



Leech Lake

ASSOCIATION INC



PO Box 1613, Walker, Minnesota 56484

July 10, 2013

FROM: John Eaton, Healthy Lakes Board Member

Leech Lake Association
6428 Kabekona Beach Rd.
Walker, MN 56484

TO: Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOC)

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Bldg., Rm. 95
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear LSOHC Members,

I would like to commend the LSOHC on deciding to accept grant proposals dealing with aquatic invasive species. As a retired fisheries research biologist with the US EPA in Duluth, MN, for 30 years, I think there is no greater short-term threat to our north-central lake and stream ecosystems than AIS, particularly zebra mussels and spiny water fleas. While the MNDNR is doing its best with available resources, there are simply not enough to obtain the equipment and manpower needed to stop or seriously impede invasion of these exotic organisms. The legislature could have done, and still could do, more to slow their spread by enacting much stronger regulations related to preventing transport by boats and trailers. Since this is unlikely, it will be up to a large number of north-central individuals, conservation organizations, lake associations, and LGUs working in partnership with the MNDNR to educate boaters and generate the resources to fight AIS.

In particularly short supply are the hot water boat washing machines that are effective at cleaning zebra mussel adults and veliger larvae, as well as spiny water fleas, off of boats and out of their water circulating systems. For example, Leech Lake, on which I live, has one resident DNR boat washing station to service 9 public launch ramps. While boaters might be aware that they should clean their boats because they are coming from Mille Lacs or Winnie or Lake of the Woods, they may not be willing to drive to a DNR washing station on the other side of the lake from where they want to launch and fish, a distance of 20 miles or more. Or the DNR station may not be operating when they arrive at the lake. Locating one or two additional wash

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stations at convenient locations and operating times around the lake, in conjunction with greater pressure on boaters to comply with AIS prevention requirements, will be needed to keep additional AIS out of Leech.

Leech is just an example of situations that exist for a very large number of other lakes in this region, where there are very few or no DNR washing stations for boats coming from AIS infested waters in MN and from other states. The proposal submitted to LSOHC by Joe Shneider entitled *Statewide AIS Facilities and Equipment*, would increase the number of washing stations from about 20 to 177. The strategy for their deployment through local as well as regional inspection and decontamination would significantly slow the spread of zebra mussels until more effective controls (biological ?) can be found. This increase in decontamination equipment is a critical need at this time, and therefore I urge support of this proposal by the Council.

Dave Lawler
Secretary/Treasurer
Leech Lake Association