



NYS DEC
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-1016
www.dec.ny.gov

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Eliot Spitzer, Governor

Alexander B. Grannis, Commissioner

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Contact: Yancey Roy

(518) 402-8000

\$1.4 MILLION EARMARKED TO BATTLE MILFOIL, PHRAGMITES AND OTHER AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

DEC Grants to Finance Local Projects to Eradicate Troublesome Invaders

More than 30 municipalities and organizations will receive a total of \$1.4 million to help wipe out infestations of non-native aquatic species across the state, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Pete Grannis announced today. The Aquatic Invasive Species Eradication grants will be used by recipients to help fight zebra mussels, water chestnuts, round goby, Eurasian watermilfoil, purple loosestrife, and phragmites, and other invasive threats to New York's ecosystems.

"Aquatic invasive species, particularly plants, have a wide range of environmental, recreational and economic impacts - they spread rapidly, congest water ways, and disrupt native fish populations," Grannis said. "Once infested by invasives, lakes and rivers can become unusable, and the negative impacts boating, fishing and swimming can adversely affect local economies that are dependant on these waterbodies. These grants will help local communities and environmental groups in their work with DEC to actively address this important issue."

Invasive species are non-native and can cause harm to ecosystems, food supplies, landscaping, industry and infrastructure. Invasive species are a threat to New York's biodiversity, second only to habitat loss. Invasives come from around the world and the rate of invasion is rising along with the increase in international trade that accompanies globalization.

In April 2007, Grannis announced the availability of state grants to municipalities and not-for-profit corporations for projects that help eliminate infestations of aquatic invasive species. State funds can be used to pay for up to one half of the total costs of a selected eradication project. Grants for terrestrial invasive species eradication programs will be awarded separately in early 2008.

For the aquatic invasive species grants, DEC received applications seeking almost \$2.1 million. A competitive evaluation process ranked and prioritized the proposals for the \$1.4 million in available funds. Individual grants were awarded for a minimum of \$7,500 and maximum of \$100,000. The projects selected were viewed to have the best potential for achieving long-term reductions in the presence of invasive species.

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The grant proposals selected for funding include:

Cayuga, Cortland, and Onondaga, Counties:

Skaneateles Lake Milfoil Eradication Corp - \$100,000: to eradicate 10 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Skaneateles Lake.

Owasco Flats Nature Reserve - \$55,000: to eradicate Japanese knotweed and Eurasian watermilfoil in the Owasco Inlet and adjacent channels.

Columbia County:

Taconic Shores Property Owners Association - \$100,000: to eradicate 94 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil and water chestnut from Robinson Pond.

Dutchess County:

Eastern New York Chapter of The Nature Conservancy - \$30,533: to eradicate 94 acres of purple loosestrife and Phragmites (common reeds) from calcareous wetlands in Dutchess County.

Erie County:

City of Buffalo - \$18,036: to eradicate Japanese knotweed, Phragmites, and purple loosestrife from Squaw Island wetlands.

Essex County:

Town of Crown Point - \$55,000: to eradicate 7 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Eagle Lake.

Paradox Lake Association - \$31,000: to eradicate 5 acres of purple loosestrife from wetlands adjacent to the eastern basin of Paradox Lake.

Town of Minerva - \$13,480: to eradicate 8 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Minerva Lake.

Franklin County:

Upper Saranac Lake Foundation - \$100,000: to continue their lake-wide Eurasian watermilfoil eradication program in Upper Saranac Lake.

The Adirondack Institute - \$42,896: to eradicate 1 acre of Eurasian watermilfoil in Follensby Clear Pond.

The Adirondack Institute - \$41,332: to eradicate 14 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Horseshoe Pond.

Mountain View Association, Inc. - \$49,197: to eradicate 19 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Mountain View Lake.

Lake Colby Association - \$30,000: to eradicate 35 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Lake Colby.

Fulton County:

Town of Caroga - \$25,055: to eradicate 75 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil from East and West Caroga Lakes.

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Hamilton County:

Town of Inlet - \$82,168: to eradicate 71 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Upper 7th Lake.

Orange County:

Village of Florida - \$48,830: to eradicate 120 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil and curly-leaf pondweed in Glenmere Lake.

City of Newburgh - \$40,148: to eradicate 110 acres of curly-leaf pondweed in Browns Pond.

Village of Monroe - \$31,450: to eradicate 11 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil, water chestnut, and curly-leaf pondweed from Monroe Mill Ponds.

Otsego County:

SUNY Research Foundation - \$28,139: to eradicate 40 acres of purple loosestrife and water chestnut from a wetland near Oneonta.

Otsego County - \$15,600: to eradicate 5 acres of water chestnut from Goodyear Lake.

Rockland County:

Friends of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission - \$37,500: to eradicate 10 acres of Phragmites from the Iona Island tidal marshes.

Schuyler County:

Schuyler County - \$100,000: to eradicate 200 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Waneta Lake.

Schuyler County - \$100,000: to eradicate 379 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Lamoka Lake and Mill Pond.

Suffolk County:

Marion Lake Restoration Committee, Inc. - \$100,000: to eradicate 1.5 acres of Phragmites in Marion Lake.

Ducks Unlimited - \$43,232: to eradicate 17 acres of Phragmites in the tidal reaches of the Carmans River.

Town of Southold - \$30,000: to eradicate 4 acres of Phragmites from Pipes Cove.

Village of Patchogue - \$17,989: to introduce triploid grass carp to Patchogue Lake to eradicate curly-leaf pondweed.

Suffolk County - \$7,500: to eradicate 1.5 acres of Japanese knotweed at Quogue Wildlife Refuge.

Tompkins County:

Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District - \$10,210: to eradicate Japanese knotweed at the Barrile Stream Restoration Project.

Ulster County:

Scenic Hudson Land Trust - \$14,000: to eradicate Japanese knotweed from the Esopus Meadows Preserve.

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Washington County:

Lake Lauderdale Improvement Association - \$11,070: to eradicate 35 acres of Eurasian watermilfoil in Lake Lauderdale/Schoolhouse Pond.

The invasive species eradication grant program is just one of the first among many initiatives of the new Invasive Species Council, which was established in law by Governor Spitzer earlier this year. The Invasive Species Council's first role will be to spearhead the attack on invasive species statewide by implementing the recommendations of the Invasive Species Task Force (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/6989.html>), which include organizing and funding regional partnerships for invasive species management, creating an invasive species research center, developing an invasive species database, and establishing an education and outreach program.

Grant awardees will still need to obtain any necessary State or Federal permits and complete review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), if required, in order to obtain reimbursement. For additional information, please call the DEC at (518) 402-8970 or visit the DEC's Aquatic Invasive Species Eradication Grant Program web page at: www.dec.ny.gov/animals/32861.html.

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