

FALL/WINTER 2018

VOLUME 23, ISSUE TWO



An Amazing Collaboration Created the Riverway

By Deb Ryun, Executive Director, St. Croix Rivers Association

When something long lasting and spectacular happens, we should remember and celebrate. On this, the 50th anniversary of the 1968 National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the St. Croix River Association is doing just that.

For half a century the public has been able to enjoy and use the St. Croix River, a unique and vital national park with abundant habitat, clean water, and spectacular natural beauty. What many don't realize is that much of the St. Croix's public parks and waters, enjoyed for generations, would not have been protected if it weren't for some far-sighted executives at Northern States Power (NSP), now Xcel Energy.

At the start of the industrial era, NSP purchased thousands of acres of riverfront land on the St. Croix north of Taylor's Falls, planning for hydroelectric power. Even as the company changed its approach to energy generation, NSP was a civic-minded steward of its riverfront lands, making the St. Croix available for canoeing, fishing and picnicking, even creating maps for public use.

In the 1960s, the company no longer needed all of the land they owned. They considered ways to protect this land and river for future generations. Simultaneously, U.S. Senators Gaylord Nelson (WI) and Walter Mondale (MN) were working at the federal level to pass the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to protect the

country's most vital waters, including the St. Croix and its principal tributary, the Namekagon.

NSP executives went to Washington and testified before Congress that they were willing to donate 25,000 acres of river land if the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was passed. Leaders in Congress recognized this donation could jump start protection of our nation's most

vibrant waters. The 1968 Act now has protected not just the St. Croix, but 12,734 miles of 208 rivers.

After the 1968 passage of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, NSP worked for years to shape the future of the St. Croix and was recognized in 1971 by the Department of Interior for its "intense devotion" to the river.

The Riverway is a magnificent national treasure. It is also a fragile

one. Continued protection of this place and its world class experiences will take the commitment of all of us working together.

In the current climate of weakening environmental protections, it is important to remember the story of a farsighted company that helped create something truly remarkable for its community and this country. As we celebrate the anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, NSP's historic role in protecting the St. Croix River leaves a lasting legacy that can be an enduring gift for another 50 years.



Message from the President

By Roger Noe, BCLRA

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LAKELINES is published semiannually at no charge by the University of Wisconsin-Extension Burnett County, 7410 Co Rd K, #107, Siren, Wisconsin, 54872.

LakeLines

is featured online at

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Congratulations and thank you to all lake associations and individuals who participated in decontaminating Burnett County lake landings. Decontamination stations have now been installed at numerous boat landings in the county. Washburn County lake groups have also been busy installing stations.

At the heart of the zebra mussel issue, decontamination stations are in full swing at Big McKenzie Lake and Middle McKenzie Lake. Big McKenzie, as you know, was the origin of zebra mussels in Burnett and Washburn counties. Zebra mussels have spread into Middle McKenzie and seem to be multiplying.

So where do we go from here? With fall 2018 arriving and staring at winter, what will open water in 2019 bring?

Needless to say, life at the “the cabin” is changing before us. Gone is most wild shoreline around our lakes. The boats are getting larger. The human footprint has become more pervasive. The picture of Big McKenzie cabin owners removing their boats for winter storage and finding them covered with zebra mussels has now become a reality.

Lake life has changed in Burnett County. If we are to help our pristine waters, we all need to get involved. We need to come to the aid of our precious natural resources.

Get involved first hand with your lake or river and its surroundings. Form a lake association. Keep a wild shoreline. Use less fertilizer on your lawn. Let the trees remain in the water. Volunteer at your boat landing monitoring boat traffic. Whatever you can do to give back to your lake is helpful.

Our lakes and rivers are being stretched in dangerous directions. Do your part to keep them healthy.

For help in your efforts, contact Burnett County Lakes and Rivers at 715-635-6309.



Photo credit: Wikipedia Commons

Clean Boats Clean Waters Grants

Yes, We Want One to Protect Our Lake, but How Do We Make It Work?

By Dave Ferris, Burnett County Land Services

We've been getting many questions with lake associations interested in using the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) grant and how lake associations can get the staff to monitor their landing to be able to access these funds.

First, a brief overview of the CBCW grant. This is a sub-program of the WDNR Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program. The lake association (or any other eligible entity) can get 75% of the annual cost of monitoring their boat landings, up to a \$4,000 grant maximum. The main requirement of the grant is the association has to provide 200 hours on one or two landings in the grant year. You can coordinate with other associations to ensure that you are able to staff all landings covered by the grant with CBCW personnel as required.

There are four ways a lake association can run a CBCW program and take advantage of the WDNR grant program. Most lake associations use volunteers for administering the grant as well as on the landing to supplement the paid staff.

1. Use all volunteers either with or without a WDNR grant.
2. Use contract positions on the landings.
3. Work with a local unit of government for staffing.
4. Hire staff as employees.

Option 1 will burn a lake association out quickly. Although using volunteers for your grant will certainly help stretch those dollars further.

Option 2 of using contract positions can work but the association will need someone to supervise the contractor, pay the bills, etc. While associations can legally contract, they have to be careful to contract with "legal" contractors. See state and federal law if you're interested in this option.

Option 3 was used by the North Sand Lake Association in 2018 to implement a CBCW program. The association applied for and received a CBCW grant. At the same time they approached the town with the request that the town hire the staff to monitor the landing. The town agreed, as

the town owns the landing. The association administers the grant, sets the schedule, and advertised for the landing inspectors. The town handles all of the payroll issues and sends the association a monthly invoice for the expenses. The association pays that invoice to the town. The association then requests reimbursement from the WDNR for all the expenses (association and town). You may contact Brian Hehn, North Sand Association, at: brianhehn@comcast.net for any additional questions.

Last, but not least, Lipsett Lake Association went with option 4, the employer route. The following is from Lipsett Lake on the steps they took to be an employer.



Photo credit: UW-Stevens Point

CBCW Grant Administration: Doing It On Your Own

By Tom Boehne, Past Treasurer of Lipsett Lake Association

For several years, Lipsett Lake Association used the services of an outside organization to handle all aspects of hiring and payroll for our CBCW workers. In 2015, we were forced to take over these responsibilities when that organization decided to move in another direction. I will summarize the things that needed to be done to become an employer.

- Since our lake association was now going to be the actual employer of record in the eyes of the federal and state government, the first order of business was that of finding, interviewing and hiring boat landing workers. This

(Continued on page 5)

Aquatic Invasive Species on the March

The Dangers of Water Gardening

By Becca Klemme, Burnett County Land Services

In the past few years the DNR and others have been educating boaters and anglers about the dangers of spreading exotic species on their boat trailers and in their live wells. You may have seen billboards, heard public service announcements, or been visited at your favorite boat landing by a local volunteer or DNR Water Guard officer about “stopping the spread”. While the threat from aquatic hitchhikers should be taken very seriously, it is not the only pathway for exotic species to invade our waterways. Water gardening, an increasingly popular pastime, is a significant threat that often goes unnoticed.

From the plastic garden pool with a built-in waterfall to the ½ acre landscape pond, enthusiasts spend nearly \$1 billion per year building, stocking and growing their water gardens. To serve this demand, garden centers and on-line retailers now offer a huge array of aquatic and wetland plants in every form and color. While some of these plants are native, most are exotic species. An exotic species becomes “invasive” when it can tolerate a wide range of conditions, is easy to establish, grows aggressively, and spreads in multiple ways. Many of these factors are just what you look for in an easy-to-grow garden plant.

Indeed, a quick review of on-line retailers shows that many offer plants that are currently on the [Federal Noxious Weed List](#) or listed as a prohibited species by the Wisconsin DNR. These include such popular water garden plants as parrot feather, yellow floating heart, flowering rush, and water chestnut. These and other plants have already proven to be invasive in Wisconsin or other northern climates. And you cannot count on the retailer knowing what they can or cannot ship to each state. In fact, when researchers at the University of Minnesota placed 14 online orders for restricted plants all but one of them was filled!

Even when a water gardener does his homework and orders noninvasive plants, there is still a significant danger of receiving unwanted invasive species. Researchers in the same study ordered 681 plants from 40 different suppliers and found that 93% of the orders also contained plants, algae, fungi, insects, or other animals they did not order. What was alarming is that 10% of the orders contained aquatic invasive species such as hydrilla, giant salvinia, or purple loosestrife. These often occurred as plant fragments, seedlings, or seeds mixed in with the desired plant. With most invasive species a small plant fragment or a single seed is more than enough to start a new invasion! In fact, the hydrilla infestation in Marinette County likely came from plant fragments on nursery stock from an east coast mail-order water

Wisconsin Invasive Species Control List (NR 40)

Prohibited Species

Fanwort	<i>Camboba Carolina</i>
Australian swamp crop/ New Zeland Pygmy weed	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>
Dydimo/ Rock snot	<i>Didymosphenia geminate</i>
Brazilian waterweed	<i>Egeria densa</i>
Hydrilla	<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>
European frogbit	<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>
Oxygen weed/ African waterweed	<i>Lagorospira major</i>
Parrot feather	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>
Spiny naiad	<i>Najas minor</i>
Yellow floating heart	<i>Nymphaeoides pelata</i>
Water Chestnut	<i>Trapa natans</i>
Water Hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>
Water Lettuce	<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>

Restricted Species

Flowering rush	<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>
Eurasian water milfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>
Curly-leaf pondweed	<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>
Narrow-Leaf cattail	<i>Typha angustifolia</i>
Purple Loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>

Watch Species

Mosquito fern	<i>Azolla pinata</i>
Pond water starwort	<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>
Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>
Indian swampweed	<i>Hygrophila polysperma</i>
Water spinach/swamp Morning-glory	<i>Ipomoea aquatica</i>
Dotted Duckweed	<i>Landoltia punctata</i>
Asian marshweed	<i>Limnophila sessiliflora</i>
Watercress	<i>Naturnium aquaticum</i>
Ducklettuce	<i>Ottelia alismoides</i>
Water lettuce	<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>
Salvinia species	<i>Salvinia spp.</i>

For a complete list of all Wisconsin species under consideration for listing, and for definitions and additional information go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/classification/>

(Continued on page 6)

Clean Boats, Clean Waters Grants - continued from page 3

time-consuming process is handled largely by our lake management committee chairperson.

- A past president of our lake association managed the purchase of a Directors and Officers Liability Insurance policy as well as a Worker's Compensation insurance policy.
- My first order of business, as association treasurer at that time, was to download and understand a number of publications. IRS Publication 15 and Wisconsin Publication 166 were among the first. These publications deal with federal and state employer responsibilities, withholding tax tables, tax filing procedures, etc.
- I downloaded the W-4 form from <https://www.irs.gov/>. We needed to print and give a copy to each employee. When completed and returned, we would then know how much to withhold for federal and state income taxes.
- I set up an online account for Lipsett Lake Association with the IRS at <https://www.eftps.gov/eftps/>. EFTPS stands for Electronic Federal Tax Payment System. It is through our online account that withheld payroll can be electronically paid to the IRS each month.
- I set up an online 'My Tax Account' for Lipsett Lake Association with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue at <https://tap.revenue.wi.gov/btr/>. It is through this account that the WI Business Tax Registration fee is paid and WI state income taxes withheld from employee paychecks can be submitted.
- I set up an online account for Lipsett Lake Association with the Social Security Administration at <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/>. Using this Business Services Online account enables me to generate W-2s and W-3s online at the end of the year.
- Lipsett Lake Association did not have to pay state and federal unemployment taxes because we have tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. I had to register our lake association as a new employer in the state of Wisconsin through the WI Department of Workforce Development. I did this online at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uitax/>.
- We developed a timesheet that employees completed for each 2-week payroll period. I created a spreadsheet into which I could enter the number of hours worked and the state and federal income tax to be withheld. My spread-

sheet then did the necessary payroll calculations that enabled me to write a manual check and print a payroll remittance advice sheet to be sent to each employee each payroll period.

- An Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return, Form 941, must be filed at the end of each quarter. I downloaded this form from <https://www.irs.gov/>. After completing this fillable .pdf at the end of each quarter, I printed it and submitted it in paper form.

Our lake association uses QuickBooks for our financial recordkeeping. We could have purchased a payroll module for QuickBooks to automate many of the payroll tasks and tax reporting tasks that I chose to do manually, online, or with my spreadsheets. I chose to save the several hundred dollars that this module would have cost annually.

The first year of doing our own CBCW grant payroll administration was the most time consuming. It got a bit better the second year because we had laid the appropriate groundwork and established our procedures and processes. We just completed our fourth year administering our own CBCW grant. While it certainly was not as easy doing all this ourselves as it was having an employment services organization do it, it sure beat the alternative of not protecting our lake using the CBCW grant dollars available to us.

You may contact Tom Boehne at tom.boehne@hotmail.com with any additional questions.



In closing, some CBCW grant management options are more complicated than others, but they will help build the capacity of your organization. All options are better than getting an invasive species in your lake and having to manage and control the species, sometimes at great expense, to protect the lake and property values.

Contact any BCLRA representative or Dave Ferris, Burnett County Land Services, at dferris@burnettcounty.org for further assistance.

Aquatic Invasive Species on the March - continued from page 4

garden store.

So what is the aspiring water gardener to do? Consider using native species. There are many native aquatic and wetland plants that look good and can fill your needs. While it's good to use natives, it's best to avoid collecting plants from the wild. The disturbance you create, especially when digging in wetlands, opens an area for invasive species to come in. Shop around and find growers that carry native species.

If you must use exotic plants acquaint yourself with the DNR list of prohibited and restricted species (see list on page 4). These plants should never be used. When you receive plants, verify that your order is correct. To help remove aquatic hitchhikers, rinse the plants well in several changes of tap water until they are clean. Be on the lookout for snails, newly sprouted plants and plant fragments.

When disposing of water garden plants it's vital that you do it correctly. Never, never, never dispose of water garden plants or drain your water garden into a natural lake, pond, stream or wetland. Unwanted plants should be disposed of in the garbage. Composting is risky because many seeds and tubers are very hardy and resistant to drying, decay, and high temperatures. Even native water garden plants should not be released to nearby waters since they may not be native to that particular lake or stream and any new introductions, even native ones, can cause problems.

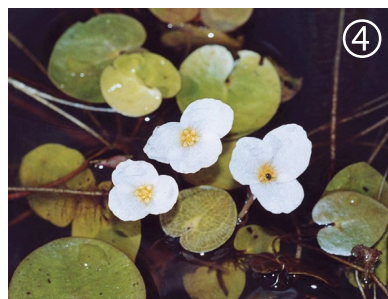
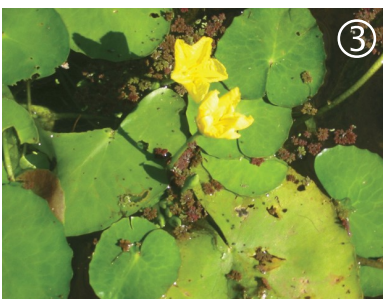
Water Gardeners Beware...

Some aquatic invasive plants found in Wisconsin are pictured here. ①Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), ②Anacharis (*Egeria densa*), ③yellow floating heart (*Nymphoides peltata*), ④European frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*), ⑤parrot feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

So help do your part to prevent aquatic invasive species. Keep checking your boats and trailers for aquatic hitchhikers, AND know what you are planting in your water garden! Of course, if you do find any invasive aquatic species in our lakes and streams, please report them to the DNR or Burnett County Land Services. For information on safe water gardening, visit <http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/ais/watergardening> or http://www.oar.noaa.gov/spotlite/archive/spot_watergarden.html.

How You Can Help

- Build your aquascapes away from natural waterways and flood zones.
- Learn to recognize invasive species.
- Purchase and plant non-invasive and native plants.
- Check plant orders for unwanted invasive hitchhikers.
- Do not use invasive plants, fish, crayfish or snails in your garden.
- Do not release any plants, fish or invertebrates into natural waters.



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Bicycling Beautiful Burnett County

By Emily Gall, Burnett County Tourism Coalition

Down winding paths, both paved and gravel, you'll find some of the best biking in north-west Wisconsin right here in Burnett County. Our legacy trail, The Gandy Dancer, traverses 20 miles of the county, with a limestone base that's perfect for a leisurely bike ride with family. Additional trail systems scattered throughout the county are connected by a network of back roads, winding through some of the most beautiful countryside you'll find anywhere. In addition, new trails have been developed in just the last year, expanding on an already robust system.

In the past few years, the biking culture has enjoyed a resurgence in Burnett County, thanks to the creation of two local bike groups – Lake Country Pedalers and Back Country Bike Club.

The Lake Country Pedalers plan easy-going trail and road rides during the warmer months. These casual rides are great for bikers of any experience level and usually end up at one of the areas' local restaurants or coffee shops for mid- or end-of-ride comradery. Their most popular promotion is their 12 Rides of Summer – a biking schedule that plans routes throughout Burnett County and into northern Polk County. For more information on these and the other great events put on by the Lake Country Pedalers, go to LakeCountryPedalers.com. This group is also spearheading the development of single track bike trails and rustic campsites in the 1,340 acre Keizer Lake property that is part of the Burnett County Forest. To stay up-to-date on this project, follow them on Facebook @KeizerLakeTrails.



New in 2018, the Back Country Bike Club is an offshoot of the Webb Lake Men's Club. Formed in order to bring another recreational sport and activity to the Webb Lake area, their trails in northern Burnett County are carved through scenic forest, winding over hills, through the forest, and around unspoiled lakes that most people have never seen. Broken into two sections, the Dogtown Cluster and the Bear Lake Loops, these

trails are meant to be rugged and wild. For more information, please see BackCountryBikeClub.com.

If you haven't made it to the Timberland Hills Ski Trails lately, you're missing out. The lighted trail system is a perfect cold weather experience. Though many trails are designated for skiers alone, this year they've added a multi-use trail that's great for fat tire bicyclists. This trip to the easternmost reaches of Burnett County is well worth it.

Additionally, the Fat Fish Forty will be hosting its second annual fat tire bike race in Webster on May 11, 2019. This 42-mile course is open to fat tire and mountain bike racers, and begins and ends at the Central

Burnett County Fairgrounds in Webster. Athletes from across the region attended the inaugural event, and the second year is sure to be even more successful. More information can be found at FatFishForty.com.

So, while the lakes are definitely a cornerstone of life and vacationing in Burnett County, let's not forget the adventures that can be found while bicycling down a wooded trail into the heart of our beautiful county.

Upcoming Events

Christmas at the Forts

Forts Folle Avoine | December 1, 2, and 8, 2018

Open Skating

Lodge Center Arena, Siren

Saturdays, 6:30-8:30pm through March 2, 2019

Siren Destination Wedding Fair

Siren | January 27, 2019

American Legion Ice Fishing Contest

Grantsburg (Big Wood Lake) | February 9, 2019

Webb Lake Area Ice Fishing Contest

Webb Lake | February 2, 2019

Siren Lions Club Ice fishing Contest

Siren (Lower Clam lake) | February 23, 2019

Siren St. Patrick's Day Parade with St. Paul Winter

Carnival Royalty

Siren | March 9, 2019

Webb Lake St. Patrick's Day Parade

Webb Lake | March 16, 2019

Fat Fish Forty Bike Race

Webster | May 11, 2019

For more information check the Burnett County Tourism Coalition website: burnettcountyfun.com, or any village chamber of commerce website.

Crex Meadows Events January - March 2019

Winter Wildlifers

January 8, 15, 22, 29

February 5, 12, 19, 26

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Families are offered a chance to discover wildlife through stories, songs, hands-on activities, games, crafts, and snacks. Winter Wildlifers is a free, no-registration, no-obligation program that encourages families to get out and enjoy nature. Dress for the weather. Ages 2 – 8.

O.W.L.S

January 3, 17, 31

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Join us for the program “Older Wiser Learning Series.” There will be a short presentation followed with a discussion. There may be an outside component, make sure to dress for the weather. Hot beverages and snacks will be provided. Adults only.

January 3 Aldo Leopold

January 17 Habitat Management on Crex

January 31 Birds of the Marsh

Snowshoe Hike

January 4

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Experience wildlife in a new way and join us for a morning snowshoe hike in search of animal sign! All skill levels are welcome. Snowshoes provided. Pre-registration required. All ages.

Winter Exploration Hike

February 23

9:30 am – 10:30 am

Join us for a family snowshoe hike in search of animal sign and winter wildlife! Snowshoes will be provided. Pre-registration required. All ages and skill levels welcome.

Outdoor Skills Camp for Kids

March 18-20

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Day camp offers a unique opportunity to learn science and conservation through hands-on outdoor experiences. Recommended for youth ages 8 – 14. Parents welcome but not required to be present. Pre-registration required. Class size is limited to 20 students.



Odds and Ends

Looking for Some Extra Cash?

Are you interested in having a little extra spending money while performing a great community service? The Burnett County Land Services Department is looking for people interested in conducting Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) duties around the county. CBCW inspectors help perform boat and trailer checks, disseminate informational brochures, and educate boaters on how to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. We are looking for adults, age 18 or older, willing to work on Friday, Saturday, and Sundays for 2 to 6 hour shifts. These are seasonal positions that will run approximately May through September. Training will be provided. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Dave Ferris at (715)349-2109 ext. 1361 or dferris@burnettcounty.org.

2018 McKenzie Lake Zebra Mussel Update

In 2018, the population and year classes of zebra mussels continue to grow in Big McKenzie Lake. Zebra mussels were also found in Middle McKenzie Lake at low population numbers. On a field day on July 16th with several groups including McKenzie Lake Association, Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association, Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association, Wisconsin DNR, Washburn County Land and Water Conservation, and Burnett County Land Services, only two zebra mussels were found in Middle McKenzie. Since then only a few other zebra mussels have been reported on Middle McKenzie Lake.

In May 2018, these same organizations joined together to apply for a Rapid Response Grant through the Wisconsin DNR to prevent the spread of zebra mussels. Purchasing decontamination stations, supplies and monitoring equipment was the main purpose of the grant.

We are currently looking for lake associations interested in sponsoring and maintaining decontamination stations and monitoring zebra mussel activity. If your lake association is interested in participating in this effort to curtail the spread of zebra mussels and/or would like to erect a decontamination station at your lake's boat landing, please contact Becca Klemme at rklemme@burnettcounty.org or (715)349-2109 ext. 1382 for more information.

For questions or if you think you've found zebra mussels (or any other invasive), please contact the Land Services Dept. at 715-349-2109 ext. 1361 or dferris@burnettcounty.org.

AIS Transport Ordinance Gets Update

Were you aware that in January 2018, the Burnett County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution #2018-01 to amend the Illegal Transportation of Aquatic Plants and Invasive Animals Ordinance? This amendment requires anyone entering or leaving a boat landing with a decontamination station available to spray off their trailer, aquatic vehicle, and any other equipment contacting the water body. With zebra mussels now found in two lakes in the county (Big and Middle McKenzie) it is important to take the extra step to decontaminate your boat, anchors, live wells, etc. to stop the spread of zebra mussels and possibly other invasive species.

The decontamination stations funded by the Rapid Response Grant mentioned above will provide the necessary equipment to neutralize and remove vegetation from your equipment to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. The grant will provide 20 decontamination stations for Burnett and Washburn counties. If this project goes well we hope to apply for more grants in the future to help provide more decontamination stations around the counties.

We want to keep our lakes free of aquatic hitchhikers. To do this please remember to: Always inspect, Remove plants and animals, Drain all water, and Never Move plants, animals, or water from any boat landing. For more information contact the AIS team through Burnett County Land Services.



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Burnett County Lakes & Rivers
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LAKELINES

FALL/WINTER 2018

VOLUME 23, ISSUE TWO



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