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The Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20426
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RE: WVIC P-2113; AIS Plan of Action – Annual Allocation Activities Report 2016

Introduction- In Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company's (WVIC) 2011 *Fish and Wildlife Management Plan* Update Report, WVIC submitted an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Plan of Action, which was approved by FERC on February 14, 2013. In the Plan, WVIC proposed providing monetary assistance (\$60,000) to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to help further combat AIS issues on WVIC's Project Reservoirs. The funds were to be allocated annually (\$12,000/year) to WDNR over a 5 year period beginning in 2012 and continuing through 2016. Funds contributed by WVIC can be used for a variety of activities and the priorities are determined and agreed upon between WVIC and WDNR in the spring of each year.

2016 Summary- WVIC and WDNR met on December 16, 2015 with the AIS Limited Term Employee (LTE) to identify priorities and activities to implement during the 2016 season. 2016 priorities outlined at the winter meeting included:

- Fund AIS LTE position.
- Conduct Point Intercept (PI) survey and AIS surveys at Sugar Camp Reservoir.
- Continue Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CB/CW) inspections on Willow and Rainbow along with additional WVIC reservoirs.
- Assist with a variety of AIS surveying and monitoring projects at other WVIC reservoirs.
- Perform site visits as needed from public inquiries.
- Assist with new discoveries or AIS situations that may arise throughout the year.

The fourth year of monetary assistance began on October 1, 2015 and ended September 30, 2016. Of the eligible (not to exceed) \$12,000 in costs directly associated with services as defined in the MOU, \$12,000 was dispersed. The following is a summary of the activities performed by the AIS LTE in conjunction with WDNR and WVIC staff when noted.

2016 AIS LTE Activities- (580 Hours)

Point Intercept (PI) Survey, Meandering Survey, Lake Surveys, Veliger Tows, Purple Loosestrife (PL) monitoring etc. Sugar Camp, Willow, Rice, Spirit- 50% of Time.

A PI survey was conducted on Sugar Camp Reservoir (SCP) to determine baseline aquatic macrophyte information and assist with long-term monitoring of aquatic plant populations. All five lakes (Dam, Sand, Stone, Echo, and Chain) were surveyed along with all connecting thoroughfares (Sugar Camp Creek) and Indian Creek. The AIS LTE along with staff from WVIC, WDNR, and Trout Lake Station – UW Center for Limnology participated in the survey. The SCP survey was completed over the course of 5 days with two boats and six people for the majority of the survey. Floristic quality assessment scores were calculated for the lakes and creeks that are part of the reservoir and were determined to be above statewide and regional averages.

A meandering survey was also conducted on SCP as part of the WDNR AIS Early Detection monitoring protocol. The AIS LTE and WDNR staff meandered along the shoreline and stopped at targeted sites

and boat landings for AIS searches. Methods used includes: visual detection, d-pole, throw rake, and spiny water flea and zebra mussel veliger tows at the deepest points of each of the five lakes. Data sheets and laboratory information were entered into the WDNR Statewide Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System (SWIMS) database.

Additional work completed by the AIS LTE included: assisting WVIC staff with PL monitoring and mapping program on Rice, Spirit, and Willow Reservoirs, pressing plants for identification, compiling spreadsheets, preparing data for reports, and assisting with other field work.

CB/CW Watercraft Inspections- Rainbow, Pickerel, Sugar Camp (Sand/Dam/Chain)- 25% of Time

The AIS LTE conducted boat inspections and provided information and educational materials to recreational boaters and anglers regarding transport of invasive species. Educational efforts included: showing people how to identify AIS, AIS trailer stickers, maps of the reservoir, and general dialogue regarding AIS concerns and misconceptions.

During the season, the AIS LTE contacted 165 people comprised primarily of fisherman and recreational boaters. Most people were compliant and receptive to AIS information regarding specific invasive species on the waterbody they were entering and how to identify differences between species. The majority of users knew to check over their boats, remove any aquatic plants, and drain boat and live wells before leaving the landing. No invasive plants were observed being carried away from landings on boats or trailers during the monitoring period. CB/CW data was entered into the WDNR SWIMS database.

Office Time and Other Additional Work- 25% of Time

Additional office related activities conducted include: Contacting lake associations regarding AIS issues, responding to emails, answering AIS calls and questions from the public, participating in training staff and other educational efforts, repairing and preparing equipment for future surveys.

Conclusion- All of the activities and priorities originally outlined for the 2016 season were completed by the AIS LTE. The MOU concluded on September 30, 2016, and WDNR is unable to enter into any additional MOU's at this time. WVIC and WDNR will continue to work together on AIS efforts as issues arise and staff are available. This final report concludes WVIC's annual allocation reporting requirements.

Sincerely,


Ben Niffenegger
Senior Environmental Specialist