

Pennsylvania ANS Management Program

FINAL Report for Fiscal Year 2019 Funding

ANS 2019 (F20AP00212)

Grant Period: July 1, 2020 – September 30, 2022

Reporting Period: October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

Cooperative Agreement #4100086809 – Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan Implementation - Pennsylvania 2019

1.0 Summary

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has contracted with Penn State University/ Pennsylvania Sea Grant to support implementation of the Pennsylvania AIS Management Plan.

Funding through this grant was used for three tasks:

- 1) Pennsylvania Sea Grant will participate in the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council, which meets approximately four times per year, and brings together representatives from agencies, non-governmental organizations, and industry to communicate and coordinate on invasive species issues in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Sea Grant will participate in two regional AIS panels – the Great Lakes and Mid-Atlantic - to coordinate with regional partners, identify AIS efforts that could be replicated in Pennsylvania, and share examples from Pennsylvania. Each Panel meets twice per year or as needed. Pennsylvania Sea Grant will participate in national forums when possible, such as ANS Task Force meetings, the International Conference on AIS, or other regional or national conferences, as they also provide opportunities to collaborate and identify AIS efforts from other locations that would be beneficial to Pennsylvania and a chance to highlight Pennsylvania activities that may be applicable elsewhere.
- 2) Pennsylvania Sea Grant will work with Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council members and other stakeholders (such as watershed associations, angling groups, boating organizations, water gardeners, field staff and researchers) to conduct programs and develop outreach materials to prevent the AIS introduction and spread. PASG will conduct 3-4 presentations (guest talks, seminars, meetings, or staffing events) on AIS prevention. A December 2009 Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission survey of anglers in Pennsylvania found that anglers felt that signs at boat launches; signs at bait and tackle shops or sporting goods stores; and brochures, species identification cards or factsheets are extremely effective ways for anglers to receive information that could actually change how they handle their boat and gear. These efforts will be coordinated with state agencies and organizations to implement a consistent, statewide message based on the national campaigns “Stop

Aquatic Hitchhikers” and “Habitattitude”, so that anyone visiting a water body in Pennsylvania will be better able to understand, remember, and act upon the message to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS in Pennsylvania.

- 3) Pennsylvania Sea Grant will work with Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission staff, Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council members, and other stakeholders (such as watershed associations, angling groups, boating organizations, water gardeners, field staff and researchers) to develop a control plan for round gobies in northwest Pennsylvania, specifically focusing on the French Creek watershed and Lake LeBoeuf, near the town of Waterford in Erie County. PASG will facilitate 1-2 in person meetings, to bring together scientists, natural resource agency staff, and other experts to provide expertise in the French Creek watershed and round goby control and management to identify possible options for controlling round gobies, including considering impacts to native species. Webinars and virtual meetings may also be used as a tool to bring key stakeholders together, and Pennsylvania Sea Grant will also consider sharing results at local, regional and/or national AIS meetings as timing and funding allow. Round goby were first found in Lake LeBoeuf in 2014, and have since spread downstream into French Creek, which is considered a critically-important stream due to its ecologically-intact fishery and low level of human disturbance.

2.0 Major Accomplishments

(P) To support statewide and regional AIS planning efforts, PASG staff participated in the following state and regional AIS meetings:

PISC quarterly meetings (virtual): March 9, 2021, June 8, 2021, September 7, 2021. Served on legislative, grant, and PRISM subcommittees.

Mid Atlantic AIS Panel Meeting (virtual): April 29, 2021.

Great Lakes AIS Panel Meeting (virtual): June 15-17, 2021, and October 26-27, 2021

(EO) PASG gave presentations and staffed exhibits targeting boaters, anglers, water gardeners, and other recreational water users to increase their awareness about the AIS issue and provide information on the steps they can take to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS (3-4 presentations):

April 30, 2021 – gave presentation on AIS and stopping aquatic hitchhikers on the Millcreek Township Government Channel, Millcreek Township, Pennsylvania. Approximately 20 people viewed the presentation.

July 24, 2021 – staffed exhibit on AIS issues and prevention at the Beer Not on the Bay outreach event in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 150 people interacted with the exhibit materials.

August 10, 2021 – gave presentation on AIS issues and prevention at the Pennsylvania Steelhead Association meeting in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 35 people attended the presentation.

(CM) PASG worked with Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission staff, Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council members, and other stakeholders (such as watershed associations, angling groups, boating organizations, water gardeners, field staff and researchers) to develop a control plan for round gobies in northwest Pennsylvania, specifically focusing on the French Creek watershed and Lake LeBoeuf, near the town of Waterford in Erie County. PASG will facilitate 1-2 in person meetings, to bring together scientists, natural resource agency staff, and other experts to provide expertise in the French Creek watershed and round goby control and management to identify possible options for controlling round gobies, including considering impacts to native species. Webinars and virtual meetings may also be used as a tool to bring key stakeholders together, and Pennsylvania Sea Grant will also consider sharing results at local, regional and/or national AIS meetings as timing and funding allow.

Participated in the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council workgroup on round gobies, which met on January 21, 2021, April 22, 2021, June 18, 2021, July 22, 2021, October 28, 2021, January 27, 2022, April 28, 2022, and July 29, 2022.

Facilitated meetings with key scientists and resource agency staff to compile expertise on the French Creek watershed and round goby control and management options. Meetings were held via phone or webinar due to challenges with meeting in person and scheduling:

- February 11, 2022 – Jim Grazio, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- February 16, 2022 – Mary Walsh, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
- February 17, 2022 – Sean Hartzell and Doug Fischer, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- February 25, 2022 – Casey Bradshaw Wilson, Allegheny College
- March 11, 2022 – David Janetski and Darby Byington, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Shared draft control plan with Sean Hartzell and Doug Fischer, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, on September 30, 2022. The plan will continue to be shared with additional scientists and resource agency staff (Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, academic institutions, etc.) to gather and incorporate their input. The control plan will continue to be a working document, with opportunities to update and revise it, especially over the next year as we also work on a related round goby monitoring plan.

3.0 Program Expenditures

Invoice will be submitted separately.

¹ **P = Prevention; DM = Detection & Monitoring; CM = Control & Management; EO = Education & Outreach; R = Research**