

2009 Summary Report of Watercraft Inspection Results at Lobster Lake

Author: Heidi Wolf

Watercraft Inspection Coordinator

Invasive Species Unit, Ecological Resources, MN DNR

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Introduction:

The watercraft inspection program's goal is to reduce the spread of invasive species into and around the state. To accomplish this we complete at least 10,000 hours of watercraft inspections each year, work with citizen groups and educate the public at events such as the state fair.

The Lobster Lake Association cooperatively hired with the MN DNR in the 2009 watercraft inspection season for forty hours of additional inspection time at their lake. Twelve watercraft inspectors were hired in the west central area and some of them were assigned to work at Lobster Lake to accomplish the forty hours.

The inspection process consists of a six-question survey that ensures that boaters are aware of the issues surrounding invasive species and incorporates the inspector walking the boater around the watercraft to show them where they should be looking for invasive species. Survey questions focus on boater knowledge and behavior with information given on the impacts of invasive species and what can be done to prevent their spread.

The data in this report will be based on all hours and inspections done at Lobster Lake in the 2009 season.

Inspection Results

Watercraft Inspectors worked 67.75 hours (57.5 hours of access time and 10.25 hours of drive time) at the Lobster Lake access. During this time 51 inspections were completed (table 1).

Table 1. Lobster Lake summary of inspections in 2009.

Access Name	Number of Boaters/Inspections	Enter/Exit/Unknown	Hours	Insp. per Hour
Lobster Lake	51	31/20/0	57.5	0.88

Out of the 51 watercraft inspected at Lobster Lake four were found to have attached vegetation. One watercraft was inspected prior to entering the water and three were inspected after exiting the water. The watercraft that came to the access with attached vegetation was inspected prior to entering the water and the owner was asked to remove any vegetation prior to putting their watercraft into Lobster Lake. No other plants or animals were found on any watercraft.

The following information has been provided as a summary of the inspections done at Lobster Lake in the 2009 season. Information we gather helps us understand risks involved, for example boaters coming from waters infested with zebra mussels are more likely to transport zebra mussels than those coming from non infested waterbodies.

The surveys done during the inspection process found that 2 boaters out of 51 inspections (or 3.9%), completed had come to Lobster Lake from a waterbody in Minnesota known to be infested with zebra mussels (table 2).

Table 2. Watercraft entering or exiting Lobster Lake that last used zebra mussel infested waters.

Last Waterbody	Enter/Exit	Number of Watercraft
Le Homme Dieu	Enter	1
St. Croix	Enter	1

The surveys found that none of the boaters who were inspected either entering or exiting Lobster Lake had come from another state. These boats would have represented another high-risk group.

We use a decal with the current year on it to track if a boater has been inspected in the current year. Boaters who have been inspected in the current year are more likely to be educated about invasive species and how to prevent their spread. Below is the number of inspections broken down by whether they had a current year decal and would be a repeat, had a previous year's decal and had talked to us in past years, or had never spoken to us before (table 4.)

Table 4. Decal summary at Lobster Lake for 2009

<u>Year</u>	<u>Inspections</u>	<u>Incoming</u>	<u>Outgoing</u>	<u>Curr Yr decal</u>	<u>Prev. Yr decal</u>	<u>no decal</u>
2009	51	31	20	7	6	38

We have data for 51 boaters who were asked if they are familiar with invasive species, 1 (or 1.9%) of them were not familiar with invasive species. When asked if they were familiar with Eurasian watermilfoil 1 out of 51 (or 1.9%) said they were not familiar. We also asked boaters if they were familiar with zebra mussels and the problems they cause and 1 out of 51 (or 1.9%) of boaters said they were not familiar with zebra mussels. These numbers illustrate that boaters using Lobster Lake have a high level of awareness about invasive species and how to avoid transporting them.

Discussion:

This was the first year that the watercraft inspection program had a spent time on Lobster Lake. Our goal during the 2009 season was to accomplish at least forty hours of inspection time at Lobster Lake; we completed 67.75 hours.

Out of the 51 inspections done at Lobster Lake 38 (or 74.5%) had not been inspected prior to 2009 and were an important audience for us to contact.