

# **Burnett County Aquatic Invasive Species Education and Prevention**

## **Burnett County Land Services Department**

2018 *Clean Boats, Clean Water* and AIS Monitoring Report

## Introduction

In 2018, the Burnett County Land Services (BCLS) was able to continue their Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program due to a grant provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The grant will be used to carry out AIS education and prevention efforts throughout Burnett County. The grant enabled the staffing of the Burnett County AIS Coordinator and the positions of four summer AIS interns. Throughout the summer the AIS staff carried out several AIS projects and tasks including education and monitoring. With the discovery of Zebra Mussels in Big McKenzie Lake in the fall of 2016, staff had a very busy year of monitoring and education/outreach. The interns were responsible for the AIS education provided through the *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* program. This report discusses the details of the *Clean Boats, Clean Waters*, Purple loosestrife control, and AIS monitoring projects conducted throughout Burnett County in 2018 through June.

### **Project Goal:**

To prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species in Burnett County lakes and rivers.

### **Objectives:**

1. Conduct watercraft inspections at Burnett County public boat launches with emphasis on high traffic areas and lakes known to have Zebra Mussels, Eurasian Water-Milfoil, or other aquatic invasive species (AIS).
2. Provide educational resources about AIS for the general public through the *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* program.
3. Monitor for the presence of Eurasian Watermilfoil, Curly Leaf Pondweed, Purple Loosestrife, Zebra Mussels, and other AIS. Conduct AIS monitoring of littoral zones around every public lake landing in Burnett County.

## 2018 *Clean Boats, Clean Waters*

The biggest concern is the prevention of AIS spreading from lake to lake by human means. This is why *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* is one of the main focuses for the interns. Making sure that invasive and non-invasive plants are not traveling from lake to lake and educating boaters about the laws and concerns of invasive species is the major goal of the *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* program.

Throughout the summer the interns made direct contact with boaters using the *Watercraft Inspection Report* form, which was then entered into the *Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System*. Watercrafts were checked for aquatic plants or animals and boaters were asked about their familiarity with AIS laws. Ice packs were given out during the Drain Campaign and throughout the rest of the summer as a reminder to drain live wells even with fish in them.

Between May and June of 2018, the interns and weekend CBCW staff monitored boat landings with higher traffic and focusing on lakes with Zebra Mussels and Eurasian Watermilfoil. The interns spent a lot of time educating the public on the counties new decontamination ordinance.

Burnett County had two contract positions doing CBCW activity during the 2018 boating season. They were focused almost exclusively on the McKenzie chain (due to the zebra mussels) as well as the four townships near McKenzie that are heavy with permanent and seasonal waterfront homes.

## Purple loosestrife Control

This is a continuation of the Burnett County program that has been going on for years. The interns helped collect approximately 100 purple loosestrife plants for two mass rearing cages. Due to the late spring collecting beetles was a challenge but were able to collect around 50 beetles. These beetles were placed into a mass rearing cage until July.

## 2018 Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring

AIS monitoring was carried out in Burnett County lakes and rivers between May and June.

Nine curly leaf pondweed surveys using the point intercept method were done May and June by AIS staff. These surveys are often completed to keep track of a specific population such as the curly leaf pondweed in the McKenzie Lakes. Early detection surveys were completed in June following the AIS early detection protocol.

AIS staff spent time on the Yellow River mapping purple loosestrife locations and looking to see if beetles were present.

In the summer of 2018 locating and monitoring Phragmites was continued on a limited basis. Because invasive Phragmites is moving into western Wisconsin the ability to keep it from spreading is of great importance.

## Conclusion

Clean Boats, Clean Waters and AIS monitoring were the main projects in 2018 as part of Burnett County's AIS Education and Prevention Program supported by the grant provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Clean Boats, Clean Waters is not only a great educational resource to the general public, it also prevents the spread of AIS to new water bodies. The AIS monitoring was aimed at detecting AIS early, in order to properly control any newly found infestations.