

**SOKAOGON CHIPPEWA COMMUNITY**

**Final Report**

**WDNR Planning Grant – ALPL-018-04**

**Establishment of Watercraft Inspection  
and User Education Program**



**July 15, 2007**

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## **INTRODUCTION – PROBLEM**

In summer 2001, zebra mussels were found in Lake Metonga, Forest County, WI (Figure 1). In spring 2002, the Sokaogon Chippewa Community initiated a long-term study to address possible ecological impacts of zebra mussels to Lake Metonga and the potential spread of zebra mussels downstream to the Wolf River.

Preliminary study results indicated that zebra mussel adult densities had increased steadily and reproduction and subsequent veliger survival on samplers had been alarmingly high. The potential for zebra mussel introduction in to other lakes was a big concern. Zebra mussel veligers could be introduced through bait buckets and boat livewells and bilge water. Furthermore, zebra mussels were colonizing the exotic plant, Eurasian water-milfoil. By not removing this plant from watercraft and trailers, two exotics could be spread to other lakes at the same time. Lake Metonga also contained rusty crayfish and purple loosestrife, and because of its exotic species history, was a good candidate for new species such as quagga mussels, curl-leaf pondweed, and spiny water flea.

With the high density of lakes in Northern Wisconsin, and the likelihood of lake jumping occurring, preventive measures were needed to slow-down or eliminate the introduction or spread of exotics to and from Lake Metonga and other regional lakes. In the spring 2004, the Sokaogon Chippewa Community received funding through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Lake Planning Grant, AIS Program to initiate a watercraft inspection and lake-user education program to help achieve this task.

## **PROJECT AREA**

Although the project area was to consist of lakes in Forest County with an initial emphasis on Lake Metonga, all effort was concentrated on Lake Metonga because of the increase in zebra mussel abundance and the potential transfer threat to local lakes.

## **METHODS AND ACTIVITIES**

Watercraft inspections were performed in 2004 and 2005. All watercraft inspections were performed using protocols and guidelines provided in the “Clean Boats, Cleans Waters” Volunteer Monitoring Handbook for Invasive Species developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and UW-Extension. All inspection/education materials were provided by the WDNR and UW-Extension. All interview data were entered into the WDNR online database. Inspections were performed during high-use days, such as fishing tournaments and holidays. The work schedule was coordinated with WDNR inspectors to make sure an inspector was present for most high-use days. An emphasis was placed on finding out where users were coming from or going to. Inspectors performed most surveys at the north boat landing on Lake Metonga but traveled to the south boat landing as needed (Figure 1).

Michael Preul, Tribal Fisheries Biologist coordinated the program, including the training of all inspectors. Michael Preul attended numerous schools, county and local lake meetings, workshops, and conferences to recruit volunteer inspectors and present program results.

The inspection program consisted of the following activities:

- 1) Perform standard inspection/education program using WDNR protocol.
- 2) Perform user survey with a focus on where users are coming from and going to.

Program funds were used to purchase a power washer for watercraft cleaning and a customized, enclosed trailer (Figure, Report Cover), which was left at the north boat landing on Lake Metonga for the season. The trailer was used as information booth/concession/shelter for inspectors. Conveniences such as refreshments and snacks, a first aid kit, bug spray, suntan lotion, toiletries, etc. were available to lake users with the goal of providing an incentive to cooperate with the program. The trailer was also brought to local lake fairs and used as an information booth.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **2004**

In 2004, inspections were performed from June 18 until August 3. Inspectors were present for one major holiday and several fishing tournaments. The start time of inspections was later than expected due to project organization and delays in grant fund distribution. However, WDNR inspectors were present during early-season, high-use days and throughout the season when Sokaogon Chippewa Community inspectors could not be present.

Please refer to Table 1 for details regarding the 2004 season. A few highlights are presented below. One inspector spent 75.25 hours at the Lake Metonga landings performing 44 interviews with 75 individuals contacted. Anglers accounted for most interviews at 63%, personal watercraft second at 25%. Twenty-five percent of those interviewed weren't aware of AIS in Lake Metonga. There were many lake users from the Fox Valley and other areas with existing zebra mussel infestations. Lakes visited by boaters after leaving Lake Metonga included Lake Michigan (Green Bay area), Lake Tomahawk (Oneida County), and several Forest County Lakes: Franklin, Butternut, Rolling Stone, Roberts, Lucerne, Kentuck, and Wabikon. Where possible, individuals from these lakes have been contacted about this threat. All interview data were entered into the WDNR online database.

### **2005**

In 2005, inspections were performed from May 27 until July 24. Inspectors were present for two major holidays and several fishing tournaments. However, WDNR inspectors were present during early-season, high-use days and throughout the season when Sokaogon Chippewa Community inspectors could not be present.

Please refer to Table 2 for details regarding the 2005 season. A few highlights are presented below. Several inspectors, sometimes 2-3 at a time, spent 75.25 hours at the Lake Metonga landings performing 191 interviews with 399 individuals contacted. Anglers accounted for most interviews at 52%, personal watercraft second at 35%. Fifteen percent of those interviewed weren't aware of AIS in Lake Metonga, down 10% from 2004. Hopefully this is a result of education efforts in 2004 and 2005 by the WDNR and the Sokaogon Chippewa Community. As in 2004, there were many lake users from the Fox Valley and other areas with existing zebra

mussel infestations. Lakes visited by boaters after leaving Lake Metonga included Lake Michigan (Green Bay area), Lake Tomahawk (Oneida County), and several Forest County Lakes: Franklin, Butternut, Rolling Stone, Roberts, Lucerne, Kentuck, and Wabikon. Where possible, individuals from these lakes have been contacted about this threat. All interview data were entered into the WDNR online database.

Starting the weekend of July 4, 2005 a power washer was available at the north landing of Lake Metonga. The washer was only available when an inspector was present and was used only on watercraft exiting the lake. Surprisingly, many users chose to use the washer voluntarily.

Overall, the Sokaogon Chippewa Community received a lot of positive feedback with this program. Inspectors were complimented many times for their efforts in fighting the spread of exotic species. The Sokaogon Chippewa Community will continue to be involved watercraft inspections and exotic species issues as necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, the WDNR “Clean Boats, Clean Waters” and WDNR Planning Grant, AIS Program are beneficial, well-run programs, and the Sokaogon Chippewa Community appreciates the funding support. All the materials provided by the WDNR and UW-Extension made starting a watercraft inspection program easy. However, there were some difficulties in starting and sustaining the program, primarily in recruiting volunteers to assist with the program. The WDNR Planning Grant, AIS Program did not allow the labor costs of conducting inspections as an eligible expense, thus relying on volunteers for all of the inspections. Initially, Michael Preul, Fisheries Biologist was confident that many volunteers could be recruited as inspectors, thus using their volunteer hour wages as a local match. However, he was unsuccessful in recruiting one consistent volunteer, even after speaking at schools, lake groups, and various meetings. Instead, all interviews were performed by Sokaogon Chippewa Community employees.

The Sokaogon Chippewa Community has recommendations for the WDNR Lake Planning Grant, AIS Program. First, inspectors should be eligible to be paid from grant funds. Second, the grant requirement of a 50:50 state-local expense match is difficult to achieve, especially when volunteers and their donated labor match are difficult to come by. This 50:50 match may make it prohibitive for various groups including the Sokaogon Chippewa Community to apply for these funds. Consequently, the Sokaogon Chippewa Community recommends that the WDNR change the match from 50:50 to 75:25 as with the other Lake Planning Grants. These two recommendations will cost the State of Wisconsin and the WDNR more money, but may save the state money in the end if more boat landings are being manned by inspectors and the spread of exotics are slowed. Finally, the Sokaogon Chippewa Community urges the state to adopt stricter laws prohibiting the transfer of exotics from lake to lake. For these laws to be effective, expensive fines will be necessary.

Lake Metonga and the region have been hit hard by exotic species and this appears to have taken its toll on local attitudes, thus contributing to the difficulty in recruiting volunteers. Lake Metonga landowners, especially with the introduction of zebra mussels, seem to have lost the desire to protect their lake and feel helpless in stopping additional species from being introduced.

It is difficult to convince them that additional, potentially more problematic exotics could still be introduced. Non-Lake Metonga landowners, either non-lake or lake owners, have the attitude that it is not their problem, its Metonga's, even though it has been pointed out that the lake they live on or their favorite lake to visit could be next. The bottom-line is that all landowners must unite and take ownership in local lakes for this effort be successful. Hopefully, attitudes are different in other areas of the state.

Figure 1. Map of Lake Metonga



**TABLE 1 - 2004 Lake Metonga Watercraft Inspection Data Summary Chart**

**BOATS**

Date	County	Waterbody	Hrs. Spent	Vehicle State	Personal	Pontoon	Fishing
6/18/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	6	WI (3)			2
6/26/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	4.5	WI (3)	1		1
6/30/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	3.25	WI (1)			1
7/1/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	3.5	WI (5)	1	1	3
7/2/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	4	WI (1)			1
7/3/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	9	WI (12)	5	2	5
7/5/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	9.5	WI (3) IN (1)	1		3
7/10/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	5	WI (1)	1	1	3
7/14/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	4	WI (1)			1
7/19/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	6	WI (2)			2
7/24/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	5.5	WI (3)	2		1
7/31/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	8.5	WI (5)	1		4
8/3/2004	Forest	Lake Metonga	6.5	WI (3)			3
<b>TOTALS</b>			75.25	WI (43) IN (1) =44	12	4	30

**BOATS**

**HORSEPOWER**

Date	Pleasure	Sailboat	Kayak	Other	Total Boats	0-25	26-50
6/18/2004	1				3	1	
6/26/2004				1	3	1	
6/30/2004					1		1
7/1/2004					5		2,50hp, 40hp
7/2/2004					1		48hp
7/3/2004					12	4	50hp
7/5/2004					4	1	2
7/10/2004					5		
7/14/2004					1	20hp	
7/19/2004					2	25hp	
7/24/2004					3		50hp
7/31/2004					5	25hp	
8/3/2004					3		50hp
<b>TOTALS</b>	1			1	48	10	10

**TABLE 1 - Continued**

Date	HORSEPOWER				VEG ENTERING		LEAVING	
	51-75	76-100	101-150	>150	Yes	No	Yes	No
6/18/2004						3		3
6/26/2004			115hp			2		2
6/30/2004						1		1
7/1/2004						3		3
7/2/2004						1		1
7/3/2004		90hp	120hp	3		12	2	10
7/5/2004		1				4		4
7/10/2004		90hp	115hp,150hp			1		1
7/14/2004						1		1
7/19/2004	75hp					2		2
7/24/2004		1	125hp			3		3
7/31/2004		90hp	2	225hp		5		5
8/3/2004	70hp	90hp				3		3
<b>TOTALS</b>	2	6	7	4		41	2	39

Date	INFESTATION		KNOWLEDGE					
	Yes	No	Inspector	PSA	Newspaper	Presentation	Publication	Other
6/18/2004	2	1				2		1
6/26/2004	2	1	2		1		2	1
6/30/2004	1				1	1	1	
7/1/2004	5		3		1	1	3	1
7/2/2004	1						1	
7/3/2004	7	5	4		1	1	4	3
7/5/2004		3	2				1	
7/10/2004	1		1					
7/14/2004	1		1		1	1	1	
7/19/2004	2		2				2	
7/24/2004	4		2				3	
7/31/2004	5		4				1	
8/3/2004	2	1	1		3		2	
<b>TOTALS</b>	33	11	22		8	6	21	6



**TABLE 1 - Continued**

<b>Date</b>	<b>NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>TOTAL PEOPLE CONTACTED</b>
6/18/2004	3	4
6/26/2004	3	7
6/30/2004	1	2
7/1/2004	5	8
7/2/2004	1	2
7/3/2004	12	18
7/5/2004	4	5
7/10/2004	1	2
7/14/2004	1	2
7/19/2004	2	4
7/24/2004	3	8
7/31/2004	5	7
8/3/2004	3	6
<b>TOTALS</b>	44	75

**COMMENTS**

<b>Date</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
6/18/2004	One man was from Manitowoc and does a lot of fishing in Greenbay. Only fishes Metonga.
6/26/2004	Fish on Lake Michigan and Lake Tomahawk. One boater from Milwaukee.
6/30/2004	Fish Franklin and Kentuck.
7/1/2004	Anglers from Oconto Falls and Green Bay. One angler fishes Roberts and Lucerne.
7/2/2004	Also fishes on Rolling Stone. Metonga is their main fishing lake
7/3/2004	Couple anglers fish Green Bay frequently. Others said they fish on Roberts and Lake Lucerne.
7/5/2004	One man was from Green Bay and does all fishing on Metonga. He didn't want any info.
7/10/2004	No comments.
7/14/2004	One angler traps crayfish on Roberts Lake, they have not been trapping on Metonga for about 10 years.
7/19/2004	Angling couple fishes a lot in Vilas County, Roberts, Kentuck, Butternut, Lucerne, and Wabikon Lakes.
7/24/2004	Two people where from Greenbay, the other 4 where from Crandon area, and 2 people also fish on Lucerne.
7/31/2004	Two anglers from Green Bay.
8/3/2004	All people were from Crandon or Argonne area. Couple of anglers fish on Lucerne, Kentuck, and Butternut.

2004 Watercraft Inspections were completed by: Charity Robison

**TABLE 2 - 2005 Lake Metonga Watercraft Inspection Data Summary Chart**

**BOATS**

Date	County	Waterbody	Hrs. Spent	Vehicle State	Personal	Pontoon	Fishing
5/27/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	2	WI (2)			2
5/28/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	5	WI (18) other (2)	4	1	14
5/29/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	4	WI (9) other (1)	1	2	6
5/30/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	4	WI (8) other (1)	2		7
6/4/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	3	WI (4)			4
6/23/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	5.5	WI (5)	1	1	3
6/24/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	7	WI (30)	13		13
7/2/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	7.5	WI (7)	2		6
7/3/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	6	WI (21) other (3)	12	2	9
7/4/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	8	WI (34) other (2)	18		14
7/16/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	7	WI (6)	2		3
7/24/2005	Forest	Lake Metonga	6.5	WI (34) other (2)	11	3	19
<b>TOTALS</b>			65.5	WI (178) other (11)	66	9	100

**BOATS**

**HORSEPOWER**

Date	Pleasure	Sailboat	Kayak	Other	Total Boats	0-25	26-50
5/27/2005					2		
5/28/2005				1	20		3
5/29/2005				1	10	1	1
5/30/2005				1	10		3
6/4/2005					4		2
6/23/2005					5		2
6/24/2005				4	30		6
7/2/2005					8	1	1
7/3/2005	1				24		4
7/4/2005	4				36		6
7/16/2005	1				6		4
7/24/2005	3				36	1	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	9	0	0	7	191	3	36

**TABLE 2 - Continued**

Date	HORSEPOWER				VEG ENTERING		LEAVING	
	51-75	76-100	101-150	>150	Yes	No	Yes	No
5/27/2005		1	1			2		
5/28/2005	5	3	7	2		13		8
5/29/2005	3	2	3			8		2
5/30/2005	2	3	2			8		2
6/4/2005	1	1				2		2
6/23/2005			3	1		2		3
6/24/2005	5	8	7	4		27		3
7/2/2005	1		4	1				8
7/3/2005	1	8	10	1		13	5	6
7/4/2005	5	5	9	11	3	24	1	8
7/16/2005	1			1		3	1	2
7/24/2005	1	3	13	14	3	21	1	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	25	34	59	35	6	123	8	55

Date	INFESTATION		KNOWLEDGE					
	Yes	No	Inspector	PSA	Newspaper	Presentation	Publication	Other
5/27/2005	2		1	1			1	
5/28/2005	19	1	2	5	3	7		7
5/29/2005	7	3			1	3	2	6
5/30/2005	9	1	2		1	4		3
6/4/2005	4		1		1	4		
6/23/2005	4	1	1			3	1	2
6/24/2005	26	4	9	3	1	12	4	6
7/2/2005		7	1	2	7	1	1	1
7/3/2005	21	3	12	2	2	11	1	6
7/4/2005	33	3	18	5	2	15	3	9
7/16/2005	5	1		4	2	2		
7/24/2005	31	5	15	6	3	16	4	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	161	29	62	28	23	78	17	51

**TABLE 2 - Continued**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>	<b>TOTAL PEOPLE CONTACTED</b>
5/27/2005	2	3
5/28/2005	20	39
5/29/2005	10	19
5/30/2005	10	19
6/4/2005	4	9
6/23/2005	5	9
6/24/2005	30	63
7/2/2005	8	15
7/3/2005	24	53
7/4/2005	36	81
7/16/2005	6	9
7/24/2005	36	80
<b>TOTALS</b>	191	399

**COMMENTS**

<b>Date</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
5/27/2005	No comments.
5/28/2005	A few people are coming from Silver Lake and Lake Eau Plaine. A couple of fishermen are going to Roberts Lake.
5/29/2005	Some fishermen are coming from Roberts Lake and Gerber's Lake
5/30/2005	No comments.
6/4/2005	No comments.
6/23/2005	No comments.
6/24/2005	People coming from Lake Winnebago, White Lake, Potato Lake, and Pine Lake. Heading to Pine Lake and Three Lks.Chain.
7/2/2005	Some boaters are coming from Thunder Lake. Boaters going to Thunder Lake and Jungle Lake
7/3/2005	Boaters were coming from Rolling Stone, Silver Lake, Eagle River Chain, and Chain Lake.
7/4/2005	Some boaters coming from Trump Lake, Lake Wausau, and Waupaca Chain. Boaters going to Turtle Lake.
7/16/2005	A few boaters are coming from the Wolf River
7/24/2005	A few boaters where coming from Green Bay, Lake Michigan. Boaters going to Shawano Lake.

2005 Watercraft Inspections Completed by: Michael Preul, Joshua Grimm, Thomas McGeshick, Christopher Kolasinski, and Scott Polar.