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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: February 26, 2018
TO: Local Area Media
FROM: Stephanie Boismenu, Oneida County Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator

**ONEIDA COUNTY AIS PROGRAM AND AREA LAKE ASSOCIATIONS AWARDED GRANT FUNDING TO
BATTLE AIS**

The Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department's (LWCD) Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program is proud to announce it has been awarded a \$25,615.00 AIS Education, Prevention and Planning grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). These funds will support the Oneida County AIS Prevention and Control Project 2018-2019, aimed to empower Oneida County's fight against AIS and prevent one of the greatest environmental and economic health threats to the county's lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

The Project sustains the AIS Program's mission to "develop and implement an aquatic invasive species (AIS) plan of action that prevents and manages AIS in Oneida County lakes, rivers, and wetlands." The Project provides AIS education, outreach, prevention, early detection, rapid response, control, and management efforts and activities throughout Oneida County. Additionally, the Project fosters collaboration, support, and participation among lake associations, riparian owners, school groups, businesses, various organizations and partners.

A key component of the Project is the hiring of three limited term employees (LTE's) to perform AIS management, monitoring, outreach and educational activities to broaden awareness and understanding of AIS. Some of the many activities include: conduct Clean Boats Clean Waters watercraft inspections, lead/participate in student and adult educational field events and workshops, host an Invasive Species Road Show, develop and distribute outreach material, and provide outreach to individuals, lake groups, organizations, and during events and fishing tournaments. The AIS Team will

also participate in the statewide AIS Drain Campaign, 4th of July Landing Blitz, AIS Snapshot Day, Bait Shop Initiative, and Waterfowl Campaign. Additionally, the AIS Team will provide AIS monitoring and management, Purple Loosestrife biocontrol, restore and rehabilitate ecosystems affected by AIS, and conduct AIS early detection, water quality monitoring, data collection, and mapping on Oneida County waterbodies .

The AIS Program is also pleased to announce 18 individual lake associations and partners in Oneida County were awarded grant funding through the DNR's AIS Grant Program. The awarded grants, consist of four AIS Education, Prevention, and Planning Grants (\$134,512.30), two Large Scale Planning Grants (\$44,079.59), and 13 Clean Boats Clean Waters Grants (\$72,735.00), totaling \$251,226.89, and will support AIS education, prevention, control, and management efforts and activities. Oneida County is fortunate to have many dedicated lake associations and partners, including individuals and groups who are not utilizing grant funds, whose hard work will significantly contribute towards safeguarding our valuable natural resources, sensitive ecosystems, recreational opportunities, waterfront property values, and enjoyment for current and future generations. Grant recipients in Oneida County include:

- AIS Education, Prevention & Planning grants: Crescent Lake Association, Three Lakes Waterfront Association, Tomahawk Lake Association, and Oneida County Land & Water.
- Large Scale Planning grants: Lake Association of Oneida County and Post Lake Protection & Rehab District.
- Clean Boats, Clean Water grants: Bear Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District, Big Bearskin Lake Association, Lake George Lake Association, Lake Julia Association, Lake Thompson Association, Minocqua/Kawaguesaga Lakes Protection Association, Moen Lake Chain Association, Pelican Lake Property Owners Association, Squash Lake Association, Three Lakes Waterfront Association, Tomahawk Lake Association, and the Town of Newbold (Two Sisters Lake).

Statewide, the DNR awarded 222 AIS Grants totaling nearly \$2.9 million in funding under the current 2018 grant cycle. Awarded grants will help stop and reduce the spread of AIS, improve water quality, reduce runoff, and create aquatic habitat. Congratulations to all grant recipients as you begin your new projects. If you would like to help stop AIS, contact Stephanie Boismenu, Oneida County AIS Coordinator at 715-369-7835 or e-mail sboismenu@co.oneida.wi.us.

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