

A REPORT ON THE CLEAN WATERS, CLEAN BOATS PROGRAM ON GENEVA LAKE WI, SUMMER OF 2020.

By: Geneva Lake Environmental Agency
December 2020.



The Geneva Lake Clean Boat, Clean Waters inspection and educational outreach effort was made possible by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grants CBCW 85520 and CBCW 85620 and the cooperation and support of the GLEA Board, the Villages of Williams Bay and Fontana-on-Geneva Lake, the Towns of Linn and Walworth, and the City of Lake Geneva.

2020 Clean Boats Clean Waters, Geneva Lake WI

INTRODUCTION

To reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species in Wisconsin lakes, University of Wisconsin Extension, Sea Grant, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources established the Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) program. The program includes using volunteer and paid staff to help perform boat and trailer checks, disseminate informational brochures, and educate boaters on how to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. UW – Extension established a training program for inspectors. WI DNR established a statewide data base into which the inspectors entered their numbers and data from their work at the launches and the local partners hire the inspectors and administrate the program on the local level.

Geneva Lake is a 5,262-acre lake located in southern Walworth County. It has five municipal launches and numerous private launches. Geneva Lake has been known for its quality boating opportunities. Its unique fisheries also draw a myriad of fishing boats, including fishing tournaments.

During the summer of 2020, the Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) hired and trained four inspectors to implement the CBCW program at Geneva Lake's five municipal launches. With the financial assistance of a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources cost sharing grant, the Williams Bay municipal launch, the City of Lake Geneva's municipal launch, the Fontana municipal launch and the two Linn Township launches, Hillside Rd. and Linn Pier Rd., were manned by inspectors several days each week. In general, the manning of launches by inspector included one weekday per week and every weekend.

METHODS

Manning the launches was initially intended to start the first weekend of May, opening fishing weekend. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, quarantining, and social distancing guidelines, the DNR did not initiate the statewide CBCW program until the first of June. This resulted the Geneva Lake CBCW program not being implemented at the launches until June 3rd.

Originally inspectors were to work two three hour shifts each day the launch was manned. Shifts were planned to run from 7 am to 10 am and 3 pm to 6 pm. It was soon learned that these were not the best time for contacting the most boaters. Hours were changed to a single shift of 9 am. to 3 pm. each

working day. Throughout the summer, inspection shifts varied slightly, but it was felt that the major use times for the launches were generally covered.

It was the intent to have the launches manned one weekday and every weekend. Generally, that was accomplished, with the weekday being Wednesday and the weekend covering from Friday through Sunday. There was some variance in the scheduling due to staff vacations and other commitments. The Williams Bay launch was closed one day for the parking lot resurfacing. On two separate occasions launch staff had either tested positive or had contacted someone who had tested positive. On those occasions the CBCW inspector and launch staff were advised not to work the launch until test results of launch staff were known to be negative.

CBCW inspectors were trained on the CBCW program goals and protocols by UW-Extension/DNR personal in a two-hour video session. They also received local training by the GLEA on the launches and how to best incorporate the CBCW program into the launch site operation.

The Villages of Fontana and Williams Bay and the City of Lake Geneva each have one launch. CBCW staff were assigned to a specific launch and stayed with that launch all summer. The Town of Linn has two launches. One CBCW inspector traded off her time between the Town of Linn's two launches. Having the same inspectors work the same launch the whole summer allowed the inspectors to get to know the launch crews and to complete their responsibilities without disrupting the launching process. It also allowed the inspectors to recognize repeat users. Several launches were used by local in-out services. After a few launches by these services, inspectors recognized them and did not have to use the complete Clean Boat Clean Waters protocol on them.

Throughout the summer the CBCW inspectors were randomly visited by their supervisor to audit their procedures and efforts. Inspectors followed CBCW protocol and worked well with launch staff.

RESULTS

All four Geneva Lake CBCW inspectors started at their launches on Wednesday June 3, 2020. As mentioned earlier, the intent was to have the municipal launches staffed with CBCW inspectors every weekend till the end of August.

Due to vacations and some issues in Williams Bay on a few days, launches were not exactly staffed as anticipated. In Fontana, the inspector was also a swim teacher at the Fontana beach and her schedule

had to accommodate that commitment. It did not significantly alter attempts to cover that launch with CBCW staff.

At the beginning of summer, the CBCW inspectors were busy with fisherman, pleasure boaters and the in-out services of the lake boat companies. As summer progressed and the inspectors started seeing returning boaters, their interaction with these returned boaters decreased. However, there was still plenty of new boaters for the inspectors to get their CBCW message out.

In discussion with the inspectors, there was a consensus that many of the fisherman were familiar with the CBCW message and the role they need to play in preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species. The pleasure boaters who were first time or one-time visitors, were the target of many CBCW inspections and discussions.

According to the web site with the listed CBCW data, a total of 848 hours were spent by the four Geneva Lake CBCW inspectors at all the municipal launches. Together they inspected 2,818 boats and talked to 5,599 boaters about the CBCW program. From these numbers, the lake-wide number of boats inspected was 3.2 boat/hr. Lake wide the number of people talked to per boat was two per boat. The number of people talked to per hour during the inspections was 6.3 people per hour. These values represent the entire summer. As the summer progressed and inspector saw more repeat boaters the number boaters the inspectors talked to decreased.

There is a slight difference between paid hours and hours recorded on the web page (<3% difference). This may be due to the inclusion of training, and data entry times in the paid hour. A monthly breakdown of hours per launch, per month, based upon timecard numbers, found that the two Linn launches combined, recorded the most hours for all three months. During June and August, the Lake Geneva Launch had the second most hours at 76.3 and 95.6 hrs. respectively. The Fontana inspector had the second most hours for July at 86 hrs.

The number of inspected boats per hour of inspection for Fontana was 3.8 boats, followed by Williams Bay at 3.6, Lake Geneva at 3.0, Linn Pier had 2.7 and Hillside Rd. had 2.4 boats per hour.

Fontana had the largest number of boats inspected during the summer. It also had the most inspection hours recorded. Linn's two launches combined for the second most inspected boats at 760, with the Linn Pier having 522 boats inspected and Hillside having 238 boats inspected. Lake Geneva had 602 boats inspected and Williams Bay had 516 boats inspected.

The Clean Boats, Clean Waters program was established as a means of reducing the spread of aquatic invasive species by inspecting boats and educating boaters as they come and go from Wisconsin Lakes. It is only hoped that when boaters are informed of how they can help reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species, they will make the effort to do so. In-person interactions with boaters raises aquatic invasive species awareness and reinforces efforts to do so.

The GLEA hopes to continue Clean Boats, Clean Waters during the summer of 2021. Although the number of inspectors may be reduced, it is anticipated to keep the hours manned by each inspector to remain the same. In conjunction with the CBCW data, it is anticipated the community launch records will all so be inventoried and reported. This will put the CBCW numbers into a clearer perspective relative to boating use. It is also anticipated the some of the private launches will volunteer to conduct CBCW outreach. Walworth County has applied for a WI DNR grant to offer CBCW training during the summer of 2021. If they receive the grant all CBCW inspectors, whether they are working at private or public launches should attend the training.

CBCW Statistics for Geneva Lake WI, 2020			
Launch	Boats Insp.	People contacted	Hours spent
Hillside	238	410	101
Linn Pier	522	1,083	192
Fontana	940	2,312	249
W. Bay	516	1,064	142
L. Geneva	602	730	200
total	2,818	5,599	884
Source: https://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/invasives/WatercraftSummary.aspx?show=landings			

Hours of CBCW Staffing at the Five Municipal Launches, Geneva Lake, Walworth CO. WI, Summer 2020.				
Launch	June	July	August	total
Williams Bay	60.2	49.5	31	140.7
Linn Pier - Linn	35.5	66	89.59	191.09
Hillside Rd - Linn	54	36.6	15	105.6
Fontana	64	86	75	225
Lake Geneva	76.27	74	95.6	245.87
Total	289.97	312.1	306.19	908.26
Source: GLEA, 2020				



Geneva Lake Clean Boats Clean Waters Team, 2020



Emma Coltman, Fontana



Margaret Stehno, Williams Bay



Matt Cranny, Lake Geneva



Geneva Lake



Ted Peters, Supervisor



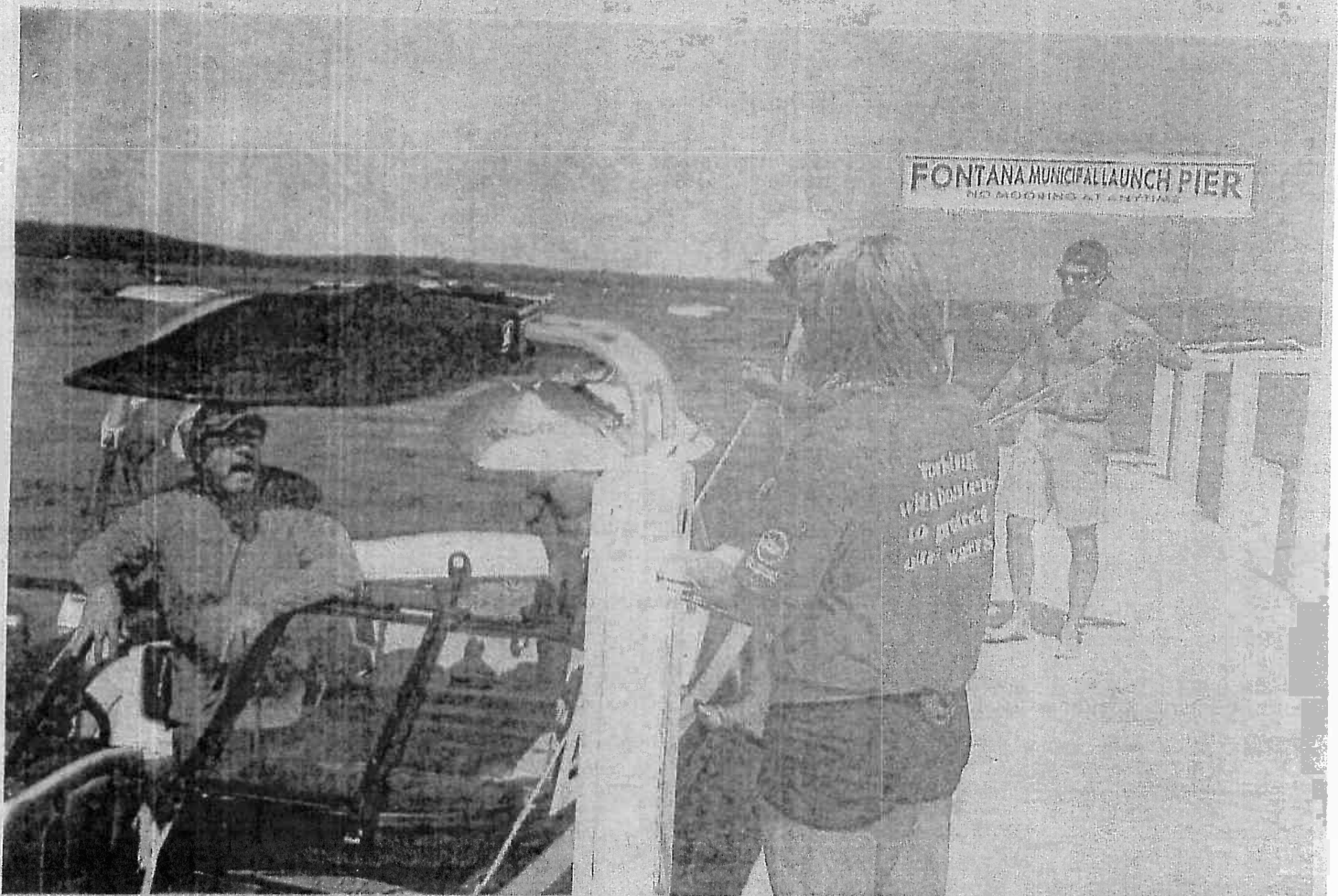
Rachel Stute, Linn Launches



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WEST END

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Geof Clippert, left, a boater from St. Charles, Illinois, speaks June 19 with Clean Boats, Clean Waters boat inspector Emma Coltman, in blue T-shirt, about invasive species

CONNOR CARYNSKI PHOTOS, CCARYNSKI@LAKEGENEVANEWS.NET

Boat inspectors busy with lake protections

State grants fund new program to stop lake invaders

CONNOR CARYNSKI
ccarynski@lakegenevanews.net

WILLIAMS BAY – In the first two weeks of the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program aimed at reducing the spread of invasive species, more than 750 boats have been surveyed on Geneva Lake.

The Clean Boats, Clean Waters program stations inspectors at public boat launches throughout the lake to educate boaters about invasive species and to perform inspections that catch invaders attached to vessels.

With unwanted species like zebra mussels, starry stonewort and banded mystery snails already inhabiting Geneva Lake, inspections conducted by the trained staff members can keep the species from spreading from one lake to another.

Four inspectors, funded under the program at \$12-an-hour, monitor Geneva Lake boat ramps during peak busy times, and also speak with boaters about what they can do to reduce the spread of invasive species.

While local municipalities have sometimes enlisted staff to perform inspections in the past, the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program is the first to staff inspectors around the entire lake.

Boater Geof Clippert of St. Charles, Illinois, launched his boat June 19 in Fontana, saying that he was pleased to see a pro-



Matt Cranny, a boat inspector through the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program, works June 17 at the Lake Geneva public boat launch.

gram in place to educate people about the importance of controlling invasive species.

"I think programs like this are fantastic, just from an educational standpoint," Clippert said.

The inspectors work weekends, holidays and some weekdays at the main boat launches in Williams Bay, Fontana, Lake Geneva and the town of Linn.

In addition to conducting inspections, the inspectors survey boaters on their familiarity with the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program and their travel history with the boat.

Ted Peters, director of the Geneva Lake Environmental Agency, said since the program started June 3, inspectors have collectively spent 155 hours at the launches and surveyed more than 760 boaters.

Peters said he believes a majority of boaters coming to Geneva Lake are unfamiliar with the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program. Having conversations with boaters about reducing the spread of invasive species can help them develop proper boat etiquette, he said.

"If they're new to the idea,

hopefully we put something into their minds that they follow through every time that they go," he said.

The inspection program was created this year with funding from two grants provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The grants provided \$7,209, with a local match of \$2,403, for the Lake Geneva and Fontana boat launches, and \$7,681, with a local match of \$2,560, for the Williams Bay and town of Linn launches.

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Inspections

From B1

Matt Cranny, a boat inspector spending the summer in Lake Geneva, said in his first two weeks as an inspector, he already made a difference in controlling the spread of invasive species by educating boaters and removing plant life from boats and trailers.

"Just talking to people, making them more aware of the program, and just taking a little seaweed off — that's all you need to do," Cranny said.

Cranny said he was surprised this was the first year for such a program on Geneva Lake. He wished it had been implemented earlier, before invasive species like starry stonewort came to the lake.

Peters said with increased traffic coming to

the lake from areas where coronavirus restrictions are more prominent, the program came at a good time. He added that some boaters have been coming to Geneva Lake from other lakes with no-wake policies.

"Not only are they coming up here to get away from the restrictions of the pandemic down in Illinois, but they're also coming up because conditions on their boating lake aren't as good as Lake Geneva," he said.

Peters said at the end of the summer season, the survey information will be gathered and used to develop an approach to next year's program. With so many repeat visitors to the lake, Peters said, inspectors may not need to spend as much time at launches once boaters build good habits of checking their boats for plant life.



CONNOR CARYNSKI, CCARYNSKI@LAKEGENEVANEWS.NET

Emma Coltman, working as a new Clean Boats, Clean Waters boat inspector, pauses during her work June 19 at the Fontana Municipal Pier.