

Connect with your environment

Learn about environmental issues in your community and how you can get involved.



PENNSYLVANIA SEA GRANT

Volunteer groups can earn money and help prevent the spread of invasive species by hosting a boat wash.

Boat washes can serve as group fundraiser

You can help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and raise money for your fishing club, Scout troop, sports team or other group at the same time.

Boat-wash stations are one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread

of AIS. Learn how you can partner with Pennsylvania Sea Grant to conduct a watercraft inspection and boat-wash station in your community. For more information, contact Sara Stahlman at sng121@psu.edu or (814) 217-9011, Ext. 109.

— Anna McCartney



MONICA HERNDON, STAR TRIBUNE

Julie Siems from the Minnesota DNR demonstrates the abilities of one of their zebra mussel-sniffing dogs. While mandatory boat inspections and sniffer dogs are considered essential tools to stop AIS infestations there and in some other states and provinces, they are not employed in Pennsylvania. In either case, boaters are the best defense. Follow the recommendations below to stop new AIS infestations. To see a video go to: <https://youtu.be/IHK-aVQebhw>.

Don't move a mussel

Clean, drain and dry your watercraft

By ANNA McCARTNEY
Contributing writer

If you don't clean your boat and equipment before moving from one body of water to another, you are likely helping aquatic invasive species (AIS) to spread.

Lakes, rivers and streams are under attack by aquatic invaders, which are causing environmental and economic harm. These non-native species can tolerate a variety of conditions and they have no natural predators to keep them in check. As a result they can degrade a body of water,

impair boating and fishing, threaten native and game species and destroy habitat. Additionally, AIS pose public health risks and also burden municipal water plants, agriculture, tourism, fisheries and outdoor recreation industries. In many states and provinces, it is illegal to transport AIS because once established, they are impossible to eliminate.

AIS are transported to new areas attached to boats and equipment. Many are microscopic and some species may live in tiny amounts of water or on plants that have not been removed. Therefore it's important to do the fol-

lowing when you leave a waterway:

- Check everything that came into contact with the water, including every inch of your boat, trailer, canoe, fishing gear, life jackets, etc.

- Remove any plants, mud and aquatic life.

- Don't dump leftover bait into the water, unless you collected the bait there.

- Dispose unwanted bait and other animals or aquatic plants in the trash.

- Drain all standing water from your boat and from all equipment.

- Wash all boat parts and equipment with hot water (140 degrees Fahr-

enheit) or with a high-pressure spray or use a commercial hot-water carwash.

- Dry everything for at least five days before entering another waterway.

- Report sightings to a local natural resource agency or Sea Grant office if you suspect a new infestation.

To learn more go to <http://seagrant.psu.edu/topics/invasive-species>.

ANNA McCARTNEY, a communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at axm40@psu.edu.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/Anna McCartney

Cleaning up areas like this one are perfect opportunities for municipalities and citizens to work together to improve their communities.

Clean up Erie County

For more than 20 years, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with municipalities and community volunteers to clean up the state's forests, parks, roadways, city blocks, greenways and waterways.

You can join the Great American Cleanup of Pennsylvania, which began March 1 and runs through May 31. Choose from one of the cleanups listed below or find a listing of all Erie County events, resources for organizing a cleanup, and other information online at www.gacofpa.org.

What: Four Mile Creek Cleanup between Routes 5 and 20, Wednesday, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Sponsoring group: Erie Coastal Cleanup

Contact person: Brittany Prischak, (814) 451-7326 or bprischak@eriecountypa.gov.

Municipality: Lawrence Park Township

Meet at Napier Park near the corner of Napier Avenue and Morse Street at 3:30 p.m. for a short safety talk and to collect garbage bags, work gloves and data cards before heading out to clean up trash along this stretch of creek.

What: Presque Isle State Park 60th Spring Cleanup, Saturday, 8 a.m.-noon.

Sponsoring group: Presque Isle State Park Volunteers.

Contact person: Stacey Marendt, (814) 217-9638 or

smarendt@pa.gov.

Municipality: Millcreek Township.

Meet at the Rotary Pavilion to sign-in; receive bags, gloves and location of cleanup. Lunch will be served for all participants from 10 a.m.-noon. Service hours are available. Pre-register at http://events.dcnr.pa.gov/presque_isle_state_park.

What: Wintergreen Gorge Cleanup, April 17, 4-6 p.m.

Sponsoring group: Greener Behrend Club at Penn State Behrend.

Contact person: Kathryn Manno, (814) 602-7163 or kathryn.m.manno@gmail.com.

Municipality: Harborcreek Township.

Meet at Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Drive.

What: Third Annual Academy Neighborhood Cleanup, April 23, 9 a.m.-noon.

Sponsoring group: Academy Neighborhood Association.

Contact person: Robert Hand, (814) 881-6665 or academy.neighborhood.erie@gmail.com.

Municipality: Erie City.

Meet at 3025 French St., outside the Academy Neighborhood Office. From there we will fan out across the neighborhood to work on litter cleanup and some minor beautification projects at Baker's Field and lunch at noon.

— Anna McCartney



NPS.GOV

AIS like these quagga mussels are transported to new areas attached to boats and equipment. Many species are microscopic and some may live in tiny amounts of water or on plants.



SDLEASTWANTED.COM

Pull the plug and drain all water from motor, bilges, bladder tanks, live bait wells and any other wet compartments and portable bait containers. Dispose bait in the trash.



WALPA.ORG

Inspect your boat, canoe, or other watercraft, and trailers and equipment. Remove visible aquatic plants, animals and mud. Even small fragments of plants can spread AIS to a new area.



NPS.GOV

Boats of all sizes and types and anything that comes in contact with the water must be thoroughly cleaned and dried before moving to any new waterway to avoid spreading AIS.

This page brought to you by:



Check out these websites to learn more:

www.protectyourwaters.net/
<http://seagrant.psu.edu/topics/invasive-species>
www.fishandboat.com/AIS.htm

Spreading invasive species is another example of how people often unknowingly change the environment. Look for articles about the environment. How many are about human impact? Share your ideas of what people should do to stop transporting invasive species and why? Send them to axm40@psu.edu for possible publication in the "your space" feature.

