



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

Senator Lea Webb Announces Over \$250,000 in State Funding to Support Local Invasive Species Prevention Projects in Cortland and Tompkins Counties

LEA WEBB January 30, 2024

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Today, Senator Lea Webb (SD52) announced that over \$250,000 in state funding has been awarded to projects in Cortland and Tompkins Counties to protect our natural resources from invasive species. This funding is part of \$3 million in state funding awarded through the DEC's Invasive Species Grant Program to 43 projects across New York to combat the negative impacts of invasive species on New York's natural resources, economy, and

communities.

- **Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District** received \$122,705 for Aquatic Invasive Species Watercraft Spread Prevention Boat Steward Education and Outreach/Voluntary Inspection.
- **Research Foundation for SUNY Cortland** received \$98,630 for Invasive Species Research on invasive jumping worm patterns.
- **Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District** received \$51,718 for the Aquatic Invasive Species Watercraft Spread Prevention -- Stewards -- Boat Decontamination Program.

Senator Lea Webb said, "I am pleased to announce this funding to support local efforts to combat the spread of invasive species in our natural resources. Invasive species can have disastrous and costly effects on our waterways and local ecosystem. With this funding, we will be able to strengthen and sustain local efforts to monitor invasive species, ensure robust outreach to the community, and implement protection efforts to safeguard our region."

Amanda A. Barber, Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager, said, "We are so excited about this new grant which will allow us to keep aquatic invasive species spread prevention a priority in the county and expand our program to include two new lakes in the

region and three new sites for boat stewards. We will also be collaborating on outreach and education with new community partners including SUNY Cortland, BOCES New Visions, and the Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways.”

SUNY Cortland President Erik J. Bitterbaum said, “This funding will continue important research on invasive jumping worm patterns, particularly their impact on local soil and plant communities, in an effort to prevent future spread. This project also speaks to the extraordinary talents of the faculty in our Biological Sciences Department, particularly Dr. Laura Eierman and Dr. Andrea Dávalos, who will continue to monitor a growing land management challenge and provide valuable undergraduate research experiences with the award.”

Jonathan Negley, Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager, said, “This funding opportunity allows a further advancement of invasive species goals specifically for eradication of Hydrilla in Cayuga Lake, but also many other invasive species threatening the waters of Cayuga and all of the Finger Lakes. In partnership with our project management team, which includes the Town of Lansing, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network and Finger Lakes PRISM; the funding awarded to Tompkins County will help to install a watercraft decontamination station, hire boat launch stewards and increase the awareness of invasive species threats at their point of entry. We are so grateful for New York State providing this assistance as one piece of a large puzzle to tackle the problem of invasive species.”