



# Media Release



June 15, 2016

## Local “Hit Squad” member is fighting invasive species

### Invasive species student on the job in Finch

Invasive species pose a growing threat to Ontario’s biodiversity and cause millions of dollars in damage annually. There are more invasive species in Ontario than anywhere else in Canada, so it is a good thing that the Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) Hit Squad is working across the province again this summer to spread awareness about the impacts that invasive species are having on our environment, economy, and society. One member of the squad is located here in Finch this summer.

Locally, Melanie St.Cyr is an Invasive Species Community Outreach Liaison working with South Nation Conservation Authority and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH).

“I’m looking forward to working with the residents of Eastern Ontario to prevent the spread of invasive species,” says Melanie. “With outreach and public awareness, each resident can make a difference in limiting the spread of local invaders.”

The OFAH, in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, delivers the Invading Species Awareness Program. This program uses public education to prevent the introduction of new invasive species, and to stop the spread of those already here.

Over the course of the summer, the Invasive Species Hit Squad, comprised of about 25 summer students, will monitor more than 200 local lakes, waterways and forests, looking for zebra mussels, spiny water flea, round goby, giant hogweed, garlic mustard, and other invaders. They will also contribute to a variety of efforts to control the spread of these invaders. Funding is being provided by the federal government’s Canada Summer Jobs program.

The public and media are invited to contact Melanie St.Cyr by email at [mstcyr@nation.on.ca](mailto:mstcyr@nation.on.ca).

To report a sighting of an invasive species, or request information materials, call the **Invading Species Hotline** at **1-800-563-7711**, visit [www.invadingspecies.com](http://www.invadingspecies.com) or [EDDMapS.org/Ontario](http://EDDMapS.org/Ontario)

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