

Angling, AIS and Access Open Space Meeting Session Notes

Date: 08/15/2019

Location: Monticello High School, Monticello, MN

All notes have been typed unedited, directly from handwritten participant notes.

Topic 1: Wake Boats (9 attendees)

Convener: Larry Koch

Discussion Notes

East Lecture Room

Introduction

- Bill
- Barry, Park Rapids
- Rosalie
- Bob Sedney
- John
- Nancy Stewart, DNR
- Dave Heuhn, White Bear

Bob

- Wakes almost washed (?) almost (?) of the wake
- Min distances
- (?) kayak
- Grassi & Roche: Ballast water – (?) and not (?) to buy from one to another

Bill

- Lake water take in and brings out
- Carry in motor and the ballast
- Hard to decontaminate
- Wright County – decontaminate – why should (?)
- Problem not the boats the
- Responsible for wake – no idea what's going on
- Lot who drive don't (?)
- Ed of owner but not the...

Barry

- Kayak
- Almost run over
- Applies to all
- Lake Mich – to the US Coast Guard
- Question: What's left ballast – clean . drain . dry
- Adam Doll – U of M/DNR

Dane Huinker –

- Drain as much as can
- Decontaminate
- Take long time
- Dry at least five days

Barry – location of decontamination

- App – decontamination stations
- Website
- Lakebed disturbance
- (?) out nature
- Roschn – Ohio – 25 ft – 6 ft – phosphorus

Bob – Is on no wake – DNR (?)

No – wake – put a face book notice by no wake

Sherburne County

- Cell phone – shoot videos

Bill – Maple Lake

reasonable restrictions on the size of lake.

- Slow the traffic to protect the people
- Pontoon – too scary – might get rid of
- Don't mix –
- Wake Boats – special rules
- Local h
- ?'s
- Had an online course – Was repealed
- Has to have enforcement

Bill – Lake patrol

- If enough cells – get on the lake
- Make job longer term
- Ultra violet radiation – (?) – decontamination
- Access – grade / classification
- Method to report incidences
- Enough needs
- Need Enforcement
- Not enough to do inspections and monitor violations

Topic 2: Centralizing AIS Inspections and Decontamination (30+ attendees)

Convener: Steve Gunther

Discussion Notes

Negative Impacts of Centralization

- Lost business revenue due to lower boat traffic.
- Angler participation reduced.
- No outgoing inspections.
- Takes more time from inspection to launch.
- Less traffic on the lake.
- Lower quality inspections crushed inspectors.
- Inspections not 24/7.
- Other avenues of infestations.

Positive Impacts of Centralization

- More lakes get AIS inspections.
- Saves money.
- Allows centralized decontamination
- Provides more education to more users.
- Reduces impact to fishing / boating quality.
- Less traffic on the lake.
- Better quality inspection (more supervision).
- Entrance = Exit

Potential Action

- Inspect once and allow launch on some lakes.
- Better education load Self-education.

Topic 3: Who should pay to keep lakes usable? Prevention and Control (20 attendees)

Convener: Joe Schneider

Discussion Notes

Shoreowner: 13

Fishing Industry: 3

Government: 3

Sea Grant: Doug Jensen

Joe: Cost for inspection programs are very high but very convenient and necessary!

- AIS generally there for a long time – will never go away.
- SS is an algae – more complicated than an animal or plant.

- How do we control the costs of maintenance to use the lake. Lake Koronis is spending \$100K to \$250K per year to treat SS.
- What is the right public policy to keep these costs under control – have more government involvement and not rest on shore homeowners and those who use the lake (transient boaters).
- Some homeowners are looking into LIDs. They can't afford the costs anymore.
- Ramsey Lake – boat access is not easy to boat thru because of CLP! Thus, not as many boaters. Their lake is very low with a huge infestation of CLP.

Doug: Either we put more \$ into prevention or even more into maintenance.

Alicia: Wright County: How do you allocate funding – what % for inspections, treatment, surveys, and maintenance is good enough. She is in charge of funding – the main concern is SS.

Roger: Former and lakeshore owner – why do we use chemicals! Why don't we harvest the weeds and not use chemicals.

Joe: We can't do that – it won't control the weeds otherwise.

Roger: Why can't we dump sand?

Others: It is illegal!

Charlie: Most of my peers used to be happy to pay more for a fishing license – we're paying a minimum now.

Carroll: Legislators are stopping the hike

Doug: \$10.65 for boat restoration fee now.

- 2017 – 97% compliance
- 2018 – 97% compliance
- Roadside inspections – 15% are not compliant – they're just passing through our state. Over 1,000 watercraft inspector's now!

Sugar Lake – budget \$15K for CLP - \$15K for EM. They've been treating each for years – the infestations rise and fall but overall has stabilized. They haven't gotten rid of the AIS but it seems to be staying the same so far.

View: DNR – “You have to get sicker to get some medicine.”

Rich: We have to get more participation from the homeowners, the government, fishermen and transient boaters! Thanks to ML and R we got the funding in the past.

Charlie: Far more fishermen than lakeshore owners! Inspectors should be more thorough and make fishermen more compliant. Have the fishermen take a class on line for \$20, then get a sticker to “brag” about this class. This sticker would maybe allow more “leniency” for these people.

Doug: 83 out of 87 counties get the \$10 million. Start a contingency fund to address new infestations – have these counties each kick in 1% and then have DNR kick in some too.

Chad: (From I Cast business): Increase of boat req. fee is ok. “Online” class is a good idea. We just don't want to see accesses closed. Everyone needs to get along.

Doug: 2.9 million/year due to fee increase.

Carroll: Tip the motors up all the way to dump another few ounces of water; including trolling motors. Start your motor for a few seconds to release even more water.

Topic 4: What type of controls are needed for boat accesses and lakeshore owners to stop AIS? (12 attendees)

Convener: Tom Frahm

Discussion Notes

- Electronic Tag
- Decontamination of all boats.
- 1 Lake / Boat
- Guarantee
- Larger Fine
- Boat / AIS Training – Mandatory
- Lakeshore Owner Pay Management \$
- Boat Mandatory Help / Trailer / Help Stop AIS
- Are humans the only cause of AIS spread?
- Too much control is a problem.

Topic 5: AIS Classified and Managed as a Pollutant. Some AIS meets the definition of a pollutant under the CWA and may be a “toxic pollutant” under the CWA (Clean Water Act) (15 attendees)

Convener: Eric Evenson

Discussion Notes

- Has it been good (?)
 - Need to be more focused.
 - Need to go back to legislation to determine if it is a pollutant.
 - What AIS is a pollutant (e.g. Zebra mussels)
- MPCA would need to accept AIS as a pollutant.
- Locals would need to pressure the DNR to have the discussion.
- What are the political issues between the DNR and PCA that would prevent this from happening?
- At a conference last year –
 - Ballast water laws could be used to consider AIS as a pollutant.
 - Dumping of tailings/sewage discharge are considered pollutants.
- In this political climate we don't want DNR and MPCA fighting.
- Don't want to compete with funds.
- This would shift the AIS from DNR to MPCA.
- This would require local plans and be created to address this problem.

- State moving this direction – 1BA macrophyte indexes this would easily dovetail into this effort.
- Just because it's an AIS it might not be a pollutant.
- The PCA releases CLP funds to control common carp.
- Zebra mussels are tied to toxic algae blooms.
- Legislature executed carp & CLP from listed as invasives.
- Legislation needs to be changed not to exclude carp and CLP.
- If toxic algae classes beaches – is there a way to related AIS to pollution?
- Lake managers don't know how to classify AIS.
- There are standards that make a lake impaired as unimpaired (this is actually a ...
- DNR advisory committee as MISAC - may be take right people to talk to.
- Who do we talk to about this issue at the state agency level?
- Chamber of Commerce. Campaign at the Legislature. Fishing Groups. May have interest in this.
- Poor management of lake access.
- Needs technical and legal vetting.
 - How do we continue honing these questions?
 - Bring this to MAWD for a discussion panel.
- To answer this question it would need local, citizen, SWCD, MPCA, DNR, MAWD to ask the question.
- Would there be a value in convening a meeting between DNR and MPCA to ask this question?
- Watershed Districts are uniquely suited to ask this question.
- Hydrilla / SSW only to be able to control with herbicides.
- Good idea – needs to be considered
- Good direction.

Topic 6: Inspection / Inspector Overreach and Failures (12-14 attendees)

Convener: Carroll

Discussion Notes

How can inspections be improved?

- Need to check the trolling motor props during inspections.
- More training for inspectors.
- More consistency in inspections, higher level.
- DNR inspection program hasn't changed for years – update it, improve techniques.
- Livewell plumbing, trailers – places water can hide.
- Looking, touching underneath, talking to inspect.

What inspection components are hindering?

- Important to maintain ability to go lake to lake.
- Not wanting to back up line for entering / exiting lakes.
- Catch / weigh / release tournaments ONLY to avoid livewell need? Chemical to pour in livewell or spray down boat with to kill everything?

What gets logged during inspection?

- Yes/no questions, license plate #, checklist inspection.
- Sheriff water deputy, DNR staff doing inspections.

Four types of inspectors –

- Level 2 is the highest.
- Level 1 – cannot get in your boat.
- Two lower levels with limited ability.

If someone denies a Level 1 or Level 2 inspector the right to inspect a live well, then

- Can restrict access to lake
- Can report a conservation officer if they still launch their boat.

LGU needs better/more management and oversight of boat inspectors – funding/resources needed from DNR?

- Opportunities to shadow best/seasoned DNR inspectors.
- All boats are different.
- More questions on survey – more specific e.g. – check under the hull?
- Trolling water? Checking trailer?

Inspectors should be given tools to clean the public accesses.

- Should be regularly cleaned.

Overreach

- Need to be reasonable, common sense.
- When lightning and 20 people trying to get off of one access – safety FIRST!
- When wind pushes plants to public boat launch, and it takes an hour to pull weeds off, let people go? (with promise to clean / dry at home!)

Topic 7: Is Behavior Change and Outreach Working? (23 attendees)

Convener: Doug Jensen

Discussion Notes

- 16 people – Lake Associations
- 1 DNR / 2 Statements / 3 Property Associations
- 1 Media / 3 State SAIS Committee

- MN Angling 1982 AIS, 1994 Boaters Survey
- Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers in 1992
- Partnering with DNR – (?) and Wildlife Forever
- Used 25-30 Different Strategies
- Dan – Clean, Drain, Dry

Behavior Change

- Boaters and Anglers campaign- (?) in Behavior Change
- Stop Aquatic hitchhikers make it so anyone can get involved

Clean Drain Dry message – use an understanding of resource protection

- Consistent messaging

- 825,000 boaters
- Get public information – MPR doing it

Ideas

- Create an AIS video game
- Huge fine for transporting
- Target children – AIS Inspector Badge
- Video game – stop AIS –stop zebra mussels
- Get into schools, so message becomes generational
- Education
- “All it takes is one boat to ruin a lake”
- Message – Do the right thing!
- Is anyone partnering with experts who deal with behavior change?
- Where do they get their information?
 - internet
 - billboards
- Mass communication piece
- Cell phone App – service @ small lakes
- DNR website lists decontamination statistics
- Cameras change behaviors if they know someone is watching them.
- 5 days boats before place in another water
- 21 day dry docks, rafts
- Idea- (?) bait, HACCP
- Day time for feasibility
- Benefits for imprints – long-term (?)

Topic 8: Quarantine of Lakes with AIS new to MN (24 attendees)

Convener: Rich Burton

Discussion Notes

Gov – 1, Fish – 3, LPO – 17, DNR – 1, MLRA – 1, RAPALA – 1

- Jeff F. tried to get boat cleaning stations – did not succeed.
- 15 lakes now infested. Pressure wash all boats exiting lake.
- Lake Minnetonka has 16 public accesses. 160 private accesses.
- 66,000 public launches, 4,000 LPO
- If Minnetonka gets SSW, many lakes will get it quickly.
- Definition of quarantine: No In/Out
- Jeff Forrester: Research shows animals do not spread AIS.
- Tim Edgeton (DNR): Riparian rights limit or prevent closing public accesses. Actually might require a U.S. Constitution Amendment. States may need to get approval from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Dan Quinn (Rapala): Says central inspection greatly reduces number of people fishing. Inspection/cleaning is too big an inconvenience for many people.

- Could quarantine be achieved by high pressure cleaning when watercraft is taken from lake? Need trained full person to run the cleaning station.
- Bulbils live 2-4 hours out of water. Plant fragments 2-72 hours.
- Cleaning stations can be solar powered. Have universal education for school fishing clubs for bass clubs, etc.
- Quarantine would be very sore subject with most people. How about boat operator's license for every boat owner and user? Include AIS training in licensing.
- 15 lakes, 28 launches with SSW. Cost for 3 year program with wash stations would be \$1,200,000 including equipment and labor for cleaning. No ramp inspection included in this cost.

Topic 9: How is DNR Organized/which part oversees AIS?/What Actions has the state made to stop the spread of AIS (? attendees)

Conveners: Jean Swanson & Steve Gunther

Discussion Notes

Heidi Wolf / DNR Head of Invasive Species Unit which is under Division of Ecological and Water Resources, filled us in on what her Division is doing to control and prevent AIS.

- The department is working to educate boaters and encourage more participation by total lake communities and general in public.
- They are concentrating on research, education, management and reaching general public.
- They are presently hiring for trainings for AIS inspection/prevention.

The groups talked about steps that could be made to solve the AIS issue.

- If people knew about changes in lake, fines applied to offenders, etc. and then asked to contact legislators to back more strident laws, we could help change and improve the AIS issue.
- My own thought – work with educators in schools to teach.

DNR Action

- We lack a national regulatory framework.
- MAISRC not funded by DNR.
- DNR has a 2018 AIS report on the website that defines action.
- DNR delegates AIS inspections to LGUs but provides training.
- AIS detector volunteers are a U of M project.
- \$10M distributed to Counties.

Specifics

- Community-based social marketing.
 - Get people to sign and pledge to stop AIS.
- Boat operators training – only for 12-16 year olds!
- AIS decal – required online training but repealed after 2012.
- Boat surcharge increased from \$5 to \$10.65 - \$2.9M in additional funding.

- DNR hoping to hire another year-around AIS trainer.
- \$100K for AIS Rapid Response.
- Aquatic plant management grants for Lake Associations.
- Fines - \$50 for transporting AIS – Counties can apply additional \$.
 - Need legislators to raise fine.
- Cross state/border inspections – too expensive and too many pathways.

Topic 10: Fee Increases (4 attendees)

Convener: Chad Tonowicz

Discussion Notes

Marty: Shoreline property owners. All MN need to have a stamp.

Pat: Shoreline owners work with Soil & Water and set goals through them.

- Transient Boater education.
- Education – Mandates

Dan: Lives on Sugar Lake – Serves on Wright County Regions Inspection Board.

- Invoice of Extension
- Fees – Prevention or Eradication?

Ryan: Fishing industry and shoreline owner.

Pat: A good connection with Soil & Water. More help than the DNR.

R (? to the ?) to inspire more education.

M: Because there is no leadership we have to do it ourselves.

Pat: Let's put skin in the game – give everyone an opportunity to ??

Ryan: Are we slowing it to buy time for science to manage it?

M: How do we fund it?

Ryan: Would rather forward bio-control methods than pure prevention that you cannot guarantee will work.

Dan: Fees – Some should go to research.

Barry: While more \$ is needed – also would be good to have an action plan and implement or the funds.

Pat:

- Education
- Research
- Prevention

- Ryan: Can't be socioeconomic – must be all inclusive.
- Pat: only raise fees with (?)
- Dan: Got grant from DNR (\$15,000) to help with milfoil

Topic 11: Lake Service Providers and Lake Vegetation Treatments (7 attendees)

Convener: Larry Koch

Discussion Notes

April Rust with DNR
Roger – 1 mile Lakes
Sharon – Hubbard County, Long Lake
Lisa – Wright County
Alicia – Elk
Drew – C. County
Bill – Maple Lake

Lake Service Providers

April Rust gave LSP program Overview

- Paid to install, remove, rent or decontaminate water related equipment
- Outfitters, lawn irrigation (with lake water)
- 2012 start in statute, definition change 2013
- Outreach to those not understanding they are covered
- 3 year permit
- Mandated education – water inspection methods
- Training – now online – more accessible.
- Owner gets permit and permit sticker on vehicle
- Sticker on the windshield
- Inspection – wallet card?
- Up to \$175 fine, working without training, without permit sticker
- Neg. AIS regulations – transport – try to introduce
- Work with local inspectors – patterns of violations [owner must escort]
- DNR: Can modify, revoke, deny. Want to be deliberate – judge decide – high penalty. [DNR admin. Judge] fee – additional requirements
- Max. revoke, customized permit requirements.

Outreach

Itasca– program for 5 star LSPs

Drew – New LSP

1. Owner/mgr permit training

2. All employees wallet card quick training

Hire late – Can do @ home at night

- Lakes with 100's owners –
- Not fallen lake rules plants
- When not have inspections

April multiple fine – couple of \$1K's

Bill – Maple Lake

- Boat lift – across people's property – zebra mussels
- Who was fined?
- Prairie Lake handed
- Permit – drop (?)
- Last year – 100
- (?) not a \$ - Logo's - # how do it – slow –
- Bill – bring across on the ice? Permit?
- Lisa –
 - Rents of jet ski needs permits.
 - Not tour operators
 - No tabs –
 - “Lake Service Providers” on DNR website
- VRBO – rental?
- Charlie –
- Bill – 6 groups – many ok – LSP – come in – swarms

Lake Vegetation Treatments

Brandt – Maple Lake – treatment

- Treatment
- Diversity – treatment
- 12' out
- Natural coontail
- > of Eurasian / coontail
- Key each systems – all fish
- There – not in the “weeds”
- Bluegills condensed – middle of lake
- Beebee Lake
- Treatment take out the coontail – coontail not recover
- Same lake provided but different chemical and approved in deeper water.
- Need a feedback loop for public to know results.

Topic 12: Legal issues to slow the spread of AIS and how to garner better awareness, advocacy and action at state and local level (? attendees)

Convener: Kris Olson

Discussion Notes

- Out-of-State lake users (Education/Law Awareness)
 - Fishers (Out-of-State fishing license education point)
 - Recreational boaters (need a solution for educating this group)
- Tiered Action Plan for various AIS infestations
 - Offer different action plans for different species (based on danger/impact of ecological damage to lakes)
 - EWM/CLP
 - Zebra mussels
 - SSW or similar
- OIT Pathways (organisms in Trade)
 - Aquarium/water garden releases
 - Closing these infestation opportunities
- Pursuing AIS as pollutant – more serious issue to tap into other funding sources
 - Ballast water
 - AIS species

Legislative Issues re: AIS

- Need a more organized citizen and business education process to shape and inform what our state legislature works on and to track and communicate the bills and outcomes along the way.

Key stakeholders that need to be involved and collaborate

- Lake Associations / COLA's – City/County leaders
- Local/state elected officials
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Other environmental/conservation groups
- MN COLA and MLR

Topic 13: Once AIS is identified, what are reasonable to control access while treatment and spread are in process? (10 attendees)

Convener: Rosalie Musachio

Discussion Notes

- Discussed early detection – Rapid Response and DNR policies – vs. county owned access. Also discussed Federal Requirements.
- Sherburne County Sheriff will review Camera Video at boat landings for violation.
- Lake associations are acting aggressively to treat AIS.

Topic 14: What are acceptable limits to free and unfettered access? How restrictive public water access? Regulations are detrimental to participation, conservation and MN's economy. (32 attendees)

Convener: Ryan Deschine, Joe Schneider

Discussion Notes

Lakes 20, Anglers 9, News 1, Government 2

- Concern that young people aren't becoming participants as much anymore and that's not good. And that regional decontamination will further that decline.
- Haven't seen a decrease in under 30 fishing licenses but % of populations are decreasing.
- Cost of boating is more expensive.
- Perception that regional inspections will further impact fishing participation.
- But AIS impacts also reduce usage.
- Getting rid of AIS (milfoil) through treatment increases usage.
- Lots of industry involvement in this session.
 - Rapala
 - Wildlife Forever
 - Linder Media
- Lots of misunderstanding of who pays the costs of inspections and decontamination.
- Question: Does the industry growth have more priority over water quality?
- Quarantine can only be considered for life and safety reasons.
- Belief by the industry that education is primary.

Topic 15: Fostering relationships between transient boaters and property owners/lake associations (9 attendees)

Convener: Ron Eisner

Discussion Notes

- Face-to-face conversations are most helpful. Example was one Lake Association whose AIS Committee reached out to fishing organizations and has reps of fishing clubs at all of their meetings by extension. There was a suggestion that any Lake Association receiving AIS funds should be required to have fishing organizations participation in their organization.

Comments from pro-angler tournament director:

- Fishermen are as passionate about lake access as gun owners are about 2nd amendment rights.
- Has had lake associations ask him to leave their meetings when he went to the meeting to answer questions about the tournament.
- New watercraft should have "green certified" designs – that i.e. design will not promote spread of AIS.

- Lake property owners would be much more at ease if they were aware of exhibition steps fishing tournament organizers. Also, fishing clubs have taken the step to clean up landings after weigh-in, and invited lake association to attend.
- Statewide: Incorporate AIS training and awareness into student angling programs, high school and college.