

Great Lakes Panel Member Updates

Spring 2025 – Fall 2025

Meeting of the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species

U.S. Federal

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

No update provided.

Contact: Amy McGovern, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 612-713-5109, amy_mcgovern@fws.gov

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Research activities

NOAA GLERL conducted multiple studies in Lake Michigan focused on invasive quagga mussels.

1. Developing underwater vehicle technology for invasive mussel control and monitoring. We conducted our second round of trials to use a tracked underwater vehicle to displace and damage quagga mussels in soft sediments at 45m depth.
2. Sampling mussel veligers frequently to assess growth, timing, and distribution nearshore to offshore. This project is in support of the Lake Michigan 2025 Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative. We were able to collect sufficient veliger material to run preliminary energy density tests.
3. Assessing quagga mussel body condition and reproductive status. This long-term, seasonal monitoring program has identified depth-specific reproductive trends that provide insight into dreissenid mussel distributions.
4. Tracking quagga mussel growth in a long-term field experiment. Results from the first three years indicate inter-annual variation in addition to the expected depth differences in growth.
5. Lake-wide assessments of quagga and zebra mussel body condition and reproductive status in Lake Michigan as a part of the 2025 Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative. The Lake Erie 2024 CSMI quagga mussel length-weight dataset is archived with NCEI (<https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/archive/accession/0301561>) and the Lake Michigan 2025 data should be available in early 2026.

GLERL also has a grass carp project funded under the FY24 Invasive Carp Action Plan. The objective is to conduct individual based modeling of grass carp in Lake St. Clair/Thames River

Recent Publications

Harrow-Lyle, T. J., A. K. Elgin, M. D. Rowe, P. J. Alsip, L. E. Burlakova, A. Y. Karatayev, M. McCusker, R. Valipour, and D. C. Depew. 2025. Developing the first binational dreissenid mussel biomass map for Lake Erie. *Journal of Great Lakes Research* 51:102652. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jglr.2025.102652>

Pothoven, S., and A. K. Elgin. 2025 (Early View). Quagga mussel veliger production, growth, and timing across a depth gradient in southeast Lake Michigan. *Journal of Great Lakes Research*:102705. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jglr.2025.102705>

Keretz, S. S., D. A. Woolnough, N. M. VanTassel, D. T. Powell, G. E. Sanfilippo, A. Wright, T. J. Morris, A. K. Elgin, E. F. Roseman, and D. T. Zanatta. 2025. Freshwater gastropod (Mollusca: Gastropoda) assemblages, habitat, and the first detection of an invasive gastropod species in two large, dreissenid-influenced, connecting rivers. *Journal of Great Lakes Research* 51:102497.

Contact: Ashley Elgin, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 616-414-1059, ashley.elgin@noaa.gov

National Park Service

No update provided.

Contact: Brenda Lafrancois, National Park Service, 715-682-0631, brenda_moraska_lafrancois@nps.gov

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

No update provided.

Contact: Mike Greer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District, 716-879-4229, michael.j.greer@usace.army.mil

U.S. Coast Guard

No update provided.

Contact: Kirk Beckmann | 9th CG District | (216) 902-6050 | kirk.j.beckmann2@uscg.mil

U.S. Forest Service

No update provided.

Contact: Amanda Kunzmann, USDA Forest Service, 414-297-3431, akunzmann@fs.fed.us

U.S. Department of Agriculture-APHIS

No update provided.

Contact: Vacant

U.S. Department of State

No update provided.

Contact: Nadia Sbeih, U.S. Department of State, 202-647-3228, SbeihND@state.gov

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

No update provided.

Contact: Matt Pawlowski, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes National Program Office, 312-886-7834, pawlowski.matthew@epa.gov

U.S. Geological Survey

No update provided.

Contact: Matthew Neilson, U.S. Geological Survey Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Database program, 352-264-3519, mneilson@usgs.gov

State/Provincial

Illinois

No update provided.

Contact: Brian Schoenung, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, 217-558-4581, brian.schoenung@illinois.gov

Indiana

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources continues its efforts to prevent the spread of AIS species throughout the state of Indiana but especially across the Watershed divided between the Mississippi River Basin watershed and the Great Lakes watershed.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources has continued to utilize state and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to provide for the implementation of the state AIS management plan implementation but also over the last few years we also have continued to fight the spread of Starry Stonewort in northeast Indiana and other invasive plants within the Great Lakes Basin. This year we had financial setbacks this year from both the state and federal government. We were only able to treat six lakes for Starry Stonewort from the previous year's encumbrance. Continuing to work on securing funding for the next season

In the past year plus the Indiana DNR has put special emphasis and funding toward a dedicated Invasive Carp program to engage with neighboring states and region partnerships and committees to contribute to better understanding and implementation of control strategies across the drainages.

Along with many other representatives of the AIS programs in the Midwest we continue to be engaged and participating in the following groups: Great Lakes Panel, Mississippi River Basin Panel, the Invasive Mussel Collaborative, Interstate ANS planning group, Indiana Invasive Species Council, regional hydrilla coordination and Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee.

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Michigan

Verbal update provided.

Contact: Ceci Weibert, Michigan DEQ, 517-243-4735, weibertC1@michigan.gov

Minnesota

- Invasive carp: The MN DNR continues to work with partners on a project to design and install a deterrent for invasive carp at Lock and Dam No. 5 on the Mississippi River to protect Minnesota's aquatic habitat through an adaptive management approach.
- Starry Trek surveillance event: The MN DNR partnered with the Minnesota AIS Research Center (MAISRC), University of Minnesota Extension and many counties and local partners on an annual statewide search for new populations of starry stonewort, called "Starry Trek." In 2025, 162 volunteers searched 210 Minnesota waterbodies, including 249 public water accesses. Four new

starry stonewort populations were found and the MN DNR is working to follow up with potential response efforts on those waterbodies.

- Invasive Aquatic Plant Management: Invasive Species Program staff issued 482 permits to manage invasive aquatic plants, and the DNR Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Management Grant Program funded 64 grants, totaling \$400,000.
- Nonnative Phragmites: The MN DNR continued to work with partners throughout the state to implement a coordinated response to nonnative Phragmites (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis*) in Minnesota, which is known to have been present at only 2,618 locations over the last 10 years. In 2025, MN DNR contractors evaluated populations at 1,122 sites prior to the 2025 treatment season. Nonnative Phragmites was not detected at 767 of those sites, with most being locations that had been treated in previous years.
- Signal crayfish: Since the initial capture of 10 signal crayfish (*Pacifasticus leniusculus*) by a commercial minnow harvester in October 2023 in Lake Winona, Douglas County, MN, no additional signal crayfish have been captured during collaborative delineation trapping efforts with the MN DNR, the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) and Douglas County. Analyses conducted by MAISRC on environmental DNA (eDNA) samples showed weak signal crayfish eDNA detections and further eDNA results are pending. The MN DNR is supporting some of this work through a Rapid Response grant through a new funding opportunity approved by the federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force.

Contact: Kelly Pennington, Minnesota DNR, 651-259-5131, kelly.pennington@state.mn.us

New York

Prevention/Education and Outreach:

- This season the watercraft inspection steward program performed more than 218,305 inspections with 7,224 detections of AIS. Once again Eurasian watermilfoil, curly leaf pondweed, and zebra mussels were the most frequently found species. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) participated in both the Great Lakes and Northeast AIS Landing Blitz from June 30th to July 13th.
- Monitoring and Detections:
- The 2025 aquatic plant survey of the Croton River was completed. Two hydrilla plants (*Hydrilla verticillata*) were found and removed.
- Hydrilla has been found in previously managed locations: Green Lake, Hickory Lake, and parts of the Erie Canal where hydrilla has not been surveyed for 5 years.
- The hydrilla patch found near the mouth of the Owego Creek (Upper Susquehanna River) has increased in size from 100 sq ft to 1000 sq ft.
- NYDEC continue to receive reports about scattered populations of water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) and water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) across the state.
- First report of *Salvinia minima* in Western NY
- Invasion front monitoring of Round Goby within the Champlain Canal is ongoing
- Invasion front monitoring for northern snakehead in the Delaware River Basin and Delaware and Hudson Canal is ongoing.
- Marbled Crayfish were detected in a New York City Park

Management:

- Water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) was successfully hand removed from the sole known location in the United States (Putnam County, NY). Monitoring of this site will continue and any additional plants will be removed.
- Hydrilla control projects continued at Niagara River (USACE), Erie Canal/Tonawanda Creek (NYSDEC/USACE) in Erie/Niagara Counties, and at multiple locations in Cayuga Lake in Cayuga, Seneca, and Tompkins Counties (USACE/NYSDEC).
- The third hydrilla management season on Lake Sebago in Rockland County's Harriman State Park will be completed by the end of October.

Research:

Most recent team publication: Haws A, Marino J, O'Neill M, Dean J, Pearson S, McGlynn C (2025) Benefits of standardized surveys and data centralization: a case study using New York's Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Application (WISPA). *Management of Biological Invasions* 16(3): 725–747, <https://doi.org/10.3391/mbi.2025.16.3.08>

- NYSDEC is currently analyzing the long-term data from Croton River and Hudson River aquatic plant surveys to assess changes in native plant communities post-management.
- NYSDEC completed the pilot season of study of zoochorous transport and spread of aquatic invasive plants by waterfowl
- NYSDEC is working with NYS Department of Health and University of Georgia to characterize the cyanobacteria *Aetokthonos hydrillicola* that has been found in New York. An MS has been accepted and will be published within the next year.
- NYSDEC completed surveys to develop a baseline for fish and invertebrate communities in the Champlain Canal/ Upper Hudson River prior to a potential Round Goby Invasion. Additional plant and invertebrate collections are being used to describe the existing food web with stable isotope analyses.

Restoration

- Pilot efforts to restore *Vallisneria americana* in the mouth of the Croton River were successful this season along with efforts to restore *Vallisneria americana* and other native species to the Erie Canal.
- The Long Island-Metro AIS Task Force Restoration Working Group will be piloting the propagation and installation of native plants into the Peconic River as the next steps for post-management of aquatic invasive plants in the Peconic River, Suffolk County, NY

Regulatory

- Work on an updated NYS AIS Management Plan has begun
- The NYS Invasive Species Advisory Committee and the Invasive Species Council are working on reviewing species risk assessments and proposing species for listing as the initial steps to update NYS Part 575 Prohibited and Regulated Species

Contact: Catherine McGlynn, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 518-408-0436, catherine.mcglynn@dec.ny.gov

Ohio

- Continued following the Lake Erie Grass Carp Adaptive Response Strategy 2024-2028 with the deployment of multiple Grass Carp Strike Teams through the University of Toledo and USFWS dedicated to the eradication of Grass Carp from the western basin of Lake Erie. Over 1,200 adult Grass Carp have been removed to date. We continue to track tagged Grass Carp with the GLATOS system and real-time receivers, and we are working through the University of Toledo to determine Grass Carp catchability and population size. Partners also include Michigan DNR, GLFC, USFWS, and USGS.
- Continue closure efforts for the two medium risk Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study connections in Ohio at the Ohio Erie Canal and Little Killbuck Creek 1) The USACE completed the closure of the Ohio Erie Canal connection in March 2020 and ODNR is maintaining the deterrents; 2) Phase 1 construction for the Little Killbuck Creek closure was completed in October 2025 and we are working Phase II.
- We continue the surveillance of Ohio's bait supply chain to determine if AIS, including Bighead and Silver Carp, are being transported through the bait trade. To date, no high-risk AIS has been detected. We are also working with the pet trade to ensure that invasive crayfish are not being sold.
- Continue to work with Cleveland MetroParks on invasive plant EDRR in the Lake Erie watershed. Partnering with ODNR Parks and USACE on control efforts on Hydrilla just outside the Lake Erie basin at Pymatuning Lake and Mosquito Creek Lake.
- Continue the AIS outreach campaign through Wildlife Forever to target anglers moving bait. This outreach program includes print media and items for distribution at events with the slogan "Trash Unused Bait".
- In partnership with Ohio Sea Grant, The Ohio State University, and Cleveland Metroparks, completed the second addition of the Ohio Field Guide to Aquatic Invasive Species: https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/ohiodnr.gov/documents/wildlife/fish-management/OSU_AIS_FieldGuide_Web.pdf
- Participated in the following groups: Great Lakes Panel, Ohio Aquatic Invasive Species Committee, Grass Carp Advisory Committee, and Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee.

Contact: John Navarro, Ohio DNR Division of Wildlife, 614-265-6346, john.navarro@dnr.state.oh.us

Ontario

No update provided.

Contact: Francine MacDonald, Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, 705-755-5136, Francine.macdonald@ontario.ca

Pennsylvania

No update provided.

Contact: Jim Grazio, Pennsylvania DEP, 814-217-9636, jagrazio@pa.gov

Québec

No update provided.

Contact: Annick Drouin, Québec Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, 418-654-6984
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Wisconsin

Verbal update provided.

Contact: Amy Kretlow, Wisconsin DNR, 920-838-2597, Amy.Kretlow@Wisconsin.gov

Regional/Binational

International Joint Commission

No update provided.

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Great Lakes Fishery Commission

No update provided.

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Great Lakes Commission

No update provided.

Contact: Erika Jensen, Great Lakes Commission, 734-971-9135, ejensen@glc.org

Canadian Federal

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

No update provided.

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Transport Canada

No update provided.

Contact: Vacant

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

United States

No update provided.

Contact: Vacant

Canada

No update provided.

Contact: Vacant

Environmental/User Groups

The Nature Conservancy

No update provided.

Contact: Lindsay Chadderton, The Nature Conservancy, 574-631-4992, Ichadderton@tnc.org

National Wildlife Federation

No update provided.

Contact: Marc Smith, National Wildlife Federation, 734-887-7116, msmith@nwf.org

Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

No update provided.

Contact: Brook Schryer, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, 705-748-6324 ext. 227, brook_schryer@ofah.org

Tribal Authorities**Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission**

No update provided.

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Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority

No update provided.

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PRIVATE/COMMERCIAL**Lake Carriers' Association**

No update provided.

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University/Research**Great Lakes Sea Grant Network-Research and Extension**

No update provided.

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Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center

No update provided.

Contact: Dan Larkin, Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, 612-626-1412, djlarkin@umn.edu

Invasive Species Centre

No update provided .

Contact: Rebecca D’Orazio, Invasive Species Centre, rdorazio@invasivespeciescentre.ca

At-Large

Doug Jensen – Minnesota DNR

Management/Control:

- DNR’s St. Louis River Estuary Invasive Species Technical Team met to discuss progress on field work completed contractors in August to control terrestrial invasive species and Eurasian watermilfoil in the Estuary. Nearly 1000 lbs of milfoil were removed this year. Species found include: curlyleaf pondweed, purple loosestrife, hybrid cattail, reed canary grass, common tansy, Japanese barberry, invasive phragmites (small amount) and mature buckthorn. Site stewardship planning is on-going. Surveys will be conducted for curlyleaf pondweed and a newer invader, yellow iris in 2026.

Watercraft Inspection:

- This season, DNR trained a total of 858 Level 1 which included 202 Level 2 inspectors, which will likely again be the most in the nation!

Training:

- In September, DNR supported and spoke at a *Crayfish Monitoring and ID Workshop* hosted by Michigan State University and IL-IN Sea Grant in Lanesboro.

Coordination:

- From 2020 to 2024, DNR reported 140+ activities, of which 40+ were related to invasive species management, in support of the Lake Superior Lakewide Action and Management Plan (LaMP) Priority Actions.
- DNR joined a National Golden Mussel Work Group to plan responses to the new and rapidly spreading infestation in CA.
- In September, several DNR staff attended (in-person and online) a joint two-day meeting of the Mississippi Regional Basin Panel and Western Regional Panel on ANS in Lawrence, KS.
- In September, MAISRC held its annual Research Showcase.
- Earlier this month, three DNR staff present talks and a poster at NAISMA Conference on model approaches to AIS outreach, facts and fallacies about AIS, jumping worm regulatory update, and a new invader, prickly waterlily.

Outreach:

- From July through November, DNR teamed partners to promote AIS prevention at five events including the Minnesota State Fair, which featured an invasive species booth and interactive game, *Muck Hunt*, in the DNR building, which educated thousands of visitors about terrestrial and aquatic invasive species prevention.

Contact: Doug Jensen, Minnesota DNR, 218-590-7164, doug.jensen@state.mn.us

Great Lakes Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation

No update provided.

Contact: Anthony Fisher, Deputy Administrator, 202-366-0105, Anthony.Fisher@dot.gov

Matt Santo – 1854 Treaty Authority

Verbal update provided.

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Wildlife Forever

No update provided

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Wisconsin Sea Grant

No update provided.

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Alliance for the Great Lakes

No update provided.

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Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

No update provided.

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