

New 'Clean Boats, Clean Waters' looking for volunteers

Just like it is important to bathe regularly to fend off invasive germs and dirt, it is equally important for boaters to clean their vessels to stop the spread of invasive aquatic species.

“To quote Benjamin Franklin, ‘An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,’” said Cathy McGlynn, the Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Partnership (NIIPP) coordinator. “And that definitely is the case with invasive species.”

IISG and NIIPP are currently working together to bring to Illinois and Indiana the “Clean Boats, Clean Waters” program, which will train people to help spread awareness on the issue.

They are currently looking for volunteers to organize and conduct a boater education program in their community. Those who sign up will attend a training workshop and will be in the field this summer. Volunteers will also perform boat and trailer checks for invasive species, distribute informational brochures, and collect and report any new water body infestations.

“Many invasive species can move from Point A to Point B through recreational boaters,” IISG

Aquatic Invasives Specialist Pat Charlebois said.

Since this is the program’s pilot year in both Illinois and Indiana, it will only take place in one county in each state—Lake County in Illinois and Lake County in Indiana.

Charlebois also said they have enough money to fund Clean Boats, Clean Waters from this summer to the next; however, she added that the goal is to partner with more organizations to make the program self-sustaining, as well as extend it across more counties in the two states. The program has been already implemented in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Some tips that volunteers will be giving boaters are: Remove any visible mud, plants, fish, or animals before transporting recreational equipment; drain water from equipment before transporting; and never release plants, fish, or animals into a body of water unless they come from that body of water.

To volunteer or for more information, e-mail McGlynn at cathy.mcglynn@niipp.net.

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Asian carp marketing summit fosters networking

developed a USDA-approved process for canning Asian carp.

“We were able to develop new products using this canning method, including a tomato-based version of Asian carp,” said Anderson. “We’ve taste-tested several products with Haitians and are now getting logistics and prices together to move this project forward on a larger scale.”

The summit was also helpful to partners in a new Asian carp business plan. The plan for Grafton Summit Enterprises LLC is to establish two Asian carp processing plants in Illinois—one to process fillets and the other to process the fish by-products. These plants may provide employment to more than 40 people altogether and process 50,000 to 100,000 pounds of fish per day, according to the Associated Press. This proposed business is now under review by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

This two-day event took place at the Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey, Illinois. It was organized by IISG, with sponsorship from the IDNR and the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center. You can download the published summary from the Asian Carp Marketing Summit by visiting www.iiseagrant.org/asiancarp.