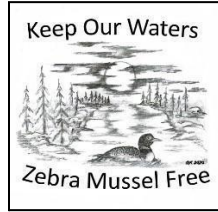


Citizens for Protecting Our Northern Waterways Inc. (CPONW)

<https://www.zebramusselprevention.com/>



Fall Newsletter - 2023

Once again, our volunteer committee had a busy year. Here is a brief summary of our activities and other important information.

Status of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in Northern Manitoba

Each year we interact with the Provincial AIS Unit who coordinates and undertakes monitoring of numerous lakes and rivers across Manitoba. The purpose of this monitoring is to determine the presence/ absence of zebra mussel (adults and microscopic juveniles called veligers) and spiny waterflea.

Although lakes sampled this year are still being assessed, preliminary results received to date for northern Manitoba indicate no new detections outside those that were previously recorded (see map). As a general statement, most waters upstream of infected waters remain AIS free.

More results will be shared as they become available.



Water bodies invaded by zebra mussels and spiny waterflea

CPONW Lake Monitoring

To augment the provincial AIS unit program, for the second year in a row, CPONW has undertaken our own lake monitoring. Lakes and rivers monitored in 2023 for adult zebra mussels by our group include the Burntwood River, Paint Lake, Setting Lake, Kississing Lake, Bakers Narrows, Neso Lake, 1st Cranberry, Rocky Lake, Clearwater Lake, Reed Lake,

Wekusko Lake and Snow Lake. Monitoring entails suspending what is called a “substrate sampler” in the water off the end of a dock.



The sampler includes four PVC plates that provide zebra mussels with a hard surface to attach to. When retrieved in the fall these plates are inspected for the presence/absence of small zebra mussels. The



assessment of these samplers will be done this month.

If you encounter one of these samplers suspended in the water at a dock site, we ask that you please “do not disturb” it.

Awareness and Prevention

This year, we set up our information booth at several public events and trade shows including the Flin Flon and The Pas Trade Shows, Kelsey Watershed District Water Festival, Cranberry Portage Market (3), and the Opasquia Agricultural Society’s Chuckwagon and Chariot weekend. CPONW information was also handed out by the Boreal Discovery Center at the Thompson Trade Show.

In total we interacted with over 400 people, including about 140 children. For the second year in a row, when talking with people visiting our booth, we assessed their level of interest in zebra mussels and other AIS, their general knowledge, and their specific knowledge about how to prevent the introduction and spread.

Compared to last year, in general, there was an overall increase in the level of interest and concern in 2023; an improvement in the level of AIS knowledge, and a slight increase in prevention knowledge.



Although the results are encouraging, an increase in AIS knowledge and, in particular, an increase in knowledge of what we can do to prevent the spread is needed.

Provincial AIS Advisory Committee Established

For several years, CPONW has advocated for the establishment of a public advisory committee to provide perspectives and advice to the provincial government on the AIS program. We are pleased to report that in early June, we were invited to the inaugural meeting of the “Provincial Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Forum” (AISAF), which we attended along with several other groups interested in AIS prevention. In July we received a letter officially appointing CPONW as a member of the AISAF.

The AISAF provides members with an opportunity to collaborate with the government and the AIS Unit by providing feedback and recommendations on strategic development and the overall delivery and effectiveness of the Manitoba AIS Program. Since the inaugural meeting we prepared a written submission outlining our recommendations to enhance and strengthen the existing AIS program. Key recommendations included: improving public outreach and awareness; enhancing hours of operation of the inspection and decontamination stations; enhanced protection to waters free of AIS and increased financial resources for the AIS program.

We anticipate the next meeting to occur sometime in the fall.

Financial Support

We are fortunate to continue securing financial support from the R.M. of Kelsey/LUD of Cranberry Portage and the Kelsey Watershed District. In addition, we were successful in extending our grant from the Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Fund.



CPONW AGM

On October 15th we held our AGM in Wanless where we reviewed the activities of the past year and financial status, elected our new Executive and discussed plans for next year. The following is our executive and regional representatives for the forthcoming year:

Executive

Chris Smith - President; **Craig Asselstine** - Vice President; **Marilyn Meyer** - Secretary;

Richard Gibbons: Treasurer; **Wade Roberts**: Ex-Officio

Regional Representatives

Don Macdonald: Thompson; Don Gamache - Rocky Lake; **Jim Lorden** - Clearwater Lake

Randy Koshel: The Pas; **Diane Ballantyne**: Opaskwayak Cree Nation; **Sheldon Bourassa** - Chemawawin First Nation; **Tony Brew** - Snow Lake/Wekusko Lake; **Debi Hatch** - Sherridon/Kississing Lake

