

Watershed Council will offer second season with Mobile Boat Washing Station

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council is pleased to announce the second season of the Mobile Boat Washing Station Program in Northern Michigan. The station, which uses high-pressure, heated water to wash invasive plants and animals off boats and trailers, will be visiting various Northern Michigan lake landings this spring and washing boats for free. Visit www.watershedcouncil.org/mobo for more information

on dates and locations of our boat washing events.

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) in our lakes come from outside Northern Michigan or the United States and harm or have the potential to harm human, environmental, and/or economic health. Species such as Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra and quagga mussels, and curly leaf pondweed are a few common examples. They compete with native species, encourage the growth

of harmful algal blooms, clog intake pipes, and cause many other problems for people and wildlife. According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, as of 2017 the Great Lakes Region annually lost \$200 million dollars due to the effects of ship-borne invasive species.

AIS can spread from one water body to the next by hitching a ride on boat hulls and trailers. That's why the Watershed Council has

invested in a mobile boat washing station to wash watercraft as they leave the lake. The station is easy and quick to use. Station staff spray hot water to kill and wash off the invasive species. The spray water is collected in a large containment mat and later discharged into designated containment facilities at parks or campgrounds or into drains where water treatment

facilities will prevent invasive species from reentering water bodies.

"We are excited to share our mobile boat washing program with boaters all across our service area because, in addition to being an effective way to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, it also allows us to connect with boaters and share how important it is to work together to protect

the waters that we love," said Eli Baker, the Watershed Council's water resources education coordinator.

From Memorial Day through Labor Day, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council will be educating boaters and washing boats throughout our Northern Michigan service area with the help of dedicated volunteers. A schedule

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Mobile boat washing...

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of events will be available at www.watershedcouncil.org/mobo. If you'd like to volunteer at a boat washing event in your area this summer, contact Water Resources Education Coordinator Eli Baker at 231-347-1181 or info@watershedcouncil.org. Together, we can help to protect the Northern Michigan Great Lakes and inland waterways that we cherish.

The Mobile Boat Washing Station Program is funded by the United States Forest Service and the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program.