

Ontario Starry Stonewort Partnership Meeting Notes

ZOOM Meeting, Jan 26, 2022, 2-4 PM

Amanda Tracey - Introduction/Welcome

Housekeeping:

- No recording this time (due 5 hr upload time)
- Link to Google Drive:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Pkmtjk4f3eeBFwBIFUJEbbD_qfpU-HGr?usp=sharing
- Will shortly shift to a new Google Drive to increase storage.

Brian Ginn – 2021 Lake Simcoe Starry Stonewort Observations

- Monitoring since 2008; SSW popped up in 09, spread to 2/3 of lake by 2018
- 75% of biomass by 2018/2019
- SSW has since declined significantly
 - o Could be due to warmer waters? But L. Simcoe waters were approx. 2 deg C cooler than average, so perhaps not
 - o Smoke particulate in atmosphere (from wildfires) may be blocking UV rays leading to lack of sun during critical growth periods of SSW
- Other's observations:
 - o Carol @ Kawartha Lakes: early in spring/summer: more mix of other natives/invasives that they hadn't noticed in previous years (Curlyleaf pondweed, watermilfoil); SSW seemed to reach "normal" levels by mid summer
 - o Rob & Tyler @ Scugog: fairly good mix with other aquatics later on in the season; SSW growing into deeper areas of lake (previously in shallower areas)
 - o David Carr @ Finger Lakes: growth this year similar to previous years, no major changes
 - o Amanda @ Presqu'ile Bay: similar growth this year vs previous years

David Carr – Starry Stonewort Management Guide (Finger Lakes PRISM)

- End of funding for Great Lakes-wide project, so David Carr will no longer be joining us
- Consulted with 8 experts and more to develop management control guide
- Summary and examples of strategies to manage SSW
- Citations at end are good resources for more info
- Questions and comments:

- o Tyler: Any ongoing work to address aspects that weren't already (re: biology, etc)?
 - Answer: in NY state, too early to know yet. Follow up work planned for early in the season. Look at current research being done in Michigan, Wisconsin, etc. Our guide based on local stakeholders' abilities
- o Tyler: From your experience in NY, should we apply things like benthic mats, chemical control, etc.?
 - Chemical treatment research done near Syracuse reported that in 2021, anything that had been treated in the previous year had come back just as strong. Benthic mats are getting more popular in NY state (but are they really working? If any sediment gets on top of the mat, SSW can then colonize on top of the mat)
- o Matthew (sitting in for Brook from OFAH): Algaecides vs herbicides?
 - Answer: usually use copper-based algaecides; effective application strategies being investigated, especially in combination with mechanical methods
 - Carol: one place uses "Reward" (herbicide) in canal system; seems to burn off top level of biomass (essentially non-effective). Traditionally depended on mechanical harvesting
 - David: algicides and herbicides are very popular in Michigan

Carol Cole (Kawartha Lakes Stewardship Association) and Tamara Brincat – Community Science Monitoring Programs Update – Resources, Difficulties, and EDDMapS

Carol Cole – Kawartha Lakes Stewardship Association

- Launched a SSW program; partnered with Kawartha Conservation
- Monitoring: some feedback from others that the monitoring programs aren't effective for SSW
 - o The monitoring program is beneficial in other ways however: learning plant ID, consideration for where invasives are coming from, monitoring for other invasives, bringing learned knowledge to other groups/organizations
 - o "Clean, drain, dry" signage posted to prevent spread
 - o EDDMaps hard for volunteers to use, some didn't even use it; issues with points not showing up properly; confusion re: submitted photos (training needed)
 - o Need to share more info between organizations as to not duplicate efforts
 - o Volunteers would like comprehensive aquatic plant guide collaborate to create one (both native and invasive species)
- Questions:

- o Andrea (Ontario Technical University): ID guide put together is challenging; SSW monocultures easy to ID but individuals much harder. A simplistic guide might not be the solution, as an expert eye is needed for proper ID.
 - Carol: we've only had online learning which makes it difficult in-person learning is better
 - Tyler: issues with looking up info online include the American SSW species is not the same as Canadian species
- o Dave: macrophyte survey program (6th year of it) saw similar issues with Carol's monitoring program, but every year gets a bit better!
- o Barbara: anyone aware of any studies on fish species populations affected by SSW?
 - Dave: in general, most fish species will not spawn in SSW or hide in it (especially in monocultures)
 - Tyler: it affects food sources, oxygen levels, etc. Very hard to research since its so complex

Tamara – Invasive Species Program Coordinator at Severn Sound Environmental Association

- ___Severn Sound watershed on SE portion of Georgian Bay (L. Huron), also work on inland lakes
- SSEA invasive species program: monitoring and mgmt. program, collaboration with local, provincial, national organizations & experts, educate municipal representatives, education
- ___Citizen Science Program: 10 volunteers, supplies provided in a monitoring kit included aquatic weed rake, sample bucket, ID cards, training manual
- ___Over 9 locations surveyed in 2021
- ___Challenges: ID of rake toss contents by volunteers; training was online (in-person is more beneficial); EDDMapS (photo resolution dropped after submission, uploading issues)
- ___Questions/Comments:
 - o ___Tamara: some positive points were not “publicly uploaded”
 - ___Brook: issue with excel file, MDNRF has to authorize some stuff before releasing info; “Private” points – meant for sensitive info; likely user error
 - ___Limitations with photos and ID, etc
 - o ___Nick: do you use/train iNaturalist for citizen science programs?
 - ___Carol: iNaturalist allows anybody to confirm ID, but SSW needs expert ID
 - ___Dave: Survey123 (product of ESRI) – licensing is expensive and you have to manually build a form
 - o ___Brook & Tyler discussed expected distribution models of SSW; Identified locations where SSW could be or is likely to end up
 - o ___Amanda: citizen science funding?
 - ___ISC Microgrant (deadline for submission is Feb 4th): <https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/isc-microgrants/>

- ___Equipment was covered (up to \$1000; this year up to \$5000)

Patty MacDonald – Education Campaign Leadership/Coordination

- How do we build on each others work? Which group will take the lead and then let partners can jump-in as needed
- Someone to start a library of SSW materials
- ISC working on web page on SSW with links to resources
- Please let Patty, Carol or Amanda know if you have a suggestion for sharing info (some sort of app, website, etc.)

Other Areas of Common Interest

Boat Wash Stations

- Carol: hard to get local governments engaged in invasive species; North Kawartha is developing system of municipal grants (i.e. Cottage associations could apply to get Boat wash station)
 - o How to get local municipality involved? Mayor in North Kawartha getting involved and provided some info
 - Pointers: for small communities, make sure to approach council often!!; township also more likely to be supportive & get involved if volunteers/community members are already showing commitment (fund raising, research, etc)
 - barriers include municipal vs provincial vs federal responsibilities
 - Start small (even just a boat wash bucket!) and keep pressuring
- Questions/Comments:
 - o Matt at OFAH will send out a link to his Boat Wash station info
 - o Matt does Water Steward program: trains volunteers on clean drain dry messaging, species ID, sets them up with engagement events to talk to boaters; monthly group meetings, next is Feb 7th (email Matt for link to join the session as next session is about SSW)
 - o Webinar Jan 27th “Lake Simcoe : Aquatic Invasive Species and New Boater Regulations” registration link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_j1Vwc7uQTVy0h4c_2qqYzA

Signage –

- Cass looking for Clean, Drain, Dry signage