

LAKE LUCERNE ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION

LAKE AIS/CBCW AWARENESS PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

The Lake Lucerne Advancement Association sponsored an AEPP Grant (AEPP-229-10) to increase awareness and educate the greater Lake Lucerne community about aquatic invasive species. This included training and education on Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW), Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) identification and detection, and other activities.

To accomplish this task several steps were taken to implement strategies aimed at creating an awareness of the issues surrounding AIS. They included hiring an AIS Coordinator to assist with training lake residents, help coordinate volunteers at the Lake Lucerne public boat landing (DNR owned) and data collection and entry into the DNR website.

A committee was formed consisting of members of the Lake Lucerne Advancement Association (LLAA) Board of Directors. Members included John Hammond, Matt Greely and Larry Sommer. As last year's coordinator, Mr. Scott Kugel, informed the Committee that he would be returning in 2010, they did not advertise for a replacement. In early June, Mr. Kugel took a full time position in another community, and had to resign from the Lake Coordinator position before the season began. However, the committee received a referral from Mr. Kugel, and interviewed Mr. Todd Veaser for the position. Mr. Kugel spent about one week working with Mr. Veaser on the program overview, trained him on AIS/CBCW identification, reviewed the SWIMS program responsibilities with him, and assisted with setup at the boat landing. Mr. Veaser started the program a little behind schedule, but supplied a tremendous amount of enthusiasm to the program.

Three LLAA Board Members (Committee Co-Chairman Matt Greely, Board Member and Forest County Association of Lakes representative Carol Tomasi, and Board Member LexAnn Hitchcock) attended the Wisconsin Association of Lakes Annual Conference in Green Bay. They attended courses regarding AIS training and identification, and CBCW training and inspection procedures, in an effort to gain knowledge which would be shared with the remainder of the lake residents at several training sessions.

Several articles were also placed in the newsletter announcing training sessions to be held over the course of the spring, 2010. The training sessions were also announced at the LLAA Spring clean Up Day in May, and at the Association Meetings. These training date was June 6th and included Clean Boat/Clean Water and AIS training at the LLAA Clubhouse lead by Carol Tomasi and LexAnn Hitchcock. A total of 46 lake residents attended the combined training session. The lake residents showed a great deal of enthusiasm at these training sessions and a genuine interest in learning how to protect our beautiful lake from the aquatic invasive species. In addition, above and beyond the grant requirements, guest speakers were invited to our Association meetings to give presentation on AIS, including Wisconsin DNR Aquatic Invasive

Coordinator Chris Hamerla, and Mike Preul, Fisheries Biologist with the Sokaogon Chippewa Community (attendees and hours not accounted for, as they are not part of the grant).

Various articles were placed in LLAA Newsletters throughout the year (copies enclosed), and strategic links were provided on the website to continue to educate and call attention to the issue, and keep AIS and CBCW in the forefront of everyone's mind. Links were established on the Lake Lucerne Advancement Association Website (www.lucernewi.com) under the "Lake Education" tab for the Clean Boats/Clean Water program, which included additional links to "Aquatic Invasive Species" and "Clean Boat/Clean Water Program", an email contact for the Lake Coordinator, Mr. Todd Veaser, and a link to the schedule for shifts that were needed at the boat landing. These links proved very helpful in not only creating awareness, but allowing lake residents and visitors to learn about the program, and become involved. There was also a link to the 2009 AIS Grant information to share it with the lake community.

This training was put to good use, as lake residents volunteered over 300 hours over 76 days (59 were required by the Grant) to assist with CBCW at the public boat launch. Lake Coordinator Mr. Veaser spent over 160 hours at the public boat landing conducting inspections and working with/training our volunteers. These hours included every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and holidays throughout the season to both conduct inspections and coordinate volunteers. Weekends were the main concentration of the hours. However lake residents also supported the program throughout the week during peak boating season periods. Inspections were conducted from June through September. Due to sturdy volunteers and continued commitment to the program, the boat landing was manned several weeks past the anticipated end date for the program. Likewise, AIS inspection continued far beyond the grant period as residents were able to easily reach the water due to low lake levels. According to the final report, 342 boats were inspected, and 826 people were educated through these contacts. Sample Boat Landing reports were shared at the Lake Association meetings to give residents an idea of the challenge we face. Some boaters admitted to not implementing proper CBCW practices and did not launch their boats. Pictures were shared of trailers parked at the landing from early morning launches with weeds hanging from their axles (the weeds were determined to be native species), and fishermen transporting live bait from lake to lake. No confrontations resulted from these contacts, and the vast majority of boaters appreciated the effort of the lake community to protect the beautiful waters of Lake Lucerne. All contacts and results were reported using the Watercraft inspection report Form 3200-120, with the data uploaded online by Lake Coordinator Veaser to the Wisconsin DNR Integrated Monitoring Systems (SWIMS) as required.

To assist with AIS education and monitoring, wallet size educational pamphlets were acquired from the WDNR (Chris Hamerla) and distributed to lake volunteers to share with neighbors and visitors to the lake. Eventually, 37 residents volunteered over 250 hours (grant allowance was only 200) to educate other residents and visitors about AIS, including many of these hours being spent monitoring shorelines to help identify the presence of AIS, and remove if necessary. Fortunately, the only specimen captured was a suspected rusty crawfish, which was forwarded to the WDNR for analysis and identification and proved to be positive. Throughout the year, there were no other reports of AIS in Lake Lucerne.

Zebra mussel monitoring plates were also hung from six (6) docks in strategic locations on the lake to check for the presence of the invasive creatures. With Lake Metonga being less than one mile from Lake Lucerne, and their continuing struggle over the presence of the zebra mussel in their waterway, they shared the design for the detection plates. No zebra mussels were detected when the plates were periodically inspected, or when they were removed at the end of the season.

5,000 AIS placemats were ordered in a joint purchase with the Forest County Association of Lakes. Although this was much higher quantity than first anticipated, the professional design was welcomed by the business owners. The design was provided by the FCAL, and it is our understanding that the design was approved by the WDNR. These placemats were distributed at three establishments which serve the lake community; Water's Edge Lodge, Duck's Bar and the Crandon Hotel. In addition, "green" grocery bags were printed and distributed at Schaefer Food Mart in Crandon, and sold at Association events including Association meetings and social events (Fun Days and Meet Your Neighbor). A placemat sample is included with this report. LLAA does plan to duplicate this program in 2011.

A new informational kiosk (picture included), as designed by the Wisconsin DNR, was donated, constructed and placed at the public boat landing by the Association. The WDNR was very appreciative of the new venue for displaying important lake information for lake residents and visitors. The WDNR prescribed AIS and CBCW posters were posted in the kiosk, along with Lake Lucerne fishing limits and other lake information (loon nesting rules, lake courtesy guidelines, etc.). This information was also posted at the existing kiosk at Water's Edge Lodge, a restaurant located on the lake which also operates a private boat landing.

As part of the LLAA ongoing efforts to gain partnerships and educate users of the lake who are not necessarily residents, strategic partnerships were developed with several organizations, including:

Town of Lincoln
Roberts Lake Association
Forest County Association of Lakes
Waters Edge Lodge
Lake Metonga Association
Schaefer's Grocery
Forest County Potawatomi

Letters of Support were received from:
Sokaogon Chippewa Community
Forest County Land and Water Conservation Department
C.A.R.S., LLC

Upon acceptance of this final Report by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, this report will be shared with the Town of Lincoln, Forest County, Forest County Association of Lakes, and all interested entities. A link on the Association website will also be provided.