# Information and Education[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Big Blake Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District is actively providing information and education opportunities to their membership. The District communicates with their membership during their spring and fall meetings, through their newsletter and mailings, and through direct contact with their volunteers. Additionally, Polk County Land and Water Resources Department staff attended the District Spring and Fall meetings in 2013, 2014, and 2015 and communicated grant updates to attendees.

**2013 Information and Education Summary**A total of 42 volunteers signed up to assist with the Big Blake Lake Clean Boats, Clean Waters program in 2013. New supplies were ordered for volunteers and current literature, forms, shirts, and supplies were refreshed and distributed. Weekly contact was made with each volunteer through email or phone in June and July. Volunteers spent 379 hours at the north access and inspected 45 boats and contacted 93 people. Volunteers spent 38 hours at the west access and inspected 11 boats and contacted 17 people.

A volunteer cookout was organized to coordinate with the July 4th Landing Blitz. Sixteen volunteers attended. Photo opportunities for a press release were organized in June to promote the Landing Blitz. A press release for the Landing Blitz was distributed to 5 media outlets. The press release and photo were published in the Polk County Leader and a county-wide release which mentioned Big Blake Lake was published in the Amery Free Press.

All 212 members of the District received two direct mailings which included AIS information. The Blake Lake Bugle Newsletter contained one page of information on Clean Boats, Clean Waters and AIS. Another mailing included: the Wisconsin Boating Regulations pamphlet and the Clean Boats, Clean Waters flyer. Additionally, AIS flyers and brochures were distributed at area bait shops and places where bait is sold.

**2014 Information and Education Summary**A total of 52 volunteers signed up to assist with the Big Blake Lake Clean Boats, Clean Waters program in 2014, which was a 20% increase from the previous year. New supplies were ordered for volunteers and current literature, forms, shirts, and supplies were refreshed and distributed. Contact was made with each volunteer through email or phone in June and July. Volunteers spent 202 hours at the north access and inspected 38 boats and contacted 75 people over the course of the boating season. Volunteers spent 205 hours at the west access and inspected 42 boats and contacted 70 people over the course of the boating season.

At the May 17th Spring District Meeting, a Clean Boats, Clean Waters display was set up and a flyer was circulated to all attendees. The Drain Campaign was also announced to attendees. Approximately 150 people attended the meeting.

For the first time, the District participated in the statewide Drain Campaign which took place on June 14th and 15th. On June 14th, Katelin Holm with the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department provided a special AIS training session for members of the Big Blake Lake District. Ten people attended this supplementary training.

The District participated in the 2014 statewide Landing Blitz over the 4th of July weekend. A press release for the Landing Blitz was distributed to 3 media outlets and was published in The Leader. A county-wide press release which mentioned Big Blake Lake was also published in area newspapers.

Similar to 2013, the Big Blake Lake Bugle Newsletter contained one page of information on Clean Boats, Clean Waters and AIS.

Three volunteers of the Big Blake Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District attended a county-wide Aquatic Invasive Species Citizen Lake Monitoring Network Training on June 11th, 2014. The training included a hands-on session to view specimens of AIS with a focus on native as well and invasive plants.

Additionally, AIS flyers and brochures were distributed at area bait shops and places where bait is sold.

**2015 Information and Education Summary**A total of 40 volunteers signed up to assist with the Big Blake Lake Clean Boats, Clean Waters program in 2015. New supplies were ordered for volunteers and current literature, forms, shirts, and supplies were refreshed and distributed. Weekly contact was made with each volunteer through email or phone in June and July. Clean Boats, Clean Waters volunteers spent 276 hours at the north access and inspected 24 boats and contacted 35 people over the course of the boating season. Volunteers spent 132 hours at the west access and inspected 8 boats and contacted 13 people over the course of the boating season.

At the Spring and Fall District Meetings, a Clean Boats, Clean Waters display was set up and a packet of AIS information, including the Big Blake Lake waterproof AIS flyer was circulated to all attendees. The latest information from state and county sources was also provided.

A total of seventeen volunteers attended trainings on Saturday, June 6th and Saturday, June 13th as part of the WDNR Drain Campaign. Polk County Land and Water Resources Department staff attended the June 13th training and provided supplemental AIS information. As in years past, the District also participated in the statewide Landing Blitz and authored a press release which was published in the Inter-County Leader.

Additionally, AIS flyers and brochures were distributed at area bait shops and places where bait is sold.

On Thursday, July 2nd a pontoon classroom was held by the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department for members of the Big Blake Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District. The classroom was attended by eight members of the District. During the pontoon classroom participants had the opportunity to collect physical and chemical data, zooplankton samples, algae samples, sediment samples, and plant samples. Data were explained and participants saw zooplankton and examined aquatic plants (native and invasive). Preserved specimens of common aquatic invasive species were also shown to attendees. A brief overview of all the projects included in the grant was also provided. Topics of conversation included aquatic plants, wild rice, and lake sediments.

1. Information and photos provided by Peggy Lauritsen, Clean Boats, Clean Waters Volunteer Coordinator [↑](#footnote-ref-1)