

CBCW report from Pearl Lake on 1 September 2013 conducted by Andrew Teal

A standard AIS Violation form can still be submitted at the request of those reading this report; however, it would not give the full story of what occurred at that time. The purpose of this document is to shed more light on that situation. While I did not get the names of the family of three, I do believe I collected enough information to make a straight arrow pointing at them should the need arise. I asked them all of the survey questions on the inspection form and recorded their responses there. I should also mention it was the man who became less than receptive at the end.

At 10:45 AM on 1 September 2013 I stopped and inspected a boat that was preparing to enter Pearl Lake in Waushara County. The lady in the family told me the particular boat they were going to launch only went from Big Green Lake in Green Lake County to Pearl Lake in Waushara County. The reason for this is because they live near Big Green Lake, but her family also has a cottage on Pearl Lake. She also told me they have a sailboat which is kept on Lake Winnebago only. When I asked if the boat had been anywhere else in the last five days, the collective response was yes, it had been to Big Green Lake the day prior (31 August 2013). They also stated they were aware of the laws about preventing the transport of aquatic plants, animals and water from one waterbody to another.

I proceeded to ask the question regarding the steps they had taken when removing their boat from the water the last time they went boating. The man's claim that they visually inspected and removed any plants when they brought the boat out of the water appeared to be quite bogus. I simply had to squat down to see approximately eighteen plants or plant fragments hanging in conspicuous locations on the bunks, axle, frame and spare tire. The boat impeller had one hanging on it as well. The plants included water celery and Eurasian water milfoil (EWM), the majority of the plants being EWM. Two of these EWM plants had zebra mussels attached to them. At my request, they all helped me remove the vegetation from the trailer and boat. I specifically asked their son if he could do me a favor and get the plants that were farther under the trailer on the bunks and axle since I was too big to reach them. With this done, the man pulled the boat plug and ran the bilges. I did not see water come from the bilges, and the boat itself seemed dry (based on the drain hole facing down a slope).

I showed the family the piece of EWM I had removed from a bunk on their trailer which had zebra mussels attached. The man claimed he did not know Big Green Lake had zebra mussels. This is when the problem arose. I asked the man in question to start his engine for 2-3 seconds to blow out anything that may have been in his inboard. He sounded incredulous when he said "No I will not start my motor on dry land", as though it was the most ridiculous thing he had ever heard. I persisted, having requested this very thing from boaters with motors in the 250 HP class all the way down to Jet Skis and met little resistance all season. Still he refused, saying he was a marine mechanic and knew doing such a thing would fry the impeller (perhaps if run for several minutes, which was why I said 2-3 **seconds**). He did say that if I was willing to risk \$400 he would start it, or if I had a bucket of water he would disconnect the pump and run that in water. This statement sounded more like he was daring me to press the issue. By this point he seemed an even mix of arrogant, belligerent and condescending, so I let him go, because I did not want to start a confrontation. I knew the warden was only a phone call away.

The boat launched after that, and I waited a few hours before calling Ben Mott, Conservation Warden for most of Waushara County. He arrived around 3:40 PM, and I showed him the vegetation which was removed from the trailer and boat. I had also put a piece of the milfoil with zebra mussels on it into a sealed glass jar provided by one of the lake residents who lives close to the landing. She and many of the residents had never seen physical specimens of zebra mussels before. The condensation on the inside of the jar indicated that not only was there moisture in the organisms, but that they were also still viable specimens. Ben and I both noted this. Before I left, I provided Ben with a verbal description of the boat, trailer and truck so he could approach the correct people (it got busy after 12 PM at Pearl Lake).