

# I S C C W - Watersmeet Lakeguards

Invasive Species Control Coalition of Watersmeet

P.O. Box 725

Watersmeet, MI 49969

I SCCW.org or Lakeguards.org



August, 2008

Dear Neighbor,

It has been almost a full year since we sent out our last letter announcing the formation of the Invasive Species Control Coalition of Watersmeet to carry on the work so ably started by the Watersmeet Township Aquatic Nuisance Species Coalition. As a person with interests in Watersmeet we thought you would like to know of the success we have had in this past year.

First has been our success in fund raising. Our prior letter produced over \$20,000 from 188 memberships and donations. In May of this year we were informed that two of our grant requests have been approved. We will be receiving \$4,000 from the BoatUS Foundation Clean Water Grant and \$40,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Grant. In addition, we have been granted \$20,000 from Watersmeet Township to further aid us as we continue our work to save our waterways from the threat of invasive species.

Second has been our success in water user's education. Our educators have been trained through the auspices of the Michigan Sea Grant on the inspection of watercraft and education of owners under the acclaimed Clean Boats Clean Waters campaign. We have five certified instructors qualified to train volunteers and presently have more than 20 trained volunteer educators. We also employ four part-time educator/inspectors at various landings throughout the area talking to boaters, showing them how to inspect their boats and trailers for invasive species making them aware of the danger and soliciting their help in controlling the most predominant way of spreading this problem. In addition, our educators are visiting local resorts, lake association meetings, and other interest groups to inform as many users as possible and to solicit and train additional volunteers who you will now see at many lake sites. Our goal is to have a minimum of one team of trained educators for each public boat landing in the Township as well as all area resorts with private landings. Our education committee has developed an informative website ([www.lakeguards.org](http://www.lakeguards.org)) and is also providing various materials to the general public to keep awareness of this problem at a heightened level.

Third, with the help of grant monies, we have taken possession of our first portable boat washing rig which you will now see at key locations within the Township demonstrating to area boaters the importance of properly cleaning their boats and related equipment prior to transporting them from one body of water to another. This is a pressurized spray unit which has proved successful in other areas for cleaning boats and trailers, ridding them of the hitch-hiking species that they may carry from lake to lake.

Fourth, our contracted lake survey professional, who is certified in the States of Michigan and Wisconsin, is actively inspecting area lakes and doing a detail analysis on each lake where a problem is found. When infestation is found we coordinate with personnel from the US Forest Service and the Army Corps of Engineers for positive species identification and treatment methods. To date seven (7) areas of infestation have been identified and all of them are being managed to reduce and/or control the infestations, six (6) of them by chemical treatments and one (1) with biological control measures. All chemical applicators are certified by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Lastly, with help from our generous backers we have been able to provide financial assistance to several of the lake groups in controlling these infested waters. Last fall we provided several area lake

associations with up to a 50% match of their costs for chemical control methods on infested lakes. This spring we assisted the Bass Lake group with a new approach (new to our area) by providing 30% of the cost of a planting of Eurasian water milfoil eating weevils in the lake. These weevils feed only on the milfoil, expanding in population as the milfoil expands and dying out as the milfoil dies out. Again, this is a proven and safe method used in other areas.

We continue to work with the Western Upper Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (WUPCWMA), the US Forest Service, and the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission and are cooperating with surrounding communities. Several of our members attended and spoke on the Watersmeet effort at the Western UP Regional Lakes & Stream Association gathering last fall. Through our Township officials we have made the Michigan Township Association more aware of the seriousness of this threat to our waters. In the past year we identified several new invasive species which we are developing plans to deal with. Beside Eurasian Water Milfoil, we now have Curly Leaf Pond Weed and Rusty Crayfish. Zebra Mussels and Spiny Water Fleas have been identified in neighboring waters.

In November of 2007 we completed a partnership with the University of Notre Dame and the Nature Conservancy in conducting a comprehensive recreational boater survey to establish a scientific database to correlate boating habits with the potential spread of invasive species from lake to lake. We are awaiting that report for use in planning our on-going activities. We continue to work at Langford Lake with the Forest Service and the Army Corp of Engineers to determine the best method of continuous treatment for Eurasian Water Milfoil and assisting Bass Lake with an alternative control method. We have also partnered, and will continue these efforts, with the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Tribal Indians, various U.P. weed management groups and the Watersmeet Township Board of Trustees.

Now you will ask, why are we telling you all of this? The answer is simple.

If you have been following the efforts of our neighbor, Vilas County, you have read of just how extensive this problem can become and how expensive it will be if not controlled from the onset. We have made a good start but there is much more to do. To do it --- we need your help. Our waterways are still in trouble. This is our second plea for your support. We need workers --- we need you. However, we know that everyone cannot afford the time to participate but --- you can still help us. We need your tax deductible dollars.

We sincerely hope that you will decide to join us by completing the enclosed [membership form](#). If not, will you at least support us with a tax deductible donation? Please, join with your neighbors and other concerned citizens of Watersmeet Township and help preserve the beautiful resources that God has given us.

I believe in Watersmeet --- I hope you do too. Thank You!

Sincerely,



Will Buergey,  
ISCCW President

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