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11-23-2016

Stev,

As you are aware, the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District manages a watercraft inspection program, where we hire summer staff members to inspect incoming and outgoing watercraft for aquatic invasive species (AIS) at the three public accesses on Forest Lake. This program is jointly funded by the Watershed District, Washington County, the City of Forest Lake, and, of course, the Forest Lake Lake Association. I would like to provide you with a summary of this year's watercraft inspection program. Please feel free to forward this summary to Forest Lake Lake Association members or anyone else who may be interested.

Total Inspection Hours

This summer we hired 4 full-time level 1 inspectors and 3 rotating level 2 inspectors operating a decontamination unit. Both level 1 and level 2 inspectors are trained by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The only difference between the two levels is that level 2 inspectors complete more training hours and are qualified to operate a decontamination unit on the watercraft. This involves using a high-pressure, high-heat spraying machine. The decontamination unit is mobile and rotates between 11 accesses in Chisago and Washington Counties, including Forest 1 and Forest 3. The level 1 inspectors are not permitted to use the decontamination unit, and instead complete visual inspections of the watercraft.

The following table summarizes the number of inspection hours completed by District-hired staff this summer:

	Forest 1 (Lakeside Park)	Forest 2 (Willow Point)	Forest 3 (Hagberg)	Forest Lake Total
Season Total Inspection Hours (CLFLWD only)	214.5	644.0	780.5	1,639.0

Since Forest Lake is a high-traffic and high-priority lake for the state of Minnesota as a whole, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources offered staff members to conduct inspections throughout the summer at Lakeside Park in Forest Lake at no additional cost to the District (and by extension, the FLLA).

The following table summarizes the number of inspection hours completed by District-hired staff and DNR-hired staff this summer:

	Forest 1 (Lakeside Park)	Forest 2 (Willow Point)	Forest 3 (Hagberg)	Forest Lake Total
Running Total Inspection Hours (CLFLWD+DNR)	904.5	684.0	780.5	2,369.0

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The total number of inspection hours conducted this year, 2,369.0 hours, is comparable to the total number of hours of inspections conducted in 2015, which was 2,549.0 hours.

Forest Lake 1 (Lakeside Park) received fewer hours by District inspectors than the other public accesses due to the frequent presence of Department of Natural Resource (DNR) inspectors at that access. If a District inspector comes to a launch and finds a DNR inspector present, protocol dictates that the inspector move to a different, un-manned launch. Inspectors may stay at the same launch as the DNR inspector if boat traffic seems heavy, and it would be beneficial for the two inspectors to work together. For the rest of this report, I will be referring to the combined results of District staff inspections and DNR staff inspections.

Total Number of Inspections

All watercraft inspectors utilize the computerized survey system run by the DNR. At the end of the season, the DNR compiles the survey results and sends them out to partnering local government units such as the CLFLWD and Chisago County. At the end of the season, we went through the survey results in order to gather certain information. A summary of the 2016 survey data for Forest Lake is provided below.

A total of **3,147** inspection surveys were performed on Forest Lake this season. This includes inspections by District and DNR inspectors. This surpasses the 2,873 inspections that were performed on Forest Lake accesses in 2015.

Inspection Rate

The following table compares the inspection rate, or average number of inspections per hour, for each access in 2015 and 2016:

	Forest 1 (Lakeside Park)	Forest 2 (Willow Point)	Forest 3 (Hagberg)	Average Rate (Inspections/Hour)
2015	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.2
2016	1.6	0.9	1.4	1.3

Survey Results

As mentioned above, a total of **3,147** surveys were performed on Forest Lake this season. Below are some findings from the compiled inspection survey data:

- Number of watercraft arriving at the Forest Lake with water, vegetation or mud on their watercraft = 32. This number was also 32 in 2015.
- Number of watercraft requiring removal of the bilge drainage plug upon arriving at Forest Lake = 19. This number was 67 in 2015.
- Number of watercraft exiting the Forest Lake with vegetation or AIS animals attached or present = 158. This number was 229 in 2015.

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Risk of New AIS

Starry stonewort and the spiny water flea are two examples of aquatic invasive species found in Minnesota that are not yet in Forest Lake. Starry stonewort is an invasive algae that forms dense mats in lakes that impede boating and prevent the establishment of native (beneficial) plants. Starry stonewort was discovered in Lake Koronis near Paynesville, MN in 2015 and has since been discovered in eight additional lakes across the state.

The spiny water flea is an invasive species of zooplankton which is about the size of a grain of rice that competes with small fish for the same food resource (other zooplankton). The spiny water flea was first discovered in Lake Superior in the early-1980s and has since spread to more than 35 inland lakes in Minnesota including: Mille Lacs Lake, Lake Vermilion, Lake of the Woods, and others. Both of these invasive species are thought to be transported primarily by recreational watercraft.

Part of the inspection survey involves asking the boaters which lake they visited last and how long ago they were at that lake. I looked through this data to determine the risk of introduction for Forest Lake from lakes infested with starry stonewort and the spiny water flea. Here is what I found:

- 183 boats launching into Forest Lake came from lakes infested with the spiny water flea. Of these 183, 108 launched at Forest Lake 1 (Lakeside Park), 24 launched at Forest Lake 2 (Willow Point), and 50 launched at Forest Lake 3 (Hagberg). 36 of the 183 had been in the infested lake less than 24 hours before launching into Forest Lake. All of these boats were inspected upon arrival at Forest Lake and deemed acceptable to launch into Forest Lake.
- 74 boats launching into Forest Lake came from lakes infested with the starry stonewort. Of these 74, 20 launched at Forest Lake 1 (Lakeside Park), 18 launched at Forest Lake 2 (Willow Point), and 36 launched at Forest Lake 3 (Hagberg). Eight of the 74 had been in the infested lake less than 24 hours before launching into Forest Lake. All of these boats were inspected upon arrival at Forest Lake and deemed acceptable to launch into Forest Lake.

These were the main results of the 2016 watercraft inspection program on Forest Lake. We expect to continue the program next year. We appreciate the FLLA's continued financial support of the program. If you, or any FLLA members have questions or comments about this, please feel free to contact me. My email address is mike.sorensen@cflwd.org and my phone number is 651-395-5857.

Sincerely,

-Mike Sorensen