Eastern Invasives Management Network
Workshop # 3, March 2003

Adirondacks, NY

1) What conditions would have to prevail to allow you to reduce (or maintain) the invasive species threat rating (s) on your conservation area to MEDIUM or LOW. Use condition statements to form objectives for your conservation area and where possible state them in quantitative terms. For invasive species threats currently rated as VERY HIGH, state the conditions that would have to prevail in order for it to be rated one level lower.

3) Identify 3 to 5 strategies that will allow you to achieve the objective(s) you identified in question 1.

To better grasp the depth and enormity of our strategic scale, the interior Core Conservation Area and Border Conservation Areas encompass 10 Ecological Planning Units (EPU). These are the NE Adirondack Lowlands, Sable Highlands, Northwest Flow, SW Adirondack Foothills, Western Adirondack Sandplains, SE Adirondack Foothills, Central Adirondack Mountains, Adirondack High Peaks, North Central Lowlands and the Adirondack Lakes. Within each EPU are multiple Conservation Targets, for example Large, Old Growth Matrix Forest, Peatlands, Low Elevation Rivers, Acidic Lake Complexes, Wetlands, Loons, etc.

Within the existing 139 roadside infestations documented, we do rate some to be VERY HIGH, and these are large infestations that continue to expand beyond our grasp of prescribed controls. As time equates to abundance, these infestations stand to threaten multiple conservation targets, and link the interior Adirondack Core Conservation Area with the pervasive infestations in the Border Conservation Area. The kingpins of these linkages being riparian corridors such as the Saranac River's Purple loosestrife and the East Branch Au Sable River's Japanese knotweed infestations. Management partners are somewhat "hand-cuffed" given the Park's overlying jurisdictional boundaries and the complexity of interwoven public and private lands and social and economic issues. These limiting conditions have only enabled repeated rounds of physical or manual control methodologies at multiple sites. (Just recently in 2002, the Adirondack Park Agency issued a General Permit that will allow surgical applications of Roundup or Rodeo in or within 100' of Designated Wetlands)

Another limiting condition is our ability to better inventory County roads and back-country trails, given the abbreviated seasonal commitment due to budgetary and personnel constraints. Yet another, and critical, limiting condition is our ability to monitor control work performed at existing sites. Before we can best implement strategies for abating existing – and future - invasive plant threats, we need to thoroughly reassess all of our limiting conditions for conservation action and leverage of abatement, monitoring and measuring work through partners via a much-improved and far-reaching Strategies and Objectives Framework. Our goals, strategies and objectives follow and should address our strategy and abatement framework needs.

Adirondack Invasive Plant Monitoring Program – AIPMP

Mission Statement: The AIPMP mission is to document invasive plant distributions, promote integrated plant management strategies, and build consensus for resource protection in the Park and through partnerships with Adirondack residents and institutions.

Vision: The AIPMP will coordinate monitoring and management activities designed to prevent, and where possible, mitigate the loss of native biodiversity due to infestations of invasive plants in the Adirondack Park. The AIPMP will remain a "grassroots" effort to offset the ecological, social and economic costs of invasive species infestations, with a commitment to the stewardship interests of Adirondack communities as a core program value.

Program Goals for AIPMP and the designated APWMA

1) Prevent new invasive plant infestations in biologically intact habitat and reduce the extent of existing infestations elsewhere.

2) Cultivate stewardship values and practices among residents of the Adirondack park to conserve biodiversity and mitigate impacts of invasive plant species.

3) Facilitate collaboration and problem solving among environmental practitioners, local governments and the public to control/prevent the spread of invasive plants using sound regulatory, planning and management practices.

Summary of Strategies:

The following strategies are listed in order of priority.

1) Document and map distributions of invasive plants in the Adirondack Park Weed Management Area – APWMA – and disseminate this information for use by professionals and the public alike.

2) Prevent new invasive plant infestations and prioritize existing sites for eradication, reduction and/or containment actions.

3) Increase awareness of invasive plant issues and support for monitoring and control activities within land management agencies and among the public through education and outreach.

4) Support research for Integrated Weed Management of invasive species and their impacts.

5) Support development of parallel programs for watershed stewardship and capacity-building among stakeholders to promote invasive plant management within the APWMA.

Strategies and Objectives

Strategy: Document and map distributions of invasive plants in the APWMA and disseminate this information for use by professionals and the public alike.

Objective 1: Maintain a Program Coordinator to facilitate plant monitoring activities, compile and interpret monitoring data and ensure timely distribution of results. Hire a seasonal assistant(s) to support the Coordinator during the monitoring season.

Objective 2: Develop and support a volunteer terrestrial invasive plant monitoring program that incorporates roadside as well as back-country surveys.

Objective 3: Expand the aquatic volunteer monitoring program to include additional waters and complete those that have received partial surveys.

Objective 4: Integrate terrestrial and aquatic species monitoring data within a single digital database shell to facilitate consistent data management and quality control.

Objective 5: Maintain the AIPMP website and update invasive species distribution maps on an ongoing basis.

Strategy: Prevent new invasive plant infestations and prioritize existing sites for eradication, reduction and/or containment actions.

Objective1: Continue plant control activities on priority infestations.

Objective2: Establish protocol for invasive plant control activities on State Lands.

(example task: Streamline regulatory procedures between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Adirondack Park Agency to enable AIPMP partners to control invasive plants outside of DOT right-of-ways)

Objective3: Facilitate plant management activities implemented by Adirondack communities.

Objective 4: Establish or support rapid response efforts to remove new invasive plant infestations.

Strategy: Increase awareness of invasive plant issues and support for monitoring and control activities within land management agencies and among the public through education and outreach.

Objective1: Inform specific user groups (boaters, anglers, etc.) of invasive species impacts and how to prevent them.

Objective 2: Educate local government officials and employees about invasive species issues.

(example task): Provide training to Department of Public Works and Town Parks and Recreation personnel in Best Management Practices for invasive species management.

Objective3: Involve educational institutions in raising awareness and promoting stewardship.

Objective4: Communicate invasive species concerns to business interests.

Strategy: Support Research for Integrated Weed Management of Invasive Species and Their Impacts.

Objective 1: Quantify plant community response at AIPMP invasive plant control sites.

(example task): Establish long-term study plots at invasive plant control sites along roadsides to quantify species-to-community responses subsequent to physical and chemical treatments. Current treatments include: hand-pulling, stem cutting, seed-head harvesting, biocontrol, and spot herbicide treatments. Use results to guide restoration efforts.

Objective2: Evaluate the direct and indirect economic impacts caused by invasive plant infestations.

Objective3: Facilitate academic research and outreach on invasive species ecology and Integrated Weed Management within the Border Conservation Area (BCA)

(example task): Expand research partnerships with Paul Smiths College, Cornell University, SUNY Plattsburgh and the Darrin Freshwater Institute to assess IWM techniques that include the use of herbivorous insects in terrestrial and aquatic settings.

Strategy: Support development of parallel programs for watershed stewardship and capacity-building among stakeholders to promote invasive plant management within the APWMA.

Objective1: Provide expertise and program review to the Adirondack Research Consortium in their development of an Adirondack Park Watershed Alliance (APWPA)

Objective2: Coordinate program development with the NY State Invasive Plant Council, NY State Fish and Wildlife and NY State Sea Grant.

2) Since invasive species can move into your conservation area from outside you probably need to consider conditions in upstream areas, upwind areas or a buffer zone surrounding it. What area(s) beyond the bounds of your conservation area do you believe should be included when assessing invasive species threats?

We are thinking about multiple strategies within the Border Conservation Area to thwart or reduce the importation of invasive plants into the interior of the Park. Some elevated education & awareness efforts are already in place. NY State DEC and NY State DOT are being more

mindful of the integrity of fill materials and/or spoils that are brought into the Park. NY State DEC has increased signage and installed some power wash stations at various DEC lake campgrounds around the periphery of the Park where invasive aquatic species are know to exist. Adirondack Nature Conservancy and the SCA Americorps are working in concert to provide education & outreach to the countless visitors at DEC campgrounds in the Old Forge/Eagle Bay/Inlet "Garlic mustard beltway" as we affectionately call it. This dense series of DEC campgrounds in the southwest interior of the Park is a haven for importation of Garlic mustard, and Japanese knotweed given the residential and commercial development and subsequent landscape alterations just outside of the southwest Park boundaries.

4) Identify at least one way that you could measure (monitor) progress towards the objectives you identified in question 1. Be as specific as you can about the species, factor, or indicator to be monitored and the kind of data (e.g. cover, density, concentration, total area covered, etc) to be gathered.

Ironically, we hope to recruit and train the many members of the Adirondack Mountain Club to inventory first and second order tributaries of the East Branch Au Sable River for any and all obscure infestations of Japanese knotweed. This demonic plant has just started showing up (across the street from our office!) within the riparian corridors of the Au Sable and Gulf Brook. Densities may be measured as plants/clumps per meter or larger pervasive stands measured in sq. feet as was done on the Bouquet River with our partners the Bouquet River Association. These stands were also mapped via GPS NAD 83 coordinates. Determination of whether public or private property is the next objective, then landowner cultivation. Request, site inspection of suspect infestation and issuance of Adirondack Park Agency General Permit is mandatory before control methods can be implemented. Monitoring the subsequent growth's density after control(s) are implemented would be a natural part of the site-specific audit.