

To: All Bay Lakers

The possibility of a zebra mussel infestation, as well as dangers from other non-native aquatic invasive species, is now more likely than ever. No doubt you have read of this and other related news over the winter. Currently, over 100 MN lakes are now infested with zebra mussels, 12 in Crow Wing County, including Gull and Mille Lacs and the Mississippi and Pine Rivers. Only 20 MN lakes were infested in 2010. We know boats frequenting infected lakes come to enjoy Bay Lake.

While the state and DNR struggle with solutions to these threats, our best defense is to monitor boats coming into Bay Lake. Annually, your lake association contracts with DNR for interns to help with that monitoring, up to 400 hours this coming summer. However, that covers only about 1/3 of the hours we need to monitor. The remainder of the monitor time must be covered by volunteers, many of whom have been participating in this program for years and are likely your neighbors.

To help us inspect as many boats as possible, I'm asking you to consider committing to 4-8 hours of monitoring over the summer. That doesn't seem like much to give, considering the "cost" we'll all pay if zebras get into Bay Lake. An infestation would greatly impact how we enjoy the lake and, most certainly, diminish our property values. Those costs include:

- mussels covering underwater structures, boats, motors, and the lake bottom;
- cut feet from sharp mussel shells;
- lower nutrients in the water resulting in smaller and fewer fish;
- clearer water resulting in significantly increased weed growth.

Over 100 Bay Lakers have joined the monitor program in recent years, about half the number we need to adequately cover the boat ramp during daylight hours. It may be presumptuous of me to put it this way, but **now it's your turn to help out.**

The DNR monitor training, which is required of all new volunteers, is scheduled for **Saturday, May 19, 10am, Ruttger's Resort** (for about two hours). A second training session will be July 7, also at Ruttgers. To register for the training, please either call (415.497.2838) or email me at philfishing@gmail.com. Additional training sessions are available at other sites and dates, click [here](#) and scroll down on the page to find the dates:

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/watercraft_inspect.html

If you are already a volunteer and want to refresh your monitoring skills, you are welcome to attend the training.

If you want to learn more and see pictures of the devastating effects of the zebras in particular, just Google "zebra mussels in Minnesota lakes."

Many are contributing to this effort. I invite you to join us in this important project.

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