

## 2009 Aquatic Invasive Species Volunteer Instructions

May 29, 2009

### ***Introduction***

For a number of years, the residents and visitors to the Iowa Great Lakes have been concerned about the threat of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). There are a dozen types of invasive species, but the two that are of the most concern to us are Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels. In the fall of 2007, it was found the tiny zebra mussel population at Clear Lake had increased exponentially. Now Clear Lake docks and hoists are covered with zebra mussels. With this zebra mussel outbreak at Clear Lake, we need to significantly increase our efforts to protect the Iowa Great Lakes.

### ***Past Efforts***

For the past three summers, three DNR Water Patrol Officers have been stationed on boat ramps to educate boaters about the threat of AIS. While on the boat ramps these officers are also inspecting boats and trailers for any signs they are carrying AIS. However, with 12 major boat ramps and 3 officers, many boat ramps remain uncovered. The major coverage concern is for weekends and holidays when the number of boaters using our ramps increases significantly.

### ***Zebra Mussels & Eurasian Watermilfoil***

Two varieties of AIS and their close location to the Iowa Great Lakes are of special concern:

**Zebra Mussels** – Clear Lake (Iowa) is infested with zebra mussels. Any boaters coming from Clear Lake should be sure their boats have been cleaned. Many boaters from Kossuth County use Clear Lake. Lake Delhi and the Mississippi River are also infested.



**Eurasian Watermilfoil** – Almost all of the lakes around the Twin Cities have Eurasian watermilfoil. Any boaters that have been around the Twin Cities should be sure their boats have been cleaned.



If a boat, motor, trailer, live well, etc. have been out of the water for a considerable length of time (Five days minimum – ten days better) any AIS should have died. To be sure, everything should be washed with hot water and allowed to dry before entering the lake.

### ***Boat Ramp Volunteer Program***

Last summer we launched a program for volunteers to assist the DNR at major boat ramps on busy weekends and holidays. Each volunteer would cover a boat ramp for two hours each summer month to educate boaters about the harm AIS can do to our lakes. Some volunteers may want to contribute more than two hours per month - that is encouraged. The volunteers would also inspect boats and trailers to be sure they are not carrying an Invasive Species.

### ***2009 Volunteer Equipment***

The boat ramp volunteer equipment includes the orange vest, clipboard, training DVD, AIS brochures, boater's maps, and trailer stickers. The equipment can be obtained from

- Maritime Museum – Arnolds Park Amusement Park
- DNR Fish Hatchery – 122 252<sup>nd</sup> Avenue - Orleans

### ***2009 Volunteer Training***

The DNR Fisheries Bureau will provide live training at these dates and times:

- Saturday, May 30th Iowa Lakeside Laboratories 10 AM and 1 PM
- Sunday, June 7th Arnolds Park City Hall 2 PM
- Saturday, June 20th Spirit Lake Expo Building 9 AM

New for this year – we also have an Iowa Great Lakes boat ramp volunteer training DVD, so it is not necessary to attend one of the live training sessions. If you were a volunteer last summer this new DVD might be a good way to brush up on your boat ramp skills.

### ***Optimum Boat Ramp Time of Day***

Boat Ramp usage can be affected by weekends, holidays, temperature, wind speed, wind direction, approaching storms, fishing conditions, time of day, and many other factors. In the morning, anglers might be launching their boats. Around noon, they might come in lunch or finish for the day. In the afternoon, you might find pleasure boaters launching their boat. Then later in the afternoon or early evening, they might be taking their boat out of the water.

### ***Role of the Lake Protective Associations***

Each lake protective association plays a critical role in organizing volunteers to cover the boat ramps on their lakes.

**Okoboji Protective Association - West Okoboji** - Emerson Bay, Lazy Lagoon, Hattie Elston

**East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corp. - East Okoboji & Lower Lakes** –

Highway 9, East Okoboji Beach, Hinshaw Bridge, Dam Road, AP City, Minnewashta

**Spirit Lake Protective Association – Spirit Lake** – Templar, Marble, Ainsworth, MiniWaukon

## ***How to Volunteer***

1. Contact your Lake Coordinator to provide your name and contact information  
The use of email is preferred because it requires less real time contact.  
Alternative: Send email to [watersafety@longlines.com](mailto:watersafety@longlines.com)
2. Obtain your volunteer items (Orange vest, clipboard, AIS brochures, boater maps, trailer stickers) from the DNR Fish Hatchery or the Maritime Museum.
3. When you are ready – contact your Lake Coordinator to advise them the boat ramp and time you will be there.

## **2009 AIS LAKE COORDINATORS**

<b>West Okoboji</b>	Rhonda Thornton & Emily Schaefer – 337-8038 Email <a href="mailto:emilyschaefer@hotmail.com">emilyschaefer@hotmail.com</a>
<b>East Okoboji &amp; Lower Lakes</b>	Toby Jensen – 712/ 249-9288 Email <a href="mailto:jensent96@iowalakes.edu">jensent96@iowalakes.edu</a>
<b>Spirit Lake</b>	Dick Ramsey – 336-5336 – Email <a href="mailto:rramsay@mchsi.com">rramsay@mchsi.com</a>

## ***Working with the Public***

Many boaters are familiar with AIS – particularly Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels. The vast majority of boaters do not want to see AIS at the Iowa Great Lakes. For the last three summers, DNR Water Patrol Officers have been interviewing and educating boaters about AIS at boat ramps on the Iowa Great Lakes. Most boaters will be cooperative as long as you are courteous and respect the use of their time. Always ask the boater if you can inspect their boat and trailer for AIS.

By asking a few questions, you can determine the boater’s level of knowledge with regard to AIS. If they do not know much about AIS, this can be an opportunity to educate the boater. If they are knowledgeable about AIS, provide them a short summary and boat inspection and send them on their way. Be sure the boater is offered the new boaters map, trailer sticker, and an AIS brochure.

As a DNR volunteer, you do not have the authority to stop someone from launching their boat. If a boater becomes argumentative, it is best to get out of their way and let them launch or remove their boat – we do not want to be confrontational. If the boater is uncooperative, does not have safety equipment, has too many passengers, is impaired, or could have AIS; you can contact the Spirit Lake Communication Center by cell phone 712/ 336-2525. Identify yourself as a DNR Volunteer and ask the dispatcher to contact a Lake Patrol officer to have this boater investigated regarding your concerns. The dispatcher will need a description of the boat along with its color – the license number would be helpful – number of passengers and the direction of travel. In an emergency involving the safety of persons or property, a quicker response can be achieved by calling 9-1-1.

### ***What If You Find AIS?***

Many native plants and mussels can look like Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels. Look at your sample very carefully. Eurasian watermilfoil has 12 – 21 leaflet pairs and is limp when removed from the water. Adult zebra mussels have D-shaped, fingernail-sized shells with stripes. For confirmation, call one of the Conservation Officers - Gary Owen Cell Phone 712/ 260-1018 or Jeff Morrison Cell Phone 712/ 260-1017. The Conservation Officers have two-way radio contact with the Water Patrol Officers, so do not be surprised if one of the summer officers arrives to make the evaluation. Save the sample by wrapping in a wet paper towel, place in a sealed plastic bag, and note the location found and the last water body used.

To remove questionable vegetation or mussels suggest the boater go to a car wash in Spirit Lake or Milford and use the high-pressure manual washer. A drying time of five to ten days is also effective.

The DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for the State of Iowa is Kim Bogenschutz. She is located at Boone, Iowa, Phone 515/ 432-2823 X103, Email [Kim.Bogenschutz@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Kim.Bogenschutz@dnr.iowa.gov) The DNR Fisheries Bureau Intern at the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery is Seth Lundgren, Phone 712/ 336-1840, Email [seth.lundgren@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:seth.lundgren@dnr.iowa.gov) More information on AIS can be found at the Water Safety Council website: [www.watersafetycouncil.org](http://www.watersafetycouncil.org) - click on Aquatic Invasive Species.

### ***Boat Ramp Repeat Customers***

In some cases, boaters will be returning to one of the Iowa Great Lakes Boat Ramps several times during the summer. The DNR will provide a blue “2009” sticker to be placed on the tongue of the boat trailer, so we know at least the people that were with that boat trailer the first time have been briefed about AIS. The returning boaters should be asked one or two questions to verify they remember their AIS discussion. If they answer your questions successfully the AIS education can be cut to a minimum. It would still be wise to look their boat over for any fresh AIS.

### ***Iowa Law on Aquatic Invasive Species***

Iowa Code Section 456A.37 paragraph 5 states: A person shall not do any of the following:

1. Transport an aquatic invasive species on a public road.
2. Place a trailer or launch a watercraft that contains or to which an aquatic invasive species is attached in public waters.
3. Operate a watercraft in a marked aquatic invasive species infestation area.

The Iowa fine for transporting AIS is up to \$500 plus costs.

### ***What about the Jumping Fish?***

One species of Asian Carp – Silver – is of great concern to boaters. The Silver Carp can jump several feet out of the water when a motorboat goes by. These fish can grow to three-feet in length and can weigh up to sixty pounds. These fish can jump into boats and can jump into the face of boaters, skiers, and tubers causing injury. We had not been too concerned about these jumping fish in the past, because they were in Illinois and SE Iowa Rivers – generally well southeast of the Iowa Great Lakes.

Now Asian Carp are being found in the Missouri River along the Iowa border with Nebraska. The Bighead Carp – a brother of the Silver variety – have been observed below the Lynn Grove dam (32 miles south of the Iowa Great Lakes). The DNR does not expect the Silver Carp to arrive in our lakes by boat and trailer, as would Eurasian milfoil and zebra mussels. The jumping fish would probably arrive here by swimming up the Little Sioux River and through Mill Creek. The DNR believes the

Lynn Grove dam provides some protection from this jumping fish. The DNR is investigating a fish trap to be located south of Milford to provide additional protection. For more information, check the website [www.watersafetycouncil.org](http://www.watersafetycouncil.org) click on Aquatic Invasive Species.

### ***Acknowledgement***

The Iowa Great Lakes Water Safety Council is organizing the 2009 Iowa Great Lakes Volunteer Aquatic Invasive Species Boat Ramp Program [www.watersafetycouncil.org](http://www.watersafetycouncil.org). Questions can be directed to Phil Petersen at Email [philpetersen@mchsi.com](mailto:philpetersen@mchsi.com)

The recruitment and organizing of boat ramp volunteers is the responsibility of each lake protective association. Participating lake protective associations include East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corporation, Okoboji Protective Association, and the Spirit Lake Protective Association.

## **Boat Ramp Report Form Completion Instructions**

**Boat Ramp:** Write down the name of the boat ramp you are covering

**Lake:** Write down the name of the lake this boat ramp is located

**Date:** Write down the date of these boat interviews and inspections

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**Type:** Show the type of water craft F=fishing, R=runabout, P=pontoon, S=sailboat, J=personal watercraft, C=canoe, O=other (please note in comments)

**Time:** Write down the time you began talking to the boater

**Registration:** Write down the boat registration number, Example IA 1234 AF

**# Persons:** Write down the number of persons that will be in the boat

**Prev Insp:** Did the boater have a previous AIS boat ramp inspection this year?

✓ means yes

**Know AIS:** Is the boater aware of AIS and the threat they mean to our lakes?

✓ means yes

**Last Waterbody:** What is the name of the last water body this boat was used?

**Inspect/Drain:** Did the boater inspect their boat for AIS? Did they drain water?

**Comments:** Please include notes such as special event, other vegetation present, or other unusual occurrences.

**Report by:** Write your name here

**Tel:** Write your telephone number here in case we need to ask a question about your report.

**Communications Center** - Non emergency number 336-2525 If you need to reach a DNR Conservation Officer or Water Patrol Officer they can be contacted by radio using the Dickinson County Communications Center – 24 hours a day. For emergencies, call 9-1-1  
The Gull Point Lake Patrol station is not manned at all times. Leave a message for the Lake Patrol at 712/ 337-3377

At the end of the month, send your boat ramp reports to the Lake Coordinator for your lake. Information can be found at the Water Safety Council website [www.watersafetycouncil.org](http://www.watersafetycouncil.org) Click on Aquatic Invasive Species. Water Safety Council Email [watersafety@longlines.com](mailto:watersafety@longlines.com)