

Glacierland Clean Boats Clean Waters Manitowoc & Kewaunee
Project No. AEPP-459-15
Glacierland RC&D

2015 Annual Report
October 28, 2015

Background

Glacierland Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) received a WDNR Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) education grant for 2015 and 2016 to hire two Clean Boat Inspectors that would provide a core boat inspection program on inland lakes in Kewaunee and Manitowoc County. Boat inspectors targeted inland lakes in Manitowoc and Kewaunee counties that receive considerable boating pressure as identified by the project coordinator.

Volunteers as a group had not been able to provide a significant force or AIS effort on most lakes in the NE region, critical in the early development of AIS education efforts. Many of these inland lakes have found to have multiple AIS species, indicating a systemic mechanism of AIS introduction that needs to be broken. Current water guard funding was too limited to reach our area lakes on a regular basis.

The boat inspectors were not assigned to boat launches on Lake Michigan that are currently being staffed by UW Seagrant student interns.

Tom Ward is currently the AIS coordinator for the Manitowoc County Lakes Association and has hired and supervised boat inspectors hired on the previous three grants. Kewaunee County has not been involved with AIS programming and this grant allowed for a presence of AIS education on their inland lakes.

2015 Summary

This year two local retirees and anglers from the County were hired to conduct boat inspections. In the past, on other projects, college interns had been hired as boat inspectors, but it was difficult to have them trained and ready to work with the public by Memorial Day weekend. It was also not uncommon to have students accept a position in April and take a different internship that offered more hours by end of May. Last year inspections did not begin until mid to late June because of student turnover.

Dave Pozorski was hired as a 2015 boat inspector. He worked the summer of 2014 as a boat inspector and was trained with the new inspection forms and procedures. He served as a past president of the County Lakes Association, has a strong background with AIS issues for each lake, and is well known by many of the boaters. Ron LaFond was hired as the second inspector. As an avid fisherman he is very familiar with the lakes in both Manitowoc and Kewaunee counties and enjoyed greeting the boaters. Having local

retired inspectors was advantageous in regard to their experience with AIS issues, familiarity with the lake systems and their users, as well as with their flexibility to work holidays and weekends. Both inspectors have agreed to return next year for our last year of inspections.

This grant's budget was reduced from the original budget request of \$10,000 to \$7,500, not to include the cash match of \$1,600. We spent approximately \$4,500, or about half of the grant, this first year allowing us to conduct inspections from Memorial Day weekend through mid-August.

The fishing season got off to a slow start for some reason so there was less boat traffic than usual early in the season. However, inspections continued through mid-August and many boaters were reached. Typically, most boaters can effectively be reached by starting inspections the end of May and continuing them through the end of July since August boating usage drops off in some years. This year we began to see a high percentage of boaters that had been previously been contacted at least once this season by the end of July, resulting in a high number of boaters with first time contacts. Fifty-one percent of boaters had not been contacted this season.

We participated in the 2015 Draining Campaign in June by handing out the ice packs which were very popular with boaters and an excellent method to start conversations with boaters. This hand-out provided an opportunity to converse with-out giving boaters the impression that they were being integrated. Overall this year, we had far fewer boaters who thought they were being bothered by the questions. During the Landing Blitz in July we handed out towels to non-anglers and ice packs to the anglers. All of the towels and icepacks provided by Clean Boats Clean Waters program were distributed this season.

After several years of AIS education and inspections, the majority of boaters understand the need to inspect and clean their watercraft. In addition, the number of anglers placing fish on ice rather than taking them home in water has improved significantly since last season. However, between 15-20% of boaters are first time boat owners or just getting back into boating and are in need of education of how to inspect for AIS.

During inspections, the inspectors focused on utilizing the new inspection forms, communicating knowledge of which lakes are spreader lakes, and the importance of treating all water as contaminated, and emphasizing the use of boat cleaning stations and bleach solution treatment.

There are several lakes in the region with hybrid Eurasian watermilfoil that we do not want spread to other lakes. English Lake has had consecutive herbicide treatments of hybrid Eurasian watermilfoil with very little success in controlling this invasive.

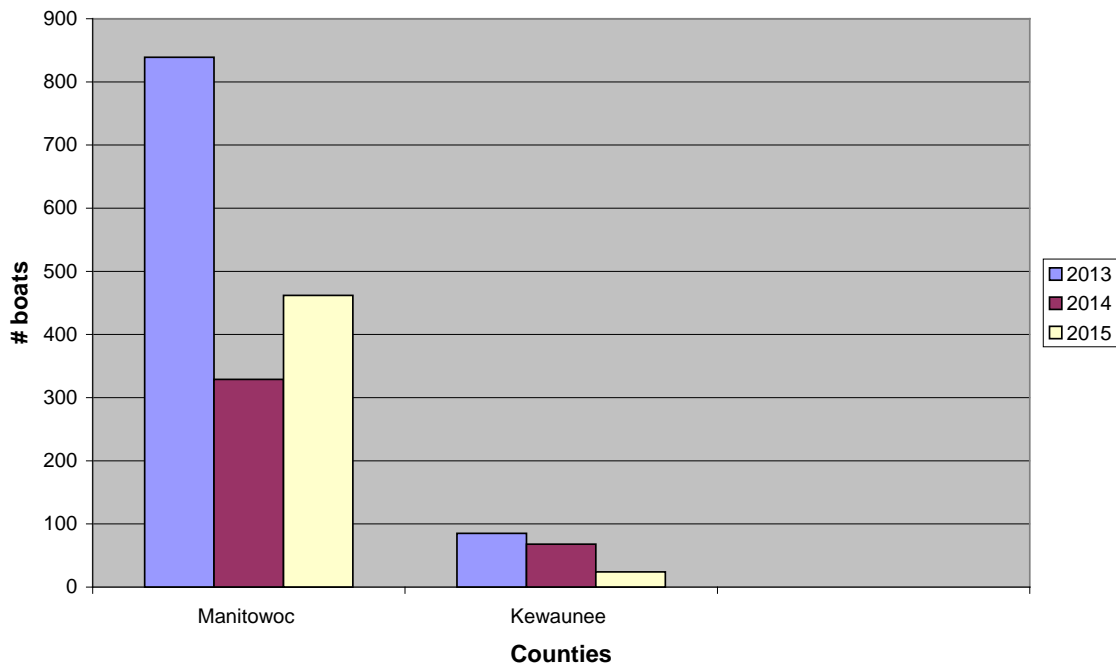
The following table summarizes the 2015 Clean Boats Clean Waters inspection efforts:

No. Boats Inspected	No. People Contacted	No. Hours
486	1,084	190

Funding for this grant project for a two year period was considerably less than the previous RC&D grants. We allocated approximately half of the 2 year grant and applied about 190 hours in 2015 compared to 516 hours in 2014. We inspected 486 boats compared to 397 boats in Manitowoc and Kewaunee counties last year.

The number of boats inspected in Kewaunee County dropped from 68 boats in 2014 to 24 boats this year as depicted in Figure 1. We did not send inspectors to East and West Alaska due to travel distance and the Association’s failure to provide a match this season. Fishing pressure drops off significantly on Kewaunee County’s Shea and Heidemann lakes by mid-July.

Figure 1. Number of Boats Inspected with Glacierland Grant Funds, 2013-2015.



Figures 2 and 3 depict efforts in Manitowoc County over time. The 2015 data did not contain as much inspection data from project sources other than this grant. Paid inspectors are allowing us to maintain a level of presence and effort of Clean Boats Clean Waters education with our boaters.

Figure 2. Number of people contacted in Manitowoc County, 2004-2015

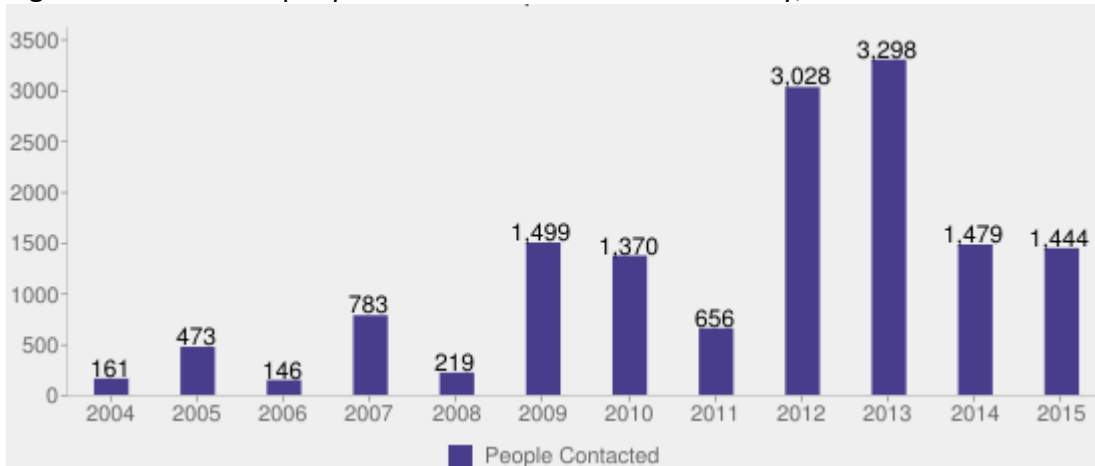


Figure 3. Number of boats inspected in Manitowoc County, 2004-2015

