

2008 Summary Report of Watercraft Inspection Results at Pelican Lake

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Introduction:

The watercraft inspection program's goal is to reduce the spread of invasive species into and around the state. To accomplish this we complete at least 10,000 hours of watercraft inspections each year, work with citizen groups and educate the public at events such as the state fair.

In January of 2008 the MN DNR Invasive Species Unit created a grant program to allow citizen groups to increase the number of hours of inspection at their water accesses. This was done as a way to increase watercraft inspections in the state, work with citizen groups and satisfy requests from citizen groups for more hours of inspections at their accesses.

The Pelican Lake association received a prevention grant from the MN DNR in May of 2008 for 308 hours of inspection time during the 2008 watercraft inspection season with an equal amount of inspection time to be matched by the MN DNR. The contract dates were May 9th through September 2nd of 2008. One watercraft inspector was hired in Ottertail County in June and assigned to work at the Pelican Lake accesses to accomplish the 616 hours.

The inspection process consists of a six-question survey that ensures that boaters are aware of the issues surrounding invasive species and incorporates the inspector walking the boater around the watercraft to show them where they should be looking for invasive species. Survey questions focus on boater knowledge and behavior with information given on the impacts of invasive species and what can be done to prevent their spread.

The data in this report will be based on all hours and inspections done at Pelican Lake in the 2008 season.

Inspection Results

Watercraft Inspectors worked 426 hours (360 hours of access time and 66 hours of drive time) at the Pelican Lake access. During this time 671 inspections were completed (table 1).

Table 1. Pelican Lake summary of inspections in 2008.

| Access Name | Number of Boaters/Inspections | Enter/Exit/Unknown | Hours | Insp per Hour |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------|---------------|
| Pelican | 671 | 418/237/16 | 426 | 1.58 |

Out of the 671 watercraft inspected at Pelican Lake fourteen were found to have attached vegetation. Three of the watercraft was inspected prior to entering the water and eleven were inspected after exiting the water. No other plants or animals were found on any watercraft.

The following information has been provided as a summary of the inspections done at Pelican Lake in the 2008 season. Information we gather helps us understand risks involved, for example boaters coming from waters infested with zebra mussels are more likely to transport zebra mussels than those coming from non infested waterbodies.

The surveys done during the inspection process found that one boaters out of 671 inspections completed had come to Pelican Lake from a waterbody in Minnesota known to be infested with zebra mussels table 2).

Table 2. Watercraft entering or exiting Pelican Lake that last used zebra mussel infested waters.

| Enter/Exit | Last Waterbody | Number of watercraft |
|------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| E | Mille Lacs Lake | 1 |

The surveys found that about 39% of the boaters who were inspected either entering or exiting Pelican Lake had come from another state. These boats likely represent another high-risk group (table 3).

Table 3. Watercraft from states other than MN who used Pelican Lake.

| State | Enter/Exit | Number of Watercraft | ZM Present in that State |
|-------|------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| CO | E | 1 | x |
| CO | X | 1 | x |
| IA | E | 1 | x |
| IL | E | 1 | x |
| Ma | X | 1 | |
| MO | E | 1 | x |
| MT | E | 3 | |
| MT | X | 1 | |
| ND | E | 155 | |
| ND | X | 89 | |
| NE | E | 1 | x |
| NV | E | 2 | |
| SD | X | 1 | x |
| WI | E | 2 | x |
| WI | X | 3 | x |

We use a decal with the current year on it to track if a boater has been inspected in the current year. Boaters who have been inspected in the current year are more likely to be educated about invasive species and how to prevent their spread. Below is the number of inspections broken down by whether they had a current year decal and would be a repeat, had a previous year's decal

and had talked to us in past years, or had never spoken to us before (table 4).

Table 4. Decal summary at Pelican Lake for 2008

| Year | Inspections | Incoming | Outgoing | Curr Yr Dec | Prev. Yr decal | no decal |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 2008 | 671 | 418 | 237 | 136 | 145 | 370 |

We have data for 608 boaters who were asked if they are familiar with invasive species, 204 or 34% of them were not familiar with invasive species. When asked if they were familiar with Eurasian water milfoil 192 out of 608 or 32% said they were not familiar. We also asked boaters if they were familiar with zebra mussels and the problems they cause and 266 out of 608 or 44% of boaters said they were not familiar with zebra mussels. These numbers illustrate that many of the boaters who are using Pelican Lake are unaware of the laws about transporting invasive species and have not been informed about Eurasian watermilfoil or zebra mussels.

Discussion:

Our goal during the 2008 season was to accomplish at least 616 hours of inspection time at Pelican Lake; we accomplished 426. During those hours we completed 671 inspections, of those 370 or 55% of the watercraft users had not been inspected before. This audience represents a very important group for the watercraft inspection program, as they have not been educated about invasive species. The data regarding watercraft users knowledge about invasive species shows that over 30% of the watercraft users who responded to our questions were not familiar with invasive species or eurasian watermilfoil and over 40% were not familiar with zebra mussels. This illustrates that there is a significant number of watercraft users being inspected at Pelican Lake that were not informed about invasive species prior to inspection in 2008.