

**TITLE:** Environmental Analyst (AIS Outreach Specialist)

**EMPLOYER:** NEIWPCC, Wannalancit Mills, 650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410, Lowell, MA 01854

**LOCATION:** NYSDEC Region 5 Warrensburg Office, 232 Golf Course Road, Warrensburg, NY 12885

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** NEIWPCC is a regional commission that helps the states of the Northeast preserve and advance water quality. We engage and convene water quality professionals and other interested parties from New England and New York to collaborate on water, wastewater, and environmental science challenges across the regions, ecosystems, and areas of expertise. NEIWPCC is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

NEIWPCC serves as financial administrator and program advisor to the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP). As such, NEIWPCC employs the program staff, including the Program Director, and maintains the program office in Grand Isle, Vermont. In addition, NEIWPCC supports multiple LCBP-related positions in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Region 5 Office, who work closely with LCBP program staff.

The LCBP coordinates and funds activities that protect and improve the natural and human resources of the Lake Champlain Basin. Partners in the program include the States of Vermont and New York, the Province of Quebec, NEIWPCC, the U.S. EPA, the U.S. National Park Service, and the International Great Lakes Fishery Commission. LCBP also collaborates with several other agencies and organizations at the federal, state, and local levels, including private firms and academic institutions.

The LCBP and NEIWPCC have been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and partners including the New York State (NYS) Canal Corporation, NYS Power Authority, NYS DEC, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Lake Champlain Sea Grant on a feasibility study for an aquatic invasive species (AIS) barrier on the Champlain Canal. The heightened need for a local AIS Outreach Specialist for the Champlain Canal is due to the recent detection of round goby at the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, 60 miles south of Lake Champlain. This full-time position is financially supported with funds provided by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service via agreements with NEIWPCC on behalf of the LCBP. LCBP and NEIWPCC anticipate support for this position for approximately 3-5 years.

**JOB SUMMARY:** Stakeholders and managers agree that there is an imminent need for increased AIS outreach for all invasive species along the Champlain Canal corridor, with the increased threat of invasion by round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) to Lake Champlain through the Champlain Canal system. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) work to finalize plans to construct an AIS barrier in the Champlain Canal, which will prevent movement of all taxa between the two systems, will benefit from outreach to communities situated along this corridor.

The two main focus areas of this position are: 1) conduct targeted outreach to anglers, angler groups, relevant stakeholders, and communities along the Champlain Canal to increase awareness of round goby and reduce the risk of overland transportation of this invasive species and 2) build connections with communities along the Champlain canal corridor to increase

awareness of the USACE study to construct an AIS barrier that will allow for continued recreational use of the canal system, and respond to questions and concerns from these communities around the benefits and impacts of the project to their community. This position will also assist the NYSDEC Lake Champlain Coordinator and LCBP AIS Management Coordinator with additional AIS-related outreach, organizing, spread prevention, monitoring, and management work in the basin, as needed. Opportunities to work alongside the DEC Region 5 Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator will also exist.

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Outreach.** Provide outreach to angling groups, bait shops, businesses, and communities about AIS, with special attention given to round goby and vectors of spread, including bait bucket, boat transfer, and canals. Organize and execute technical workshops and trainings on AIS issues, including but not limited to: AIS spread prevention, AIS identification, early detection monitoring, and reporting. Provide outreach to Champlain canal communities, municipalities, businesses, and stakeholders on the AIS barrier project. Outreach will take many forms including informal one-on-one conversations at access points to the canal, tabling at events; formal presentations to schools or community meetings; creating and distributing printed materials; and producing content for a variety of public outreach channels, including social media. Provide routine reports on the progress of the project to stakeholders and partners. Provide background materials or write articles for NEIWPCC, NYSDEC, LCBP, or other publications as directed.

**Workgroups.** Coordinate meetings on AIS concerns related to the Champlain Canal, as needed. Actively engage with AIS-related workgroups, including but not limited to:

- Lake Champlain AIS Rapid Response Task Force
- Lake Champlain Fish & Wildlife Management Cooperative
- Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM)
- Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) – Adirondack PRISM
- NYSDEC Invasive Species Coordination Section
- NYSDEC AIS and Education/Outreach Coordinator Workgroups
- Lake Champlain Basin and New York Boat Steward Programs
- Additional related workgroups as needed.

Organize AIS work in relation to the Champlain Canal workgroup meetings, webinars, and related forums of appropriate stakeholders, partner, state and federal staff. Arrange logistics for meetings (in-person, virtual, and hybrid formats), distribute information, and chair, co-chair, or facilitate meetings. Represent LCBP, NEIWPCC, and NYSDEC positively in meetings, record summary notes, distribute notes, and assist with follow-through on meeting outcomes to accomplish set goals. Work closely with all project stakeholders and develop relationships with representatives from local municipalities, local stakeholder and community groups, public agencies, and other stakeholders for the duration of the project.

**Project management.** Assist with local coordination of activities for the AIS barrier project. Help coordinate site visits for USACE staff, USACE subcontractors, and other partners and assist with scoping studies, as needed.

Assist with local AIS monitoring and management projects. These projects may vary depending on need but currently include eDNA monitoring for round goby and water chestnut management in the Lake Champlain watershed and Champlain Canal.

Conduct and support data collection to inform AIS work along the canal. Record metrics concerning the project. Organize and lead routine debriefs of project.

**Programmatic topics.** This position may work on a variety of additional AIS related spread prevention, early detection monitoring, rapid response and management projects occurring in the Lake Champlain Basin and along the Champlain Canal.

Establish regular lines of communication between user groups and management agencies. Respond to inquiries from state and federal agencies, consultants, and the general public about AIS and the Champlain Canal barrier project.

**Other responsibilities may include:**

**Work plans/budgets/contracts/grants.** Develop work plans, budgets, and contract/grant amendments and provide contract management as needed. Track specific budget elements and contracts. Provide reporting on contracting deliverables under NEIWPCC's contracts.

**Quality management.** Work with NEIWPCC Quality Assurance Program Manager with review of Quality Assurance Project Plans as needed. Where applicable, review and edit Quality Assurance Project Plans submitted by LCBP partners in collaboration with NEIWPCC Lowell office staff and in accordance with NEIWPCC's Quality Management Plan.

Other duties as assigned.

The satisfactory performance of the above duties and responsibilities requires the incumbent to have a thorough understanding of NEIWPCC's programs, organization, and policies, to exercise initiative and resourcefulness in complicated situations, and to be able to work effectively with state and federal contacts at both staff and top management levels, and with varied professional backgrounds. The ability to organize workload, and perform tasks in an accurate, conclusive, and timely manner is required.

**SUPERVISORY CONTROLS:** Incumbent operates with some independence of action and delegation of professional decisions within their area of activity. Consult with NYSDEC Lake Champlain Coordinator and other NYSDEC, LCBP, and NEIWPCC staff on certain matters of policy. The NYSDEC Lake Champlain Coordinator evaluates job performance.

The incumbent will rely on their ability, expertise, and commitment to excellence. They will also build NEIWPCC's culture which focuses on honesty, ethical behavior, personal integrity, respect for others, transparency, hard work, and collaborative teamwork.

Incumbents of positions at this level exercise direct supervision (i.e., not through an intermediate level supervisor) over, assign work to, review the performance of 1-5 professional personnel; and exercise indirect supervision (i.e., through an intermediate level supervisor) over 6-15 professional and/or technical personnel; and exercise functional supervision (i.e., over

certain but not all work activities, or over some or all work activities on a temporary basis) over 6-16 technical or professional personnel.

**PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

A master's degree in environmental science, natural science, public health, earth science, biology, chemistry, communications or public relations, or related field preferred.

Applicants must have at least five years of full-time, or equivalent part-time, technical, or professional experience in the field of above, of which at least five years must have been in a professional capacity, and of which at least three years must have been in a supervisory, managerial, or administrative capacity.

Candidates who have taken a less traditional path may be considered if an aptitude for success and a strong willingness to learn is clearly apparent.

**Personal Characteristics**

- Naturally prone to action with a focus toward continuous improvement and is committed to contributing to the overall success of NEIWPCC.
- Ability to build collaborative relationships across NEIWPCC and our partners.
- Approachable and diplomatic in all interactions.
- Able to manage change and articulate the "value case" for it.
- A team player who is inclusive and willing to help others.
- Dependable and capable of fostering trust.
- Accepts responsibility and is accountable for results.
- Ability to exercise discretion in handling confidential information.

**Special Knowledge and Skills**

- Ability to work effectively with scientists and non-scientists, engineers, and regulators.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships within diverse groups.
- Knowledge and experience with aquatic invasive species and aquatic ecology.
- Experience with or interest in technical data communication.
- Knowledge and experience with aspects of environmental policies and regulations.
- Ability to exercise considerable tact and diplomacy.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Excellent grammar and editing skills.
- Excellent computer skills, particularly word processing and spreadsheets.
- Experience with meeting facilitation and conflict resolution.
- Excellent organizational skills.
- Ability to maintain accurate records.
- Conference and event planning and management experience.
- Ability to establish professional credibility.
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to follow oral and written instructions.

**The following knowledge and skills are helpful, although not a requirement to qualify:**

- Knowledge of or experience with Lake Champlain Basin resource issues.
- Experience in website maintenance and WordPress content management systems.
- Knowledge of budget preparation, grant writing, and contract management.
- Knowledge and understanding of federal and New York State environmental laws and regulations.
- Knowledge of angling culture in New York State.
- Familiarity with the NYS Canal system.
- Knowledge of data analysis software and geographic information systems.
- Knowledge of or interest in infographic design.
- Knowledge or interest in generating social media content.
- Fluency or proficiency in French is desirable but not necessary.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

- A valid driver's license and access to own transportation is required.
  - Duties will be performed largely as outdoor field assignments or in community group meetings and will require travel to various meeting locations in New York and Vermont.
  - Occasional weekend and evening work may be required.
- Travel to Quebec may be requested, for which a private means of transportation and a valid passport or smart license will be required.
- Attendance is mandatory in the Lowell office for orientation and at the annual All Staff Meeting (held the last Thursday and Friday in March each year).
- This is a full-time position. This position requires incumbent to be in the office or at the assigned work location Monday – Friday for the first six months of employment. After six months of employment, this position may be eligible for a partial telework schedule, subject to approval and determined by program and office needs. Telework schedules are authorized by the Executive Director.
- Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination required.

**SALARY:** Salary dependent upon level of experience and qualifications.

**BENEFITS:** Benefits provided but not included in salary range: vacation, personal and sick leave, health, dental, disability and life insurance, retirement plan. This position requires the incumbent to work five days a week, 7 ½ hours per day, except for approved compensatory time.