

Pennsylvania ANS Management Program

Final Report to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Fiscal Year 2022 Funding

ANS 2022 – F22AP03279

Grant Period: December 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024

Reporting Period: December 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024

Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan Implementation - Pennsylvania 2022 (Cooperative Agreement #4100094320)

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 for this grant was used for two tasks carried out by Pennsylvania Sea Grant and one task implemented by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission:

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 is leading or participating in at least three PISC subcommittees in the next year – rapid response, legislative, and PRISMs. 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 or 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. Pennsylvania Sea Grant will look for opportunities to facilitate participation by state agencies in the panels, as they present a tremendous opportunity for learning and coordination.

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 support programs and develop outreach materials to prevent the AIS introduction and spread, including AIS identification. PASG will conduct 10-12 presentations (guest talks, seminars, meetings, or staffing events) on AIS prevention. Most of the time each presentation is attended by new participants – so even when the event is the same (a summer camp or annual meeting), the attendees are new each year and the information may help change their behavior. These efforts will partner and coordinate with state agencies, watershed organizations, and interested volunteers to implement a consistent, statewide message based on the national campaigns “Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers,” “Clean, Drain, Dry,” and “Habitattitude”, so that anyone visiting a water body in Pennsylvania will be better able to understand, remember, and take action to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Sea Grant has included funding for one undergraduate internship for summer

2023 as a means to contribute to a diverse ocean/Great Lakes workforce that understands technical and social challenges facing coastal communities and the natural environment and prepare undergraduate students for graduate school and careers in marine/Great Lakes/watershed science, policy, management, and outreach.

2.0 Major Accomplishments

Task 1 (Sea Grant) - (P) To support statewide and regional AIS planning efforts, PASG staff participated in the following state and regional AIS meetings:

PISC quarterly meetings: March 16, 2023, June 8, 2023, December 5, 2023, March 7, 2024, June 6, 2024. PISC held a field meeting on September 8, 2023 but PASG staff was unable to attend due to logistics and overlapping meetings. Currently participate in legislative, grant, rapid response, communications, and PRISM subcommittees.

Great Lakes AIS Panel Meeting: May 15-17, 2023, November 14-15, 2023

Mid Atlantic AIS Panel Meeting: November 15-16, 2023, April 10-11, 2024

Task 2 (Sea Grant) - (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 (10-12 presentations):

March 27, 2023 –shared AIS prevention information and an AIS outreach activity with a students at the Neighborhood Art House in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 10 people attended the class.

May 18, 2023 – staffed a booth about AIS prevention during a Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council Native Species Day event in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 25 people visited the exhibit.

June 30, 2023– gave a presentation on AIS issues and water quality at a Women in STEM Camp organized by Asbury Woods Nature Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 15 people attended the presentation.

July 12, 2023– gave a presentation on AIS issues and prevention to the Carrier T Watson Garden Club in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 45 people attended the presentation.

July 14, 2023 – gave a presentation on AIS prevention for anglers to Project Healing Waters in White Oak, Pennsylvania. Approximately 35 people attended the presentation.

August 26, 2023 – gave a presentation on AIS issues and prevention at Fish Field Day organized by Asbury Woods Nature Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 155 people attended the presentation.

August 27, 2023 – staffed a booth on AIS prevention at the Pennsylvania Master Watershed Stewards annual meeting in State College, Pennsylvania. Approximately 125 people interacted with the booth.

September 17, 2023 – gave a presentation on AIS prevention to a group of Girl Scouts in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 40 people attended the presentation.

October 2, 2023 – conducted an educational activity and provided materials about AIS prevention during the Children’s Water Festival at Asbury Woods Nature Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 100 people participated in the activity.

October 21, 2023 – hosted a booth and gave a presentation about AIS prevention at the Water Resources Fair organized by the Mercer County Conservation District in Mercer, Pennsylvania. Approximately 20 people attended the presentation.

November 10, 2023 – gave a presentation on AIS prevention at the Behrend County Farm in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 40 people attended the presentation.

November 14, 2023 - gave a presentation online about AIS prevention to the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania. Approximately 17 people attended the presentation.

January 25, 2024 - gave a presentation and provided educational materials on AIS prevention to a student group at Asbury Woods Nature Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Approximately 12 people attended the presentation.

March 27, 2024 - gave a virtual presentation about AIS prevention to the Wissahickon Trail volunteers. Approximately 36 people attended the presentation.

Task 3 (PFBC) - Installing Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Composting Stations at Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Launches.

Stations: Staff from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)’s Division of Construction and Maintenance installed 14 AIS Composting Stations (Figures 1 and 2) among eight public reservoirs in Pennsylvania with known presence of AIS such as Zebra Mussels, Hydrilla, or Eurasian Water Milfoil. Stations were installed during Fall 2023 and Winter 2023-2024. These were installed at public boat launches managed by the PFBC (some reservoirs have multiple public boat launches). These included Opossum Lake (Cumberland County), Tamarack Lake and Conneaut Lake (Crawford County), Walker Lake (Snyder County), Colyer Lake (Centre County), Glade Run Lake (Butler County), Kahle Lake (Clarion/Venango Counties) and Kyle Lake (Jefferson County). A Pennsylvania map with reservoir locations is included with this report (Figure 3). Reports by regional PFBC staff indicate that the public have already been using stations to dispose of aquatic plants removed from boats.

Outreach: A two-page article showcasing the stations was written by PFBC staff and published in the May/June 2024 issue of *Pennsylvania Angler and Boater* magazine (pdf available upon request). Agency staff also promoted the stations by posts on the agency’s social media accounts during Fall 2023.



Figure 1. AIS Composting Station installed at Tamarack Lake, Crawford County, Pennsylvania.



Figure 2. AIS Composting Station installation by PFBC staff.

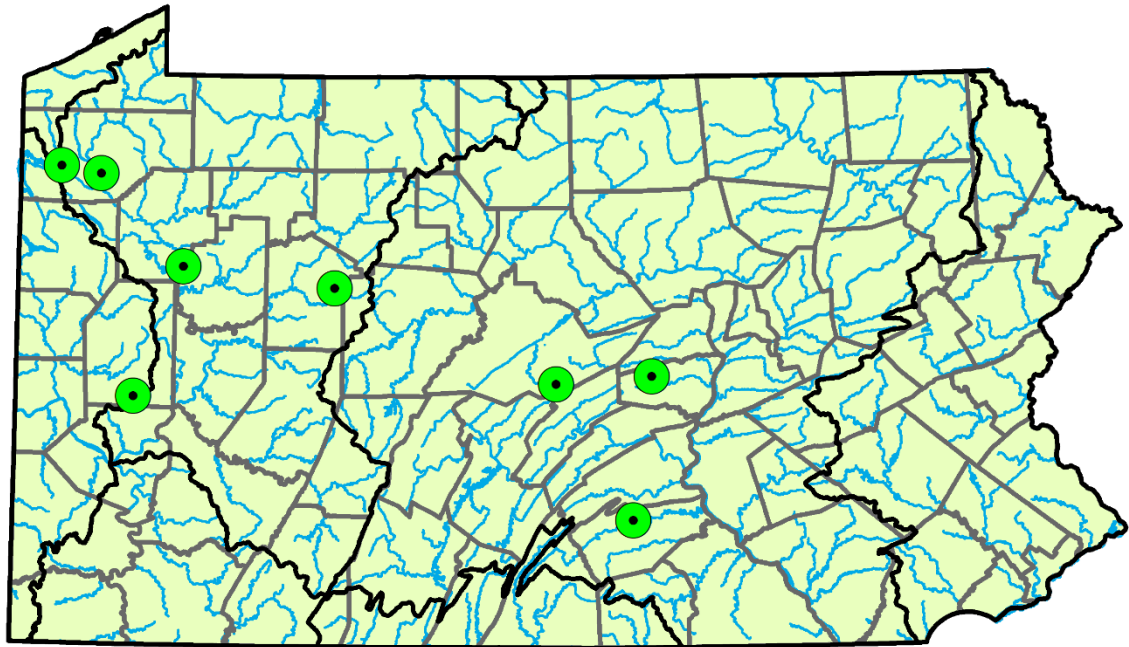


Figure 3. Locations of reservoirs in Pennsylvania where AIS Composting Stations were installed (a total of 14 stations were installed among public boat launches in eight reservoirs).

3.0 Program Expenditures

Invoice will be submitted separately.

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