

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Funding Boosts Invasive Species Program

KEENE VALLEY, NY The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) received a private foundation grant of \$170,000 for invasive species prevention and control in 2011. One of the primary uses of funds will be to pilot a terrestrial regional response team, a four person seasonal crew that will manage terrestrial invasive plants in priority areas across the Adirondack region. APIPP also directed funds to lend aid to three other projects including the Town of Inlet's Regional Inlet Invasive Plant Program to control Japanese knotweed in various communities, Paul Smith's College Watershed Stewardship Program to intercept aquatic invasive species at boat launches and the Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force to control the first infestation of Asian Clam detected in the Adirondack Park.

"I have been impressed with APIPP's leadership on the problem of invasive species and with the effectiveness of the program since its inception. APIPP has been out in front on an issue that, left unchecked, can become impossible to contain. The Adirondack region is too unique to let that happen here," said Alexander Gilchrist, one of the Foundation's Board of Directors.

APIPP is a partnership initiated more than a decade ago to bridge jurisdictional boundaries and coordinate groups to implement a park-wide invasive species program to prevent the further introduction, spread and negative impact of invasives. Many lands and waters in the Adirondack region remain free of invasive plants, like Japanese knotweed, and aquatic invasive species, such as zebra mussel. Invading plants and animals leave a wake of economic and environmental harm in their path and at times cause irreparable damage, plaguing landowners, resource managers and municipal leaders alike.

At least 80 waters in the Adirondack Park have one or more aquatic invasive species, but more than 220 waters surveyed by APIPP volunteers remain free of invasives. The recent wave of local aquatic species transport laws passed or under consideration by at least seven Village and Town boards fuels attention to the need for prevention. Once invasives are introduced, controls are costly, and, at times, not even an option – for instance, no control methods exist for the spiny waterflea, an invasive zooplankton that degrades fisheries.

With this new Foundation support, APIPP is better able to advance priority projects with local partners and leverage funding needed in the region. "We are extremely grateful for this investment in the Adirondacks and our work. One of APIPP's early goals was to formalize an early detection rapid response network. We established a volunteer detection network but lacked the capacity to respond. In 2004 we identified the need for seasonal crews that could respond swiftly to control new infestations when the chance for successful eradication is high. It is exciting to know that the response team strategy will be realized this summer and also that we will be able to support other important efforts in the region." said Hilary Smith, Director of the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program.

Doug Johnson from the Regional Inlet Invasive Plant Program said, "Foundation funding passed through the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program will allow us to complete treatment of dozens of previously treated Japanese knotweed sites and treat

many new sites in Inlet, Town of Webb, Blue Mountain Lake and Indian Lake. We already have invasive plant coordinators to help identify sites and get permissions from property owners in new areas including Long Lake, North River and North Creek. The funds will let us treat knotweed in many sensitive areas and come closer to the goal of eradicating knotweed in the Adirondacks.”

Dr. Eric Holmlund, Director of Paul Smith’s College Watershed Stewardship Program, said, “The support we received will allow us to post boat ramp stewards at the State boat launch on Lake Flower and at other critical locations in the north central Adirondack Park. We have had ongoing concern about the Saranac Lake chain serving as a source of aquatic invasive species to other lakes in the region. This funding allows us to reach out to the public at new locations and to perform critical boat inspections at ramps that access infested waterways. We greatly appreciate the recognition from the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program with generous support by the Foundation.”

Foundation funding adds to other grant funding received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. APIPP and Paul Smith’s College collaborated on a proposal to expand the Adirondack Watershed Stewardship Program and initiate an aquatic regional response team in the western Adirondacks in 2011.

The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program is a partnership among the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, NYS Adirondack Park Agency, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Department of Transportation, more than 30 cooperating organizations and hundreds of volunteers. Its mission is to protect the Adirondack region from the negative impacts of non-native invasive species. Funding for APIPP is provided by the Environmental Protection Fund and administered by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Additional information is available online at www.adkinvasives.com.

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