

Summer 2009

Volume 1, Issue 2

OUR LAKES

TOWN OF PLUM LAKE

*Published by the
Lakes Committee
for the Town of
Plum Lake*

715-542-3108

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*The Town of Plum Lake
Plum Lake Riparians
Plum Lake Library
Sayner/Star Lake Lions
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BIWBLA
Star Lake/Little Star
Lakes Association
Vilas County Lakes
Association
Vilas County Land and
Water Conservation
Department*

Town-wide Shoreline Monitoring on July 5, 2009 – “Adopt a Shoreline Project”

Join us on July 5, 2009 when the Town of Plum Lake Lakes Committee, the Ballard-Irving-White Birch Lakes Association, the Star/Little Star Lakes Association and the Plum Lake Riparian Property Owners Association conduct our first annual aquatic invasive species (AIS) monitoring of lakes and streams in the Township of Plum Lake. We’re calling it the “**Adopt a Shoreline Project**”.

As mentioned in other newsletter articles, early detection of unwanted plant life in our waters can prevent expensive and exhaustive cleanup activities. On July 5th, the emphasis will be placed on Star, Plum, Ballard, Irving, White Birch, Razorback and Laura because these are the lakes in our Township that get the most use and consequently are at highest risk for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) contamination. However, all lakes and streams are important and volunteers may choose the lake or stream of their choice.

- On July 5th at 1:00 PM come to the Plum Lake Golf Course Clubhouse where we will show you how to inspect the shoreline, what to look for, what samples to collect and what to do with the samples. You’ll be given ID cards to assist with plant identification and sample bags for collecting specimens. Things for you to bring along might include polarized sunglasses and a GPS unit, when available.
- Then you’re off to inspect as much or as little of whatever shoreline(s)

you choose, although an emphasis will be put on boat launch areas where it is most likely new infestations would occur first. You can monitor by walking, wading, kayaking, boating or canoeing.

- Before 4:30 PM on July 5th, return to the Clubhouse with your sample bags. We’ll help you identify the plants, record the information needed for a report to the DNR and give you a monitoring notebook to keep records for other inspections you complete during the summer. It is recommended that inspections of the same shoreline be completed every 4 weeks until Labor Day.
- Then the fun continues at 6:30 PM when those folks participating in the afternoon’s training and monitoring activities are invited to join a social gathering at the Plum Lake Golf Club. It’s a great chance to meet new people, have a great time and help support the new “**Adopt A Shoreline**” initiative. It’s important to note that no public funds will be spent for this party.

--- IMPORTANT ---

**Please call JoAnn Kehl at
542-4174
to let us know that you’ll help.**

Unable to join the group on July 5th?
Individual shoreline monitoring training is available upon request.
Call 542-4174 to make arrangements for your training session.

On Earth Day, April 22, Jan Wise again instructed 6th graders at Northland Pines Middle School on *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* watercraft inspections.

She's available to also train you! Call her at 542-3108 for more information!



Another Volunteer Opportunity

If you're interested in being part of the Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake, call Chris Wise at 542-3108.

Also, we are still looking for volunteers to represent Razorback Lake on the Lakes Committee.

Have you signed up yet to do *Clean Boat, Clean Waters* boat landing inspections this summer?

If not, let's coordinate our efforts! For Ballard/Irving/White Birch call Kathryn Drew at 542-3133. For other lakes call Jan Wise at 542-3108.

Returning and new volunteers: Remember to turn in your completed forms (including your volunteer hours)!

In-Lake Monitoring

By Bill Sloey, *Monitoring Coordinator for the Town of Plum Lake*

Wisconsin is being attacked by invasive species at a rate unlike any time since the first settlers brought all manner of weeds and insects and even rats along with their wheat, barley, fruit trees and farm animals from the "old country". This time, the impact is greatest on aquatic environments as our very mobile society transports invasive species via commercial vessels and recreational watercraft alike.

One hundred and sixty five exotic (non-native) species have been carried into the Great Lakes via the St. Lawrence shipping canal in recent years. On average, two new species are found in the Great Lakes each year. From there, they move via recreational boaters and even waterfowl to our precious inland lakes. Other invasives are shipped about by the aquarium and water-gardening trades from which they escape or are intentionally released into the neighboring lakes (we have new regulations, but they have not yet taken effect).

As of 2008, 479 Wisconsin lakes have become infested with Eurasian water milfoil and 121 with zebra mussels. Other lakes have become infested with Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS), curly-leaf pondweed, rainbow smelt, rusty crayfish, spiny and fish-hook water fleas, and Chinese mystery snails. New species knocking on our door include: hydrilla, New Zealand mud

snails, quagga mussels, Brazilian water milfoil, yellow floating heart, and, yes, rock snot.

The good news is that 75% of Wisconsin's lakes are still not invaded by exotic species! So, how do we keep it that way? How do we protect our lakes?

The first line of defense in protecting our lakes from invasive species must be for each of us to check our boats and trailers to see they remain weed-free. Our *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* teams do this at boat landings throughout the town. To help with boat landing *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* inspections, call Jan Wise at 542-3108.

As shown by the article on Page 1, this summer we plan to also put emphasis on monitoring shorelines and boat launch areas for new infestations of invasive species. We really want and need your help with this project.

In spite of our best efforts at the launches, however, it is really not a question of "whether" one or more of our lakes in the Town of Plum Lake will be infected by a new invasive species, but "when". So, it is absolutely essential that we get as many sets of eyes scanning the lakes as possible. The sooner we spot a new invader, the easier and cheaper it is to eradicate it.

The Town of Plum Lake's Signage Initiative: An Example of National-Local Synergy

By Frank G. Splitt, *Co-Chairman, Lakes Committee, Town of Plum Lake*

Background -The enormity of the aquatic invasive species (AIS) threat has evoked a compelling need to develop a public AIS awareness and education campaign as a front-line component of a defensive strategy. Signage is one of the key tactics that can be used in the implementation of this strategy. The Town of Plum Lake (TPL) Signage Initiative was launched during the summer of 2006 to implement this signage tactic.

The TPL Signage Initiative: Phase I – The first phase of the TPL initiative was aimed at supplementing, not replacing, the message and location of existing boat-landing signs—directing attention to the DNR's signs, especially important at boat-ramps when *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* (CBCW) volunteers cannot be present. The new signs employ the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services unequivocal, attention-getting, easy-to-read, nationwide *Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!*TM logo and text.

Replicas of this new signage were found to be well suited to a wide range of applications as an AIS awareness and educational mechanism. Poster-like sign replicas and CBCW handouts were made available at marinas, marine sales centers, bait shops, sporting goods stores, resorts, and other business establishments frequented by lake users.

The TPL Signage Initiative: Phase II – Display of larger, poster-type signs along access roads to high-use launching areas and the use of much larger signs suitable for use along county and state highways was the next logical step.

The second phase of TPL's public AIS awareness campaign got under way in the summer of 2008 with the installation of custom-made signs along TPL county highways using a design that meshes with the federal program, i.e. the signs were patterned after the basic design used in the multi-state billboard campaign that is part of the federal *Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!*TM campaign. Wisconsin first got involved in the federal program in 2007, targeting mostly major northbound highways headed to the North Woods lake region.

With help from the TPL Shop, TPL Lakes Committee volunteers installed two-by-four-foot, all-

weather signs along Vilas County Highways G, N, and K, as well as a four-by-eight-foot sign on State Highway 155.

A Final Word – The TPL signage initiative places heavy emphasis on branding—a very powerful process that generally combines imagery with words to succinctly represent ideas and values. Here the benefits of branding come with the use of an unequivocal and uniform stop AIS message with high visual impact signage that incorporates the internationally recognized *Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!*TM logo. The campaign borrows from commercial marketing by translating and simplifying the very complex AIS issue into a simple, relevant message of awareness and empowerment for recreational users to conserve and protect our aquatic resources through the promotion of cleaning behaviors. The endorsement of the TPL signage initiative by the Vilas County Lakes Association as well as the towns of Washington and Phelps shows its value.



From left to right: Frank Splitt, Doug McKay, Jerry Kurth and Jim Haberle.

**LAKES COMMITTEE
FOR THE TOWN OF
PLUM LAKE**

3185 Hanson Road
Sayner, WI 54560

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the Town of Plum Lake**

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About Our Organization...

The Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake is composed of volunteers committed to protecting our lakes from aquatic invasive species through public awareness education and monitoring.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: This spring Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle signed the "Clean Lakes" bill into law. The bill, referred to as "2009 Wisconsin Act 9", prohibits the display, sale and use of phosphorus in lawn fertilizer effective April 14, 2010. Phosphorus may be harmful to lakes as it promotes the growth of unwanted algae and other undesirable lake organisms.

This year's Newsletters were made possible by a one-year grant by the Wisconsin DNR. Grant funding for next year's Newsletters is uncertain and will be a highly competitive process. All of us living in the Township of Plum Lake are fortunate to have benefited from a small, dedicated group of talented individuals who have put in many hours of work to preserve our local lakes. New volunteers are needed, however, to help sustain this work. Please volunteer even just a few hours. Complete and return the VOLUNTEER FORM found below or call Chris Wise at 542-3108 for more information on how you can help.

For more information on activities related to Aquatic Invasive Species Control in Vilas County and/or future updates on AIS issues in the Town of Plum Lake, visit www.vilaslandandwater.org -> water resources -> AIS Partnership ->Town Lakes Comm -> Plum Lake. Lake Monitoring reports can be found there also, as well as at the Plum Lake Public Library.

2009 VOLUNTEER FORM

We need your help. Please return this form to: **Chris Wise, 3185 Hanson Road, Sayner, WI 54560**
or call **715-542-3108**

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Summer mailing address: _____ Email Address: _____

I can help with:

- _____ *Clean Boats/Clean Waters* boat landing activities
- _____ July 5th "Adopt a Shoreline" project
- _____ Other Shoreline Monitoring—individual trainings available
- _____ Other lake monitoring
- _____ Serving on Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake
- _____ Scheduling/Coordinating volunteers
- _____ Other: _____



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!™**

ProtectYourWaters.net, Township of Plum Lake, Vilas County, Wisconsin