

**9/14/2020 1:00-2:00pm (Webex)**

## **Minutes –Zebra Mussel Management Team**

Present: Lisa Burns, Katie Sickmann, Cathie Erickson, Bob Baker, Tom Boisvert, Dave Ferris, Sandy Swanson, Maureen Ferry, Kris Larsen, Tyler Mesalk

### **Meeting Purpose: 2020 field season recap**

There are many partners involved in monitoring efforts and the amount of field-work conducted would not have been possible without a strong cooperation between all groups involved. Burnett County, Washburn County, St. Croix River Association, U.S. National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and many local lake associations were all involved in the zebra mussel response efforts. Thank you everyone!

### **1. Staff Updates:**

- Jeremy Bates is no longer with WI DNR.
- Byron Karns will be retiring from National Park Service (NPS) Sept 25.
- Marian Shaffer will oversee the Aquatic Resource Program for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway which includes all things aquatic - animals, plants, water quality and AIS monitoring.

### **2. 2020 Monitoring/Results** (see attached summary report)

- To date, no new populations of zebra mussels have been found in Burnett/Washburn waterbodies.
- Veliger test results still being analyzed for Washburn Co. Lakes and hopefully early October will have results.
- ZM plate sampling: Many lakeshore owners in Washburn and Burnett still monitor using the plate samplers. Thank you!
- There are 23 plates out on Big McKenzie, 10 on Middle, and 5 on Lower. Sandy Swanson has been working with landowners and Tom Boisvert to get a more accurate count of zebra mussels (zm's) on monitoring sampler plates. Landowners have been very cooperative in providing ongoing data. Data is being entered into SWIMS.  
Big McKenzie average # zm's found on plates = 3,000-4,000  
Middle McKenzie average # zm's found on plates= 300-400  
Lower McKenzie= no population to date
- eDNA testing Jeremy Bates was going to coordinate eDNA sampling, but since he left, Lisa and Tom agreed to collect the samples (pictures attached). State lab results will hopefully be available early 2021.  
DNR realized they were getting some false negatives so took a break in 2020 to not use eDNA for additional surveillance, but focused on improving eDNA field collection methods and lab analysis methods.  
Last year, water was collected from the surface because DNA binds to water surface interface. Since zebra mussels are benthic and live on the lake bottom, samples were collected on both the surface and from near the bottom.

Water is collected from multiple locations and composited. Extracting DNA from the composites using two different methods will determine which is best: 1) on-site filtration and 2) preserved water samples.

Oversampling (collecting more than we did before) in the field will help determine how many replicates are needed for a confident positive detection.

### **3. Rapid Response Update**

- The grant will be wrapping up end of 2020
- 10 decontamination stations were ordered
- 30 lakes will be tested for calcium. Lakes within Burnett and Washburn Counties will be sampled to obtain true calcium measurements. These samples will be analyzed by a state accredited laboratory, and results will be shared within Burnett and Washburn Counties, the WDNR, local lake organizations, and the general public. Lakes selected for sampling will be chosen based on their proximity to the McKenzie Lakes, boater traffic, lake association/district involvement and public boat landing access. Results will allow agencies and organizations to assess the true susceptibility of area lakes to infestation of zebra mussels, and adjust containment measures as needed. This sampling effort may draw comparisons between the predicted susceptibility provided by the *AIS Smart Prevention Tool* and the actual calcium measurements in the waterbody."

### **4. Early Detection Monitoring**

-This is a separate type of monitoring looking for numerous aquatic invasive species. Veliger testing is part of the Early Detection Monitoring Protocol. Washburn and Burnett do this monitoring upon request as part of an association's grant and/or it's written within the County grant scope.

### **5. CBCW Inspections**

- Overall, inspections and decontamination compliance was well received this year. One issue noted, is that boaters need to decontaminate, regardless if it's the only lake they use or live/occupy. Reporting action to the Sherriff's Department will be increased with those boaters in 2021.
- A Covid pre-caution sign was developed by Burnett and Washburn County Health Departments and was placed at landings that had a decontamination station. The sign re-assured it's everyone's responsibility to use Covid-19 safety protocol after using equipment.
- Hand sanitizer was provided at some landings by lake associations.
- Inspectors wore masks and kept 6 feet away during inspections. No handouts were given.
- The frequently asked question (FAQ) document was converted to a laminated 11"x17" poster and placed at decontamination stations for the public to view for concerns/questions.
- McKenzie Chain Boat inspectors were on each of the 3 public landings each Saturday and Sunday and holiday starting Memorial Day weekend and ending September 13th, 4 paid inspectors, 7 volunteers. Each lake met their 200 hours for grant, and each also had a lot of extra volunteer hours accounted for. This is a great accomplishment to help with prevention!
- McKenzie Chain Decontamination- The sprayers were getting used a lot this year. Volunteers replaced the bleach/water as needed at each boat landing. A weekly schedule was set-up starting May 1st and will continue through Oct 15.

- The University of MN AIS Research Center got a grant to study genetic testing of zebra mussels.
- The Shoreowners of Stone Lake Association bought a battery operated sprayer for their decontamination station and keep it in a big locked box. Hose is long enough to go around the boat. It has shown very positive results (pictures attached).
- The pressure washer was used a lot this summer, especially during fishing tournaments. Overall, was very well received by the boaters. They were happy to see someone helping with prevention efforts.

#### **6. Decontamination Videos**

- Three training videos have been developed by Washburn County staff to help with training and education for inspectors and the general public to view. It's anticipated they'll be available in the winter. They will be tied to a u-tube link.

#### **7. Outreach**

- Service provider letters have been sent out, as they have been in the past.
- Newsletters, newspaper articles, etc. is encouraged to continue by all partners.
- More training videos will be considered in 2021.

**8. 2021 Monitoring-** With the Rapid Response Grant ending in 2020, it is anticipated to continue partnering on our monitoring efforts, when feasible, through our current AIS grants. More details will be developed this winter.

#### **9. Other County Decontamination Ordinances**

- Bayfield County now has a Decontamination Ordinance, very similar to Washburn/Burnett.
- Sawyer County Lake associations are starting the process to try and get one passed.

***Thank you everyone for all of your continued hard work with AIS prevention!***

2020 Zebra Mussel Veliger Testing



2020 eDNA Sampling- Big and Middle McKenzie Lake



**Stone Lake-Decontamination Battery Operated Sprayer and Box**

