

Submission Type

Oral Presentation

Presenter Name

Adrien Owens

Presenter Email

Adrien.owens@tnc.org

Presenter Organization

SLELO PRISM - The Nature Conservancy

Presenter Title

Aquatic Restoration and Resiliency Coordinator

Presenter Bio

Adrien Owens is an applied scientist with the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) with The Nature Conservancy. In her role as the Aquatic Restoration and Resiliency Coordinator, she leads early detection and rapid response efforts to protect aquatic priority conservation areas from the impacts of invasive species. Adrien holds an M.S. from the University of Washington and a B.S. from the University of New Haven, bringing expertise in aquatic science, invasive species management, habitat restoration, and community engagement.

Abstract Title

Through the underwater view scope: Meeting our Freshwater Flora neighbors through the Aquatic Invasive Species Learning Experience (AISLE)

Abstract Summary

The Aquatic Invasive Species Learning Experience (AISLE), led by SLELO PRISM, is a community-based education and stewardship program building regional capacity for aquatic invasive species management in New York. Now in its third year, AISLE engages participants through hands-on species identification and waterbody protection activities. The program blends virtual sessions, in-person workshops, and field experiences to raise awareness of high-priority invasive species while highlighting the ecological importance of native species. A key component, the Water Protectors Program, uses a waterbody adoption model to support volunteer monitoring and reporting. AISLE demonstrates the value of pairing education with place-based stewardship to strengthen aquatic ecosystem resilience, while also identifying challenges with consistent volunteer data reporting.

Conference Themes

- Outreach & Education
- Monitoring
- EDRR

TAXA

- Freshwater AIS

Through the underwater view scope: Meeting our Freshwater Flora neighbors through the Aquatic Invasive Species Learning Experience (AISLE)

The Aquatic Invasive Species Learning Experience (AISLE), led by the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM), is a community-based education and stewardship program that builds regional capacity for aquatic invasive species (AIS) management in New York. Now in its third year, AISLE engages participants through hands-on learning focused on aquatic species identification and waterbody protection. The program combines virtual, in-person workshops, and field activities to raise awareness of high-priority invasive species, while emphasizing the ecological value of native species. A core element is the Water Protectors Program, which uses a waterbody adoption model to support volunteer monitoring and species reporting. AISLE demonstrates the importance of community-driven approaches in strengthening invasive species management and aquatic ecosystem resilience. This presentation highlights the benefits of pairing education with place-based stewardship to encourage long-term engagement, while also revealing ongoing challenges in volunteer data reporting.