Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Updates

Andrew Teal

10/29-11/9/18

* Compiled match workbook and grant payment request sheets for Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW)-Iron River. Informed last remaining partner of the amount of match they would need to contribute to put us over the mark for match requirements.
* Began putting grant payment request for CBCW-Lake Superior together.
* Continued editing a copy of the current AIS grant to prepare our upcoming funding application
* Attended meeting in Drummond with two dozen partners from various organizations and agencies to begin the discussion about AIS decontamination units, and the training, staff, locations, recruitment, and other questions that went with this topic. Quite open ended, but it showed how much the partners were interested, and the diversity each could bring to the table.
* A big topic of discussion this past week, tied to decontamination units and CBCW, has been sexual harassment. Not between employees. One of our inspectors brought it to my attention after field season last year that she had been sexually harassed by boaters. One of her conditions for returning was that she wanted to know that we were serious and taking steps to address it. I have been working with her since then to do so. Then this week I found out why Northland College decided to end participation in the CBCW program altogether this year. Sexual harassment of their student scientists while they were monitoring boat landings (and because the work doesn’t fully align with their goals, which is also valid, but that is a different story). So far, I have been in contact with three faculty members at Northland College, two former CBCW inspectors, colleagues in Iron and Green Lake Counties; the Lake, Stream, and Watershed Outreach Specialist at Michigan State University, and the founder/owner of Harmony Environmental. My goal was and is to gather information about what harassment has happened, what could happen, how to handle harassment in the field and how to report it, repercussions for the perpetrator, and how to prevent harassment from happening at boat landings in the future. Obviously, it is a problem, or Northland College would not have just suddenly dropped the program. The students questioned their own decisions about a career in the sciences if those conditions were what it would be like. None of the people I have talked to want these students to turn away from the sciences and their dreams, including me, and I don’t accept that this is just the way it is, so I’m finding ways to help. More on this after next week’s statewide AIS Coordinator meeting.