

## **Douglas County Lakes Association Stopping Aquatic Hitching!**

For more than ten thousand years, nature has perfected Minnesota's bounty of beautiful lakes. The carefree lakes our grandparents enjoyed are changing. With more people seeking to experience the "lake life", our use of Minnesota lakes and rivers is changing. The Douglas County Lakes Association (DCLA) continues to support lakes by leading county-wide environmental efforts through education, public awareness and advocacy.

Since the discovery of zebra mussels in June 2009 on Le Homme Dieu, Carlos and Geneva, the lake associations, the DCLA, Minnesota DNR and the University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program have committed to be active participants in preventing this from happening to other lakes in our county. We will embark on a campaign to educate and motivate boaters, landowners and anglers to stop the spread of zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).

The DCLA and its member lake associations are committed to an aggressive campaign to change the behaviors of the people who use the lakes. It takes people who use the lakes to care! As an angler or boater here are a few things you can do to help area lakes:

1. **Learn** to recognize what Aquatic Invasive Species are.
2. **Inspect and remove** aquatic plants, animals and mud from boat, motor and trailer as you enter or exit bodies of water.
3. **Drain** water from boat, motor, livewell, bilge and bait containers.
4. **Dispose** of unwanted live bait and worms in the trash.
5. **Rinse boat** and equipment with high pressure and/or hot water – at least 104 degrees Fahrenheit, especially if moored for over a day, or dry everything for at least five days.
6. **Never introduce** fish, plants, crayfish, snails or clams from one body of water to another.

DCLA's position is that the only logical course of action must be to engage the citizenry in a public conversation about what we all can do to assist in the prevention of the spread of AIS. To address this issue, we plan to design and implement aspects of the *Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!* campaign in collaboration with local and state partners.

As Minnesotans, we celebrate unlimited access to our lakes as a privilege of living in and around Minnesota. With our efforts we believe that we can serve as an example to the rest of Minnesota and the country on how to fight the spread of AIS.

We ask for your support as we embark on these efforts!

Check out our web site [www.dclamn.org](http://www.dclamn.org) for more information on AIS and our **Douglas County Lakes Association**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?