

# Volunteer Watercraft Inspection Guidelines

for Aquatic Invasive Species  
2008 Edition



Wisconsin Lakes Partnership



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# Acknowledgments:

*Volunteer Watercraft Inspection Guidelines for Aquatic Invasive Species* is a guide for people who are passionate about “their” lake and who have a vision for future generations. The “Clean Boats, Clean Waters” program is sponsored and promoted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, UW-Extension, and the Wisconsin Association of Lakes.

Authors: Laura Felda-Marquardt and Erin Henegar

Contributors: Julia Solomon, Frank Koshere, Laura Herman, Brock Woods, Patrick Goggin, Robert Korth, Tamara Dudiak

Editor: Erin Henegar



University of Wisconsin - Extension Lakes  
College of Natural Resources  
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point  
800 Reserve St.  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-346-2116    [uwexplakes@uwsp.edu](mailto:uwexplakes@uwsp.edu)  
[www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/)



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Water Division  
101 S. Webster St.  
P.O. Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us)



Wisconsin Association of Lakes  
4513 Vernon Blvd., Suite 101  
Madison, WI 53705  
608-661-4313    [info@wisconsinlakes.org](mailto:info@wisconsinlakes.org)  
[www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org)





# Welcome to the Clean Boats, Clean Waters Volunteer Watercraft Inspection Program!

Aquatic invasive species have long been recognized as a serious threat to the United States. According to Cornell University, in 1999, introduced species of animals, plants, and microbes cost the U.S. economy at least \$138 billion a year. In 2001, Wisconsin spent over \$600,000 on aquatic and terrestrial plants and exotic birds, thousands more for sea lamprey control and hundreds of thousands for control of zebra mussels. These facts make folks a little nervous about the future of Wisconsin inland water bodies.

Wisconsin's 15,081 lakes are fortunate to have volunteers who monitor water clarity, water chemistry, aquatic plants, and invasive plants. Since 1986, these folks have functioned as the "eyes" of aquatic biologists. With the arrival of aquatic invasive species, now more than ever volunteers are needed to help preserve and protect Wisconsin's water bodies. The "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" program is an opportunity for volunteers to help stop the spread of invasive species across the state.

Through "Clean Boats, Clean Waters," volunteers are trained to organize and conduct a watercraft inspection and education program in their community. This program originated in northern Wisconsin as a middle school project. The "Milfoil Masters" program alerted adults and youth that volunteers can make a difference in helping prevent the spread of invasive species.

To continue statewide volunteer efforts, the "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" Watercraft **Inspection Program** was created in the fall of 2003. The mission of this program is to promote water resource stewardship by actively involving individuals in preventing the spread of harmful aquatic invasive species. To accomplish this goal, the program sponsors statewide training workshops and has developed resource handbooks, tool kits, and educational information; a statewide coordinator now organizes volunteer efforts.

Wisconsin realizes that volunteers are the keys to reaching hundreds of recreationalists visiting the state. Volunteers who instruct boaters on how to perform watercraft inspections are helping to prevent new invasions and are helping to maintain Wisconsin's valuable water resource.

Thank you for taking the time to learn, act, and protect Wisconsin's waters from invasive species. Volunteering will never make anyone rich, but the rewards of these efforts will be appreciated by many generations to come.



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“Anything else you’re interested in is not going to happen if you can’t breathe the air and drink the water. Don’t sit this one out. Do something. You are by accident of fate alive at an absolutely critical moment in the history of our planet.”

- Carl Sagan

