



# Clean Boats, Clean Waters 2024 Season Report

## Overview

In 2024, Clean Lakes Alliance completed its third season of the Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) program. Clean Boats, Clean Waters is a state-wide aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention program aimed at increasing awareness and education to boaters, anglers, and general lake users on best practices to prevent the further spread of AIS at our local boat landings.

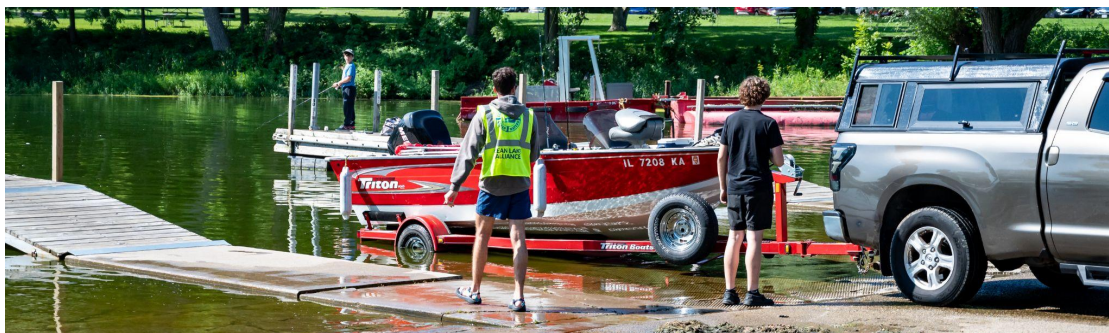
Aquatic invasive species can have broad and detrimental effects on our lakes. Many of these species are commonly introduced to new water bodies by “hitchhiking” on watercraft and surviving inside undrained live wells. To address the issue, trained educators offered courtesy boat and trailer inspections at four of the busiest boat launches located on the Yahara lakes: Olin, Olbrich, Marshall, and Warner. Clean Lakes Alliance also coordinated with the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department, which covered two additional locations: Lake Waubesa (Babcock Boat Launch) and Lake Kegonsa (Fish Camp Boat Launch).



Courtesy watercraft inspections serve as a front-line defense against emerging AIS threats. Educating our lake users on how to identify and report AIS and how to implement best management strategies when moving watercraft between water bodies provides additional safeguards for our lakes against harmful invasives.

## Program Highlights

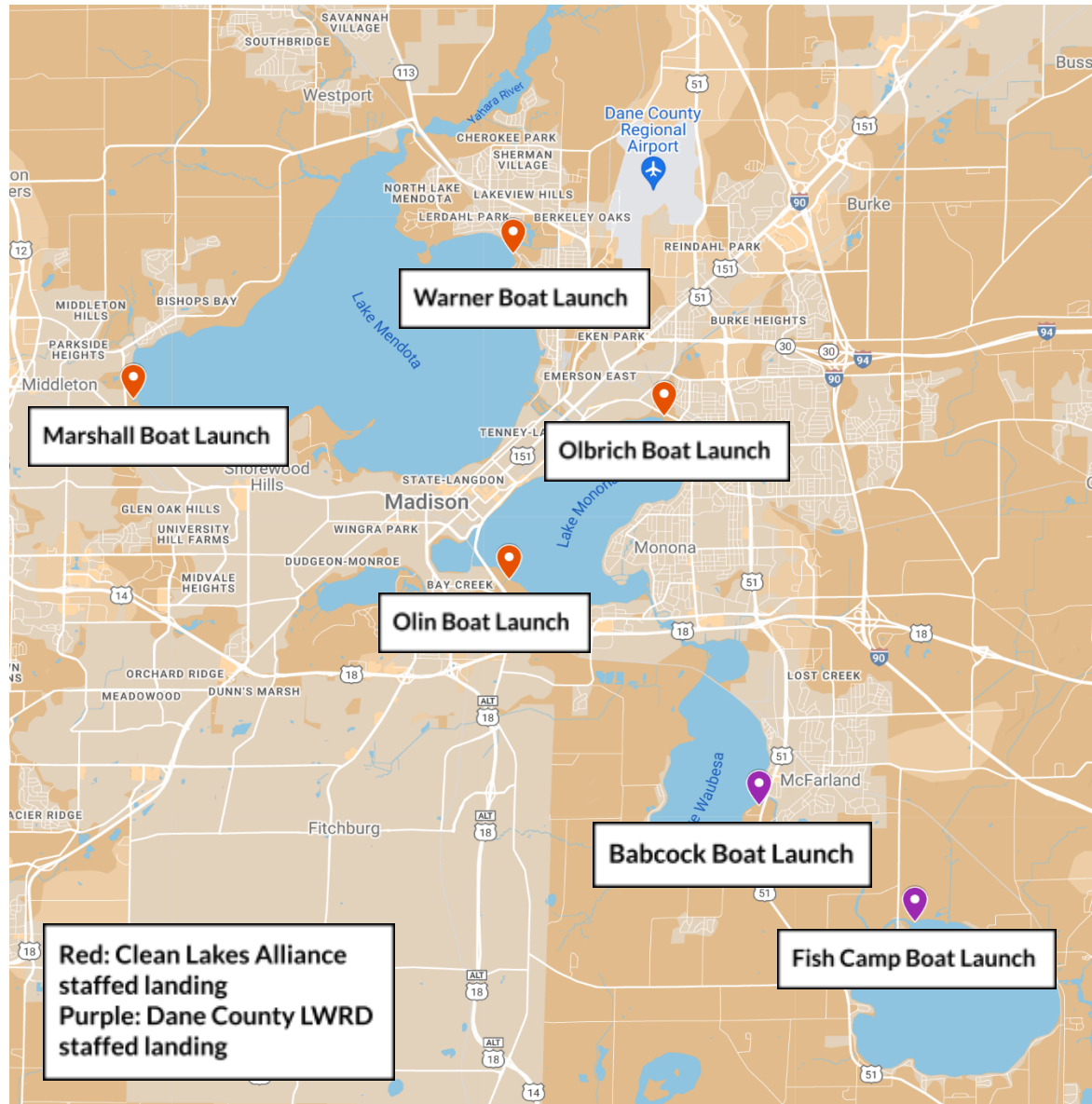
- Grant funding awarded through Wisconsin DNR’s Surface Water Grant Program
- Hired and trained 3 LTE Watercraft Inspectors
- AIS and watercraft inspection training for LTEs provided by Dane County Land and Water Resources Department (Pete Jopke) and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Shelby Adler)
- 429 inspection hours as part of 106 weekday and weekend shifts throughout the boating season (May 22, 2024 - September 1, 2024)
- 2,457 lake user interactions at four boat landings (Marshall, Warner, Olin, and Olbrich)





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## Landing locations:





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## Program Details

### a. Training and Scheduling

On May 22, 2024, watercraft inspectors began the season with training on conducting inspections, identifying invasive species, and best practices for interacting with and educating boaters. Dane County has participated in the CBCW program for several years and played a lead role in the training. Inspectors also received supplemental online training offered through the UW Extension Lakes website, as well as guidance from Clean Lakes Alliance coordinators on program and outreach goals.

Once trained, inspectors were assigned locations and timeframes to ensure adequate coverage at each landing. When making this calendar, inspector hours were skewed to the weekends when boat landings are typically at their busiest. A smaller percentage of shifts were allocated to weekday mornings and early evenings to reach anglers and mid-week lake users. Inspector shifts were anywhere from 3-4 hours each, based on inspector preference and availability. One inspector was

stationed at any given boat landing at a time. Inspectors rotated among the boat landings, switching locations with each shift. As a condition of the grant, at least 200 hours of coverage was required for each set of paired landings (Lake Monona landings being one set and Lake Mendota landings being another set) for a minimum of 400 hours.



| Boat Landings | Hours staffed | Total boater interactions |
|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Marshall      | 86            | 510                       |
| Warner        | 138           | 733                       |
| Olin          | 128           | 757                       |
| Olbrich       | 77            | 457                       |
| Totals:       | 429           | 2,457                     |



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| Inspector Name  | Total hours worked | Total shifts |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Sydney Kerstein | 66                 | 19           |
| Mikaël Rohou    | 240                | 63           |
| Anna Martin     | 123                | 42           |

## b. Watercraft Inspector Responsibilities

Watercraft inspectors started each interaction by introducing themselves and then asking questions upon the boaters' arrival or departure from the landing. All responses were recorded on data sheets provided by UW Extension Lakes. With CBCW being a statewide program, questions were predetermined.

Questions posed to all boat launch users:

- Are you willing to answer a few questions?
- Have you been contacted by a watercraft inspector this season?
- Has your boat been used on another body of water in the past 5 days? If so, where?

The questions are designed to collect valuable data on lake user habits and possible patterns in AIS transfers and help foster conversation between inspectors and boat launch users. After boat launch users responded to the set questions, we encouraged inspectors to further engage boaters by asking what questions they had regarding AIS. Inspectors had several outreach flyers, program brochures, and supplemental information for those who requested takeaway materials to review later. Staff ended each conversation with friendly reminders on state requirements (Chapter NR 40) regarding live bait reuse, draining live wells, and removing all attached aquatic vegetation before leaving the boat landing. Courtesy watercraft inspections were offered and taken up by many boat owners. Watercraft and trailers were thoroughly inspected for any remaining plant debris, which was then removed.



After each shift was completed, inspectors entered their hours, location, and collected data into the Wisconsin DNR's SWIMS (Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System) database.



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## **Chapter NR 40: The Invasive Species Identification, Classification, & Control Rule**

The CBCW program utilizes the guidelines established in NR 40 to prevent the spread of invasive species within the state of Wisconsin. The rule establishes “preventive measures” to highlight what actions boaters can take to slow their spread. For all boaters, paddlers, and anglers, the following rules apply:

- INSPECT your boat, trailer, and equipment.
- REMOVE any attached aquatic plants or animals (before launching, after loading, and before transporting on a public highway).
- DRAIN water from boats, motors, and equipment.
- NEVER MOVE live fish away from a waterbody.
- DISPOSE of unwanted bait in the trash.
- BUY minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer. Use leftover minnows only under the following conditions:
  - You may take leftover minnows away from any state water and use them again on that same water.
  - You may use leftover minnows on other waters only if no lake or river water or other fish were added to their container.



Our inspectors shared these requirements with each boat launch user and acted as a resource for those who wanted to learn more.

## **2024 Results**

### **Questions posed to all boat launch users:**

- Are you willing to answer two questions (these numbers represent only one person per group)?
  - a. Yes - 1,733
  - b. No - 51
- Have you already been contacted by a watercraft inspector this season (these numbers represent only one person per group)?
  - a. Yes - 642
  - b. No - 1,091
- Has your boat been used on another body of water in the past 5 days?
  - a. No - 1,490
  - b. Yes - 228
    - i. If so, where:



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| Within the watershed:              | No. of responses |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Lake Mendota                       | 43               |
| Lake Monona                        | 37               |
| Lake Waubesa                       | 44               |
| Lake Kegonsa                       | 16               |
| Lake Wingra                        | 1                |
| Outside the watershed:             |                  |
| Apple Lake (Saint Croix County)    | 1                |
| Beaver Dam Lake (Dodge County)     | 2                |
| Big Green Lake (Green Lake County) | 10               |
| Chain Lake (Chippewa County)       | 1                |
| Chetek Lake (Barron County)        | 1                |
| Chippewa Flowage (Sawyer County)   | 1                |
| Clear Lake (Vilas County)          | 1                |
| Clear Lake (Polk County)           | 1                |
| Delevan Lake (Walworth County)     | 1                |
| Devils Lake (ND)                   | 1                |
| Diamond Lake (MI)                  | 1                |
| Fish Lake (Washura County)         | 1                |
| Fish Lake (Dane County)            | 1                |
| Fox Lake (Dodge County)            | 1                |
| Fox River (Green Lake County)      | 1                |
| Governor Dodge (Iowa County)       | 1                |
| Green Bay (Brown County)           | 1                |
| Holcombe Lake (Chippewa County)    | 1                |
| Lac Seul (Canada)                  | 1                |
| Lake Addie                         | 1                |
| Lake Arbutus (Jackson County)      | 1                |

|                                       |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Lake Carroll (IL)                     | 1          |
| Lake Erie                             | 1          |
| Lake Jordan (Adams County)            | 1          |
| Lake Koshkonong                       | 2          |
| Lake Michigan                         | 5          |
| Lake Nagawicka (Waukesha County)      | 1          |
| Lake Redstone (Sauk County)           | 1          |
| Lake Superior (Ashland County)        | 2          |
| Lake Winnebago                        | 3          |
| Lake Wisconsin                        | 12         |
| Le-aqua-na Lake (IL)                  | 1          |
| Little Eau Claire (Bayfield County)   | 1          |
| Little Green Lake (Green Lake County) | 1          |
| Wisconsin River                       | 3          |
| Mississippi River                     | 6          |
| Moen Lake (Oneida County)             | 1          |
| Musky Lake (Vilas County)             | 1          |
| Okauchee Lake (Waukesha County)       | 1          |
| Pike Lake (Washington Lake)           | 2          |
| Pine Lake (Waukesha Lake)             | 1          |
| Red Cedar Lake (Barron County)        | 1          |
| Star Lake (Vilas)                     | 1          |
| Sturgeon Bay (Door County)            | 2          |
| Swan Lake (Columbia County)           | 1          |
| Twin Lakes (Green Lake County)        | 1          |
| Twin Lake (Kenosha County)            | 1          |
| Westfield Pond 9 (Marquette County)   | 1          |
| Yellow Lake (Burnett County)          | 1          |
| <b>Total:</b>                         | <b>228</b> |



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The numbers above reflect a general receptiveness of lake users to interact with the inspectors and answer questions. Less than 3% of boat launch users declined to speak with an inspector. If launch users did not want to engage with an inspector, we did not push them to give responses.

It's worth noting that total interactions (2,457) represent the total number of individuals who were actively engaged with the inspectors. For example, if there were four people in a boat, and all four were participating in answering questions and sharing information, then all four individuals

were tallied in this count.

Conversely, if an inspector talked with a boater who had three others waiting on the dock that did not participate in the conversation, then only one individual was tallied for this count.



Questions regarding if boat launch users had been contacted by an inspector already this season and if they had their boat on another waterbody within the last 5 days were **only**

**asked of the boat owners themselves** (not of the accompanying group). This resulted in fewer responses compared to total interactions. The number of responses to these questions is also lower than the total interactions count due to shoreline anglers without watercraft being interviewed.

A point of discrepancy with the total number of interactions is if a boat launch user stated they had already been contacted by an inspector earlier in the season. These responses were still tallied and recorded for that day regardless if they had interacted with an inspector on a prior occurrence. We are unable to determine how many of the total interactions are repeats. Because CBCW is a statewide program, many people shared that they had previously interacted with either other Clean Lakes Alliance inspectors, Dane County staff, or CBCW inspectors in other counties.



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## Improved Infrastructure Needed

Our inspectors noted a prevalent theme of boaters calling for more infrastructure to support the program. Of the four boat launches our program covers, only two have wash stations for boaters to use. Marshall and Warner Boat launches typically have functional tools and hoses to help remove aquatic invasive species at the launch. However, Olin and Olbrich launches don't have hoses available to boaters. Around Monona, we have found the strongest need for boat wash stations.



Wash stations help remove small plant fragments that are difficult to remove by hand. Tools like trash grabbers or boat hooks are particularly helpful in reaching plants stuck under the boat trailer. Both provide a better user experience at the launch while keeping traffic moving and, most importantly, help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Clean Lakes Alliance encourages residents and launch users to join us in advocating for landing infrastructure improvements, such as hoses and wash stations.

Keeping AIS out of our waters is crucial to improving the water quality of the Yahara lakes. Improved infrastructure at the landings will make our front-line educational program more effective and ensure anyone can appropriately clean their watercraft, no matter the time of day or the presence of an educator.