer where they saw no activity. He proposed a resolution be drafted requesting that the LGPC agree to wash boats exiting the lake during timeframes when they saw little or no activity from boats entering the lake. He said he felt the County was justified in makeing this request because they had contributed a substantial amount of funds toward the program.

Mr. Dickinson advised that 2/3 of the boats on Lake George entered the lake in the spring and exited in the fall while 1/3 of the boats on the lake were repeat entry. He said he felt as the program grew repeat entry boaters would become more aware that if they had their boat washed upon exiting, they could travel freely to other waterways in Warren County, as the green tag was recognized at the other wash stations located within the County. Mr. Monroe stated, as an example the other day a boat from Lake George with no wash tag was launched on Loon Lake and was planning to travel to Schroon Lake upon exiting Loon Lake. He said had they not washed the boat at their station the AIS from Lake George could have spread to both Loon and Schroon Lakes. He apprised he thought it was unrealistic to believe that wash stations could be located at every waterbody in Warren County; however, he stated, he felt it was feasible to have regional wash stations located on major transportation routes throughout the County and inspectors stationed at launch sites. Mr. Dickinson interjected he believed once wash stations were established along the northway they would become regional stations that were accessible to everyone.

Mr. Conover apprised even if the County and municipalities had to fund the initiative on their own they should do so, as he felt taking no action at all would be a colossal mistake. He continued, he did not want to look back in the future and think about what would have, could have and should have been done.

Mr. Beaty reminded the Committee that Ed Bartholomew, President of the Economic Development Corporation, stated that 2 out of 10 jobs located in Warren County were related in some aspect to the tourism and hospitality industry. He said it was imperative that the AIS issue was dealt with and Warren County be the leader if necessary because it would be detrimental to the economy of the region if the lakes were lost.

Discussion ensued.

Pursuant to further discussion on the matter motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to request that the LGPC agree to wash boats exiting the lake during timeframes when they had the capacity to do so and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 20, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Dickinson thanked Ms. DeBolt and the LGA for their involvement with developing the report, and for taking the time to present it to the Committee members. Walt Lender, Executive Director of the LGA, advised he felt the key takeaway from the report was it was much more cost effective to spend money on prevention of AIS than maintenance and/or efforts. Mr. Dickinson asked Mr. Lender to provide the Committee with a brief synopsis of how the mandatory boat inspection program was being managed on Lake George. Mr. Lender apprised he was unable to provide a full report on the program; however, he said, he had been involved in some of the logistics of the program. He noted the program had been very successful during the first few weeks of the season, as there had been no back-ups, long lines or complaints received from anyone.

With regards to the asian clam eradication efforts, Mr. Lender stated the benthic mats installed in the Glen Burnie portion of Lake George had held up very well. He said the perimeter survey outside of the matting area found no presence of juvenile or live adult clams and only 3 dead adult clams, which was a good sign. He advised the sediment on top of the mats contained no juvenile or adult clams. He apprised now that the survey was completed the mats would be removed today and a post treatment survey would be completed under the mats to determine how successful they were in eradicating the asian clams. He pointed out if they could prove there were no juveniles in the sediment prior to putting the mats down they felt they could eradicate them in certain locations such as Glen Burnie. He stated the information from this location would be utilized to determine the location of the asian clam efforts moving forward. Mr. Dickinson questioned what the perimeter was for the overlapping of the mats and Mr. Lender replied he estimated it to be about 30 feet beyond the known infestations in all directions.

In reference to the milfoil initiative in Lake George, Mr. Lender advised there were two large crews completing hand harvesting of milfoil on Lake George and surveying was being completed on new locations. He said they have identified a few new locations but they were small sparse locations. He stated they were removing large amounts of milfoil from the dense beds.

Mr. Dickinson apprised there was one item on the Agenda listed under Pending Items that needed to be discussed. He said it pertained to the referral to the Legislative & Rules Committee expressing concern with the bid specification requirements that contracted divers be paid the prevailing wage rate of $55 per hour for industrial divers, which was not relevant to the actual work being done. He explained the proposed resolution approved by the Legislative & Rules Committee at their April 29, 2014 meeting was held by the County Attorney; however, he said, he was unsure of the reasoning behind this decision.

Mr. Conover advised he did not feel the hand harvesting and benthic matting work completed by divers warranted a labor rate of $55 per hour. He said if it was determined the organizations completing this work were supposed to be paying the prevailing wage rate it would increase the project costs immensely. Mr. Monroe stated he thought the rates were set before the AIS issue was recognized; therefore, he said, the State did not take this into consideration when the rates were established. He noted he had requested Assemblyman Stec research the matter.

Mr. Monroe stated the issue came to light because the Town of Chester had sent out an RFP (Request for Proposal) for work on Loon Lake that included the prevailing wage rate for the divers. He continued, they received one response from a contractor willing to pay the rate and another response from a contractor with a much lower rate because they did not believe they had to pay the prevailing wage rate. He explained if the work was completed for a municipality the prevailing wage must be paid. He pointed out Mark Schachner, Attorney for the Town of Chester, felt these projects were Municipal Public Works projects; therefore, he said, the prevailing wage rate was relevant. He

said he was aware of other agencies that were not paying the prevailing wage rate and added the issue needed to be resolved before concerns could be brought forth in the future. He pointed out one way around paying the prevailing wage rate was to contract with a not-for-profit agency such as a lake association that was incorporated. He advised he felt further legal analysis was required to resolve the issue.

As there was no further business to come before the Invasive Species Sub-Committee, on motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Beaty, Mr. Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board