

## Watercraft Inspection Program Webinar Series Now Online

Watercraft inspection is an effective mechanism for public outreach and education about the threats of ecologically harmful aquatic invasive species (AIS) and AIS- and natural resource-related topics. The standardizing of AIS data collection by watercraft inspection programs statewide is enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of data collection, AIS reporting, and efforts to encourage citizen stewardship of environmentally and economically valuable water resources.

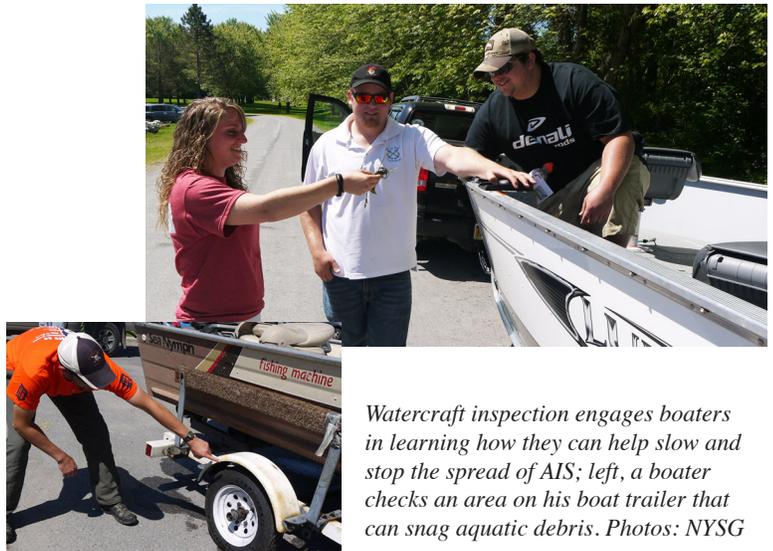
In 2015, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) developed a 6-part webinar series on the logistics of starting a new watercraft inspection program and standardizing existing water-based steward programs that include watercraft inspection. The series engaged current and potential start-up program leaders with the objective of improving efforts to slow/stop the introduction and transport of invasive species via recreation boating equipment.

NYSG personnel hosted the series with presentations on:

- *Identification, Impact, Prevention & Control of AIS,*
- *How to Start a Watercraft Inspection Program,*
- *Standardized Watercraft Inspection Data Collection,*
- *Current Program Models: Staffing and Funding,*
- *What Anglers & Boaters Know about AIS and What Messages They Still Need to Hear,* and
- *Watercraft Inspection Legislation/Regulations.*

The series registration totaled 162 people, with 47% of attendees from organizations interested in planning new watercraft inspection programs. An online evaluation survey showed that 31% of those engaged by the series have relatively young programs (1-3 years). More than 85% of responders found the webinar series presentations “useful/very useful.”

NYSG’s continuing watercraft inspection steward program training and standardization efforts are empowering community-based organizations to develop programs and assisting existing programs across New York State and beyond to address and mitigate the impact of aquatic invasive species.



*Watercraft inspection engages boaters in learning how they can help slow and stop the spread of AIS; left, a boater checks an area on his boat trailer that can snag aquatic debris. Photos: NYSG*

**2015 NYSG Watercraft Inspection Webinar Series presentations and recordings are online:**  
[www.nyseagrant.org/watercraftinspection](http://www.nyseagrant.org/watercraftinspection)

### Partners:

- Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension: Jefferson, Livingston & Wayne counties
- Lake George Park Commission
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- Paul Smith’s College
- St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management

### **The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Healthy NY Coastal Ecosystems & Habitats**

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.

New York Sea Grant Extension

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