

# 2010 Lake Minnetonka Watercraft Inspection Program

## Summary Report



### Prepared By:

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### Partner Organizations:



## INTRODUCTION

The Lake Minnetonka Conservation District (LMCD) coordinated a watercraft inspection program on Lake Minnetonka during the 2010 boating season. The primary purpose of this program was to inspect incoming watercraft/trailers, as well as educating watercraft owners and operators, to assist in preventing the introduction of new aquatic invasive species (AIS) into Lake Minnetonka. This was a cooperative effort of the LMCD, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), and the Minnetonka Power Squadron (Power Squadron).

## METHODOLOGY

Nine of the 11 public accesses on Lake Minnetonka were covered as part of this program in 2010. Watercraft inspections were conducted on peak days and peak times from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. Further details of the methodology include:

### Public Accesses Covered:

1. City of Deephaven (Carsons Bay)
2. City of Minnetonka (Grays Bay)
3. City of Minnetrista (Halstead Bay)
4. City of Mound (Cooks Bay)
5. City of Wayzata (Wayzata Bay)
6. Hennepin County (North Arm)
7. Hennepin County (Spring Park Bay)
8. MN DNR (Maxwell Bay)
9. TRPD- W. Upper Lake (see below at Lake Minnetonka Regional Park)

### Coverage Hours:

1. Fridays (13 days) (11 a.m. to 7 p.m.)
2. Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays (34 days) (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

**TOTAL INSPECTION HOURS: 4,096**

### Lake Minnetonka Regional Park:

1. Duration of Days (108) May through September 6<sup>th</sup>
2. Days to be Covered May (weekends only)  
Memorial Day through Labor Day (7 days a week)
3. Coverage Hours 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**TOTAL INSPECTION HOURS: 864**

### Public Accesses Not Covered:

1. City of Minnetrista- Phelps Bay (only 4 car/trailer spaces)
2. City of Tonka Bay- Echo Bay (no on-street parking for car/trailers east of County Road 19)

Volunteer Watercraft Inspectors:

Pilot watercraft inspection program  
coordinated with the Minnetonka Power  
Squadron

**CONTRACTS**

MN DNR:

The LMCD contracted with the MN DNR Watercraft Inspection Program to conduct watercraft inspections at six public accesses in 2010. These included:

- City of Deephaven (Carsons Bay);
- City of Minnetonka (Grays Bay);
- City of Wayzata (Wayzata Bay);
- Hennepin County (North Arm);
- Hennepin County (Spring Park Bay); and
- MN DNR (Maxwell Bay).

Total contracted hours with the MN DNR was 2,898. The MN DNR provided watercraft inspector coverage of 2,532 hours (or approximately 87% of the contracted hours). A Report has been prepared by Heidi Wolf from the MN DNR summarizing the results of the 2010 program (see Appendix A for details).

Volt Workforce Solutions (VOLT):

The LMCD contracted with VOLT to conduct watercraft inspections at two public accesses in 2010 as a pilot project. These included:

- City of Minnetrista (Halstead Bay);
- City of Mound (Cooks Bay); and
- As a substitute to the first six public accesses when the MN DNR was unable to provide inspector coverage.

Total contracted hours with VOLT was 1,198. VOLT provided watercraft inspector coverage of 1,033 hours (or approximately 86% of the contracted hours). A training session was coordinated in the LMCD office on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, with an in the field training session coordinated by the MN DNR Watercraft Inspection Program. Watercraft Inspections conducted by VOLT paralleled those performed by the MN DNR, with an Inspector Handbook created. Inspections seem to have gone well in 2010 and the use of VOLT (or other private sector watercraft inspectors) seems to be a viable compliment and/or sub substitute for future projects.

**IN-KIND**

The TRPD provided an in-kind contribution to this program in 2010 with gate attendants inspecting incoming watercraft/trailers at the Lake Minnetonka Regional Park. These gate attendants were conducting inspections similar to the MN DNR and VOLT, which included educational and inspection components. Estimated in-kind hours contributed to this program were 864 (\$6,912). This program has worked well and the LMCD hopes that it can continue in the future.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

The LMCD partnered with the Power Squadron in 2010 on a volunteer watercraft inspection program (pilot) to assess its viability for future boating seasons. 56.5 hours of volunteer watercraft inspections were provided by seven Minnetonka Power Squadron members, with the majority of the inspection hours conducted in August. Similar to the VOLT inspectors, the Power Squadron volunteers were provided an Inspector Handbook and were trained in the field by the MN DNR Watercraft Inspection Program. Inspections were conducted on weeknights (Mondays through Thursday) when there was not MN DNR or VOLT coverage.

The volunteer program seemed to work well on a pilot basis in 2010. Expansion of this should be evaluated for 2011 because of economic limitations to pay for watercraft inspectors to cover public accesses seven days a week (from sunrise to sunset). The LMCD would like to recognize the volunteers hours provided by Roger Damlo, Donald Duncan, Jerry Figg, Tim Barrett, Kelly Barrett, Bill Hill, and Dean Lindbloom.

## **FUNDING SOURCES**

There were three primary funding sources for this program in 2010. First, the MCWD provided a contribution of \$7,500. Second, the MN DNR provided a \$6,720 of grant funds. Third, the LMCD contributed \$29,545, which was a combination of AIS Management and "Save the Lake" Funds. The LMCD greatly appreciates the financial contribution to this program by the MCWD and the MN DNR.

## **DOCUMENTATION OF 2010 CAR/TRAILER LAUNCHES**

In 2010, the LMCD partnered with the MN DNR on a project to document the number of boat launches through the same nine public accesses covered by the watercraft inspection program. The methodology was established by the MN DNR, the fieldwork was coordinated by the LMCD, and a Report was prepared by Tim Kelly from the MN DNR (see Appendix B for further details). Based on this project, it was estimated that 62,112 boats were launched from mid April through mid November. One of the goals of this project was to assist in future AIS management and prevention efforts at Lake Minnetonka public accesses.

## **SUMMARY**

In 2010, zebra mussels were discovered in Wayzata Bay in late July. A number of actions were coordinated by the various partners referenced within this Report. These actions include:

- The LMCD coordinated a special Board of Directors Meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup> to get an update from the MN DNR.
- The MN DNR and the MCWD partnered to provide an early assessment of the extent of the zebra mussel infestation (coordinating with the LMA and others).
- Public Forums were coordinated by the MN DNR on August 31<sup>st</sup> at the South ShoreCenter and September 1<sup>st</sup> at the Gillespie Center.
- Training sessions were coordinated by the LMCD and the MN DNR on August 12<sup>th</sup> and September 16<sup>th</sup> with the lake service providers on Lake Minnetonka (commercial marinas, dock installers, commercial boat haulers, etc.).
- Further assessment of the extent of the zebra mussel infestation was coordinated by the MCWD in mid September on the Lower Lake.