

Town of Cable Aquatic Invasive Species Grant 2009 Final Report

Project Number: **AEPP-179-09**

Prepared for:
The Town of Cable and
The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
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Grantee: Town of Cable
Town of Cable AIS Prevention Program
Perry, Cable, Wiley, and Tahkodah Lakes AIS Education and Inspection
Project Number
AEPP-179-09

Project Committee

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Sue Benson, Town of Cable Supervisor and Agent for the AIS Grant
Diane Stewart, Tahkodah Lake District

Cable Town Board Participants

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Sue Benson, Supervisor
Bob Lang, Supervisor
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Bridey Shaugnessy
Cecelia Peterson

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Abstract

A Town of Cable Aquatic Invasive Species project focusing on monitoring and prevention of aquatic invasive species was initiated in the spring of 2006, and continued to be implemented through 2009. The project was designed for the Town of Cable in cooperation with the Town, Tahkodah Lake District, and Cable Lake Association to enable education and monitoring at Perry, Cable, Wiley and Tahkodah Lakes. Objectives to ensure inspection of watercraft included monitors, both paid and volunteer at Perry, Tahkodah and Cable Lake landings. The purpose of this was to inspect boats for possible signs of aquatic invasive species (AIS) including, but not limited to, Eurasian Water Milfoil, purple loosestrife, zebra mussels and rusty crayfish. We were to record all data and summarize the results of the monitoring using the Clean Boats Clean Waters project, and to provide a final report in electronic format to the DNR Lake Coordinator. Our second goal, education, was to communicate to volunteers, users of watercraft, property owners, and visitors to the area about AIS. We planned to do this through articles and educational materials distributed to a variety of ways.

Goals for preventing AIS in Town of Cable

Goal 1: Inspection and Monitoring of Watercraft

Our objectives for this goal included: 1.) To monitor watercraft traffic at the Perry, Tahkodah and Cable Lake landings. 2.) To inspect boats for possible signs of AIS including, but not limited to, Eurasian water milfoil, purple loosestrife, zebra mussels and rusty crayfish. 3.) To train and utilize volunteers, lake land

owners, watercraft users, and other interested parties in the monitoring of surrounding lakes for evidence of potential invasive aquatic species. 4.) To collect samples of a variety of aquatic species from volunteers, lake users, lake owners, and others who access the water bodies located in the Town of Cable lakes. 5.) To record all relevant data and summarize results of monitoring and inspection efforts using Clean Boats-Clean Waters and to the DNR. 6.) To identify common aquatic species collected, and provide suspect specimens to the DNR for further identification.

Goal 2: Education and Communication

Our objectives for this goal included: 1.) To educate volunteers, users of watercraft, property owners, tourists, local businesses, and organizations about the more common aquatic species found in the area. 2.) To distribute educational materials to a wide array of individuals through articles in local newspapers, lake association newsletters, tourist publications, and 3.) To disseminate printed materials and place signs in prominent locations. 5.) To provide individuals using the Cable landings with information on EWM and other AIS. 6.) To place signs at each of the three public landings. 7.) To use volunteers to train others at lake associations and other meetings.

Project Accomplishments

We were able to continue our AIS Prevention Program that began in 2006. This year we retained last year's 4 staff and added one more staff member to monitor the Cable, Perry and Tahkodah lake landings. We also had help from several volunteers for monitoring and lake inspections. Training was again offered through the Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) program. We worked with Bayfield County AIS Specialist and the Cable Natural History Museum to sponsor a CBCW training program in Cable in which over 14 people participated. Kits were purchased for each of the monitors, and t-shirts and aprons were provided for all staff and volunteers to present a sense of professionalism and credibility when boaters were greeted at landings. In April, one Town of Cable monitor and the Cable AIS Coordinator attended AIS related meetings at the Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Green Bay.

Effective educational signs were placed and/or maintained at each of the three landings. We also placed AIS information at key locations in the Cable area. Our paid staff spent approximately 1,500 hours in 2009 on these efforts and volunteers put in an additional 657 hours. A total of 648 boats were inspected and 1,332 boaters were alerted to the problem of EWM and other invasive species and the need to spread the word about prevention of the spread of these species. This is up from about 300 boats and 650 boaters last year.

During the boating season, no Eurasian water milfoil or other invasive species were found on any of the boats entering Cable, Wiley, Tahkodah and Perry Lakes. Non-invasive plants were removed from several boats and verbal cautions were offered to those boaters.

The person who was cited for transporting EWM to the Cable Lake landing in July, 2008 returned to the landing in June of 2009. He had a boat that he said would not be used anywhere but on the clean lakes in the Cable area. He was far more aware of the seriousness of possible AIS contamination and appeared very willing to cooperate.

Purple Loosestrife

In 2007, a volunteer collected 800 Loosestrife-eating beetles from stands of loosestrife near Lake Superior. They were transported to Cable and most were applied to the large patch of loosestrife in Cooper's Bay. Some were applied to the patch in the channel between Wiley and Cable. At the end of the season the loosestrife looked unhealthy. As expected the beetles were healthy and hungry for loosestrife in 2008. The Cooper's Bay stand was almost gone. Remaining plants looked very poor and the beetles were plentiful. In August, 2009, only one healthy loosestrife plant could be found in Cooper's Bay. Several plants were removed from the Cable-Wiley channel (west shore) and two plants were removed from between the two docks at the Wall cabin on Cable Lake. Many plants were found on Tamarack Point. Those that were accessible by water were pulled by hand. The owners of Tamarack Point will be contacted and directed to control the growth of purple loosestrife plants on their property.

Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia

VHS information was offered to boaters throughout the season. Many boaters showed deep concern. Most were already practicing procedures to reduce the threat. Most boaters appeared to know about the new regulations and were following them.

Education efforts

Education was also a significant part of what our goals for 2009. Articles were put in the Cable Lake Association newsletter and the Lake Tahkodah newsletter. Town board members were present to discuss lake issues at both the Cable Lake Association Annual Meeting and Tahkodah Lake District Annual Meeting. The project director Jim Brakken worked with the Cable Natural History

Museum to incorporate education about AIS into some of their programs – they presented information to children during their summer program called Junior Naturalists.

Sue Benson, Town of Cable Supervisor, had many conversations as the need for AIS Education and Prevention continues with UW- Extension - Bayfield County; she has interacted with the recently formed Bayfield County AIS Committee (she was asked to serve on this committee); and she provided input into Lake Owen Association's plan to monitor their landings.

Education has also continued in other ways. Project Director Jim Brakken sent out a large distribution of materials on VHS. He worked again in cooperation with the Cable Natural History Museum. Mr. Brakken also included AIS education information in the Bayfield County Lakes Forum newsletter that was mailed to over 3,000 shoreland owners in Bayfield County and delivered to 4,000 others. Finally, at the request of Town of Cable's Town Board, Project Coordinator Jim Brakken provide a report of AIS activities for 2008 at the Town of Cable Annual Meeting.

The Cable Lake Association provided a portable toilet at the Cable Lake landing for use by monitors on duty. The Cable Lumber Company provided a picnic table. Both of these amenities were used extensively by the appreciative public.

Legislative activities

Working with the Bayfield County Lakes Forum (BCLF,) we were able to help encourage two improvements in the laws regarding the transport of aquatic plants. First, we were successful in getting the Bayfield County Board to increase the penalty for aquatic plant transport. Second, with our help and partnerships with the BCLF and the Northwest Waters Consortium, we saw substantial improvements in the Wisconsin laws regarding statewide transport of aquatic plants. These two changes resulted in better tools being available to control transport of aquatic plants and animals and will result in the slowing of the spread of AIS to the waters in the Town of Cable and our region.

Summary

We feel that 2009 was another very successful year for this project. Our volunteer hours totaled 657 from at least 30 volunteers. We also generated much interest in others who may wish to volunteer at our lakes or at other northwestern Wisconsin lakes in future years. Our paid staff logged 1,476 hours. 648 boats were monitored entering or leaving lakes in the Town of Cable in 2009. Other than the two interceptions at the Cable Lake landing, no EWM was found

by our monitors during the boating season. The Purple Loosestrife problem remains small and controllable.

The good word continues to spread. In Bayfield County, our hope is that education and protection of our lakes spreads faster than AIS ever will. The new AIS transport regulations by neighboring counties and the State will help curb the AIS threat. We feel that the commitment to protecting our lakes from AIS will continue in the Town of Cable, and appreciate Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources funding in helping to protect our outstanding water resources.