



Burnett County
Lakes & Rivers
Association



Washburn County
LAKES AND RIVERS
ASSOCIATION

Dear Lake Service Provider,

We need your help! Zebra Mussels have been found in Big McKenzie Lake – the first inland lake with zebra mussels in a 12-county area in Northwestern Wisconsin. This makes boat/trailer cleaning and disinfections important. We would like to offer some assistance to you to help keep boats, trailers, and other equipment clean by providing materials for your use (disinfectants and sprayers) and training on proper procedures, etc. Service providers like you care about the lakes – so much that some of the suggestions in this letter came directly from them.

Remember that transportation of aquatic plants, animals, and water is illegal both under state and county laws. Always Inspect, Remove plants and animals, Drain all water, and Never Move plants, animals, or water from any boat landing.

Decontaminating your equipment further minimizes the chances of spreading aquatic invasive species, especially small critters like zebra mussel larvae that the naked eye cannot see. Some options for disinfection are:

1. Have a dedicated trailer for Big McKenzie Lake.
 - Some vendors are reserving trailers to be used only on Big McKenzie.
 - Some lake associations are providing trailers specific for their lake.
 - Some lake associations are providing financial assistance to purchase trailers specific for their lake.
2. Hot water pressure wash – at least 140° for 10 minutes.
3. Virkon Aquatic – this is a hydrogen peroxide type product. Fairly easy to use and safe for water environments. Non corrosive but hard on hip boots and waders especially if not rinsed. Contact Burnett or Washburn counties for assistance. We will purchase the Virkon Aquatic and sprayers for your use as requested.
4. Bleach solution – this is a substantially diluted chlorine solution from household bleach. Not good for the lake environment and is corrosive to metals. Ratio of 1.25 ounces (or 2.5 tablespoons) of household bleach per 1 gallon of water. Note: once mixed, the potency diminishes after 24 hours, so you'll need to mix a fresh batch every day. The LWCDs will provide bleach and sprayers as requested.

The good news? The County Land & Water Conservation Departments can provide you with any equipment, materials or training needed for disinfection. As we move forward in this effort to control the spread of zebra mussels we welcome any communication with requests or recommendations. In the meantime, check out www.wclra.org for more local information.

The DNR web site has gear and method specific information which you can access by following this link:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/disinfection.html>

Please feel free to contact us at the number listed below. **We need to know your spring needs for chemicals and sprayers ASAP.** We appreciate your partnership to keep our lakes clean!

Dave Ferris
County Conservationist
Burnett County
715.349.2186
dferris@burnettcounty.org

Lisa Burns
Conservation Coordinator
Washburn County
715.468.4654
lburns@co.washburn.wi.us

Dear Lake Association Contact:

I'm writing for the Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association (BCLRA) to make certain that your association knows about the discovery last October of invasive zebra mussels in Big McKenzie Lake. (Big McKenzie is partly in both Burnett and Washburn Counties.) The BCLRA wants to tell you about efforts to prevent the zebra mussels from spreading. Please forward this to others in your association as appropriate.

The WDNR has assembled a Zebra Mussel Management team with representatives from the Washburn and Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Associations, the McKenzie Lake Association, and county, state, and federal agencies to determine how to prevent these invasive mussels from spreading. I am BCLRA's representative on that team.

If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to check out the information about zebra mussels on the BCLRA website:

<http://www.burnettcounty.com/index.aspx?nid=358&PREVIEW=YES>

The Wisconsin DNR has more zebra mussel information on its website. **In addition, the public is invited to attend a Zebra Mussel Informational Open House on Thursday, May 18 from 4 pm to 8 pm at the Spooner Ag Research Station.** It will be an open house format with a question & answer session beginning at 7:00. Information will be available about zebra mussel identification, Clean Boats Clean Waters inspections, how to drain and disinfect watercraft (including PWCs), what lake associations can do (and how to form one), and more.

There will also be a session on zebra mussels at the Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference in Hayward on June 16. You can get conference details and register at <https://www.northland.edu/sustain/soei/conferences-symposiums/lakesconference/>.

Zebra mussels are spread when adult mussels are attached to a hard surface or plant that is moved to another water body and when water containing zebra mussel veligers (larvae) is transferred into another lake. To keep zebra mussels and other invasive species out of your lake, remind your association members and boaters of the steps to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers:

- **INSPECT boats trailers, and equipment.**
- **REMOVE all attached aquatic plants and animals.**
- **DRAIN all water from boats, vehicles, and equipment.**
- **NEVER MOVE plants or live fish away from a water body.**

With so many people on our lakes hiring service providers to put in docks and pontoons this time of year, it is important that they take precautions too. The Fish Lake Property Owners Association, which is located near Big McKenzie, took the lead by asking businesses that provide service on their lake to either segregate equipment used on Big McKenzie or disinfect it before putting it in another lake. Burnett and Washburn

Counties also sent the attached letter to the service providers we are aware of. Those that have been contacted have been very cooperative. However, there are likely some smaller service providers not on the mailing list. We recommend that you email the attached letter to your members and ask them to show it to their service providers.

There will be increased monitoring and signage at the McKenzie Lakes boat landings. In addition, wash stations will be set up so boaters entering and leaving those lakes can disinfect their equipment. The use of these stations will be voluntary, as we cannot legally require anyone to wash their boats unless the inspection shows that they have plants or animals attached. Please watch for zebra mussels in and around your lake this spring and summer, and report any suspicious findings to Dave Ferris at the phone number below.

Most Wisconsin lakes have been modeled to determine which ones have suitable levels of calcium to sustain a zebra mussel population. The results are shown on the model website at <http://www.aissmartprevention.wisc.edu/mappingtool.php>. It categorizes lakes as "Suitable," "Borderline Suitable," "Not Suitable," and "Data Not Available." As with most models, there are exceptions. Lakes connected to suitable lakes, for example, have a higher chance of establishing zebra mussel populations regardless of their suitability. **And, even for lakes that are "Not Suitable", please remember that the same steps that prevent zebra mussels from spreading will also keep out other invasive species that are on our doorsteps.**

BCLRA will publish current information about zebra mussels on in our spring *LakeLines* newsletter. If you have any questions, you may reply to this email or call Roger Noe, BCLRA President, at 715-635-6309, or Dave Ferris, the Burnett County Conservationist, at 715-349-2186.

Bob Baker
BCLRA Secretary/Treasurer and
Zebra Mussel Management Team Member