

REPORT ON THE NEBAGAMON LAKE ASSOCIATION

2007 AIS PREVENTION GRANT

By Ann M. Parker

Because we had an AIS Prevention grant last year, it was easier to get set up and run this year's program. It also helped that three of the four students who worked for us last year applied and were hired this year, along with one other student. Last year's part-time supervisor was also interested in helping us again this year and was a real asset. I can't imagine where we could find someone else willing to be at the boat launch the first hour of each monitoring session! Our volunteers were there for three hours of each session, leaving the student workers alone only one hour. Our students had cell phones and a disposable camera plus the sheriff's department number on their clipboards in case of violations. We had a core group of volunteers who were trained and worked with us last year, and many of them were able to help again this year. In addition, we trained 28 new volunteers this year. Our student workers and our volunteers did an excellent job!

We had planned to cover fifty 5-hour sessions this year, but because of some scheduling problems actually did forty-seven sessions. We did two 5-hour sessions per day on the busiest weekends of the summer: the fishing opener in May, the Memorial Day weekend, and the weekend before the 4th of July. I was disappointed that we weren't able to cover ten hours on July 4th, however.

We added a couple of things to the materials packets we handed out this year. During the fishing opener we handed out packets of lead-free tackle and information on the problems caused by lead tackle—we wanted to encourage fishermen to go lead-free. (These materials came from the Sigurd Olson Institute at Northland College.) Later in the summer, we added information on boat cleaning to prevent the spread of VHS (attached). (This was prepared by one of our board members.)

This year we checked close to 300 boats. Almost all of the boaters believed in what we were doing and were appreciative. Only eight were sent to the local car wash. Of these, six returned to the boat launch while we were there. One left for another lake. A couple were upset when asked to go to the car wash and clean their boats/trailers. One of those was a potential problem for many lakes, as he was putting in pontoons for a Minong business. He came here with weeds on the trailer, and did not want to let us check the trailer or go wash it. However, he left the landing and called the people who owned the pontoon. When they told him to do whatever we said, he did comply. When I found out about this, I contacted the business manager to report the incident and request that he inform his drivers about the law. He told me that it was the business's policy that the drivers power wash the trailers between deliveries. I only hope that they all do so!

At our September 2007 meeting, the Nebagamon Lake Association board decided to apply for an AIS prevention grant again next year. We'd also like to do video monitoring, and I asked our Village Board to help fund that, but the village trustees think the personal contact is a better way to go, and they had concerns about the effectiveness of enforcement with the video system. They did express appreciation for our efforts and a willingness to help us a bit financially. Overall, the program went very well, but I'm still concerned, as I was last year, about the boats that put in when no one is at the landing.