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For Immediate Release:

St. Lawrence County-Village of
Heuvelton and surrounding
areas

Community Members Encouraged to Join an Effort to Protect the Oswegatchie River From an Invasive Aquatic Plant

Volunteers are needed to assist a removal effort of an invasive plant called water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) on the Oswegatchie River in the Village of Heuvelton. On Thursday, July 25th between 10 AM and 4 PM there will be a guided paddle to manually collect sparse populations of water chestnut on the River between the Village of Heuvelton Boat Launch and the Eel Weir State Park. This is a great opportunity for community members to spend some time on the water and help protect the Oswegatchie River.

Water chestnut is an invasive aquatic species that has environmental and economic impacts. They grow thick dense floating mats that shade out native aquatic vegetation, impede outdoor recreation, and reduce shoreline property values; the hard, pointy seeds of water chestnuts can puncture vehicle tires or injure feet if stepped on. If not managed, the infestation of water chestnuts on the Oswegatchie River can grow and easily spread to connecting waterbodies, like Black Lake.

Those interested in volunteering for this effort need to register online at, <https://bit.ly/waterchestnutremoval>, or contact the SLELO PRISM E/O Coordinator at 315-522-1258.

This event is supported by SLELO PRISM, The Black Lake Association, NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, NYS DEC, Indian River Lakes Conservancy, Save The River, Thousand Island Land Trust, the Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County, the Village of Heuvelton Fire Department, the City of Ogdensburg Fire & Rescue, Brookfield Energy, the town of Morristown, the Chippewa Bay Fish and Game Club, St. Lawrence Waterfowlers, St. Lawrence Valley Sportsman Club, St. Lawrence Federal Credit Union, Comprehensive Weed Control of Northern New York, and many volunteers.

About SLELO PRISM

The St. Lawrence–Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership For Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) is one of eight PRISMs that span the state of New York. The PRISM network stemmed from recommendations from the NYS Invasive Species Task Force in 2005 and became fully established in 2014. PRISMs are funded by the NYS Environmental Protection fund in coordination with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and various partners. PRISMs have made tremendous progress towards preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species and mitigating the impacts of existing invasive species within the state.

SLELO PRISM is hosted by The Nature Conservancy and was formally recognized by NYS in 2011. Their mission is to protect native habitats, biodiversity, natural areas, and freshwater resources, utilizing a collaborative and integrated approach to invasive species management with an emphasis on prevention, early detection, rapid response, education and outreach. The work that they do provides region-wide coordination for invasive species monitoring and management across the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems within our 7,600-square mile PRISM region – which encompasses the counties of St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida and Oswego outside of the Adirondack Park, as well as portions of the Lake Ontario watershed and shoreline and the Oneida Lake northern watershed.

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