



Lake George Association

People Protecting the Lake Since 1885

NEWS RELEASE

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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2011 Lake Stewards Report Released

Lake George, NY – February 2, 2012 – The Lake George Association has released a free report for the public with findings from the 2011 Lake Steward program. It is available for download from the LGA website: www.lakegeorgeassociation.org.

Since 2006, lake stewards have inspected boats at high traffic launches around the Lake and have educated boaters about invasive species spread prevention. The LGA's 2011 report summarizes the data collected last year, and includes the number of boats inspected, the total number of animal and plant specimens removed, the identity and quantity of invasive species found, and the last waterbody each boat visited prior to entering Lake George. Over the years the program has adapted; data and specimens are collected from boats *both launching into and leaving* the Lake. The data gathered helps define how invasive species are spread, and the pathways that exist between other regional waterways and Lake George.

The program seeks to protect the Lake from the introduction and spread of invasive species that could negatively alter the Lake's ecosystem, shoreline property values, and the region's tourism-driven economy.

In 2011, Lake Stewards were posted at six launches around Lake George: Norowal Marina, Mossy Point, Hague Town Beach, Rogers Rock, Dunham's Bay, and Million Dollar Beach.

Over the 2011 season, the Lake George lake stewards interacted with 8,593 boats:

- Within two weeks of their launch in Lake George, boaters had visited 193 unique waterbodies located in 15 different states.
- Other than Lake George itself, the next most frequently visited waterbody was the Hudson River, a waterbody with 91 different invasive species; 100 boats inspected had been in the Hudson within two weeks prior to launch in Lake George.
- Lake stewards collected 171 aquatic organism samples from 125 boats and trailers, and identified 87 samples to be invasive species.
- Four different species were found: Eurasian watermilfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, water chestnut and zebra mussels.
- 75% of boaters reported taking spread prevention methods before launching in the Lake.

"In general, the LGA's lake stewards have encountered little or no resistance to their inspection activities," said Emily DeBolt, LGA director of education and the manager of the Lake Steward Program. "Most boaters are quite willing to have their boat inspected and are quite appreciative of the stewards' efforts to keep Lake George free of invasive species. We have found that while coordinated and thorough training is definitely required for the people who conduct the inspections, the process of inspecting the boats itself is relatively painless and not inconvenient for the boater," she continued.

“As members of the Lake George Park Commission deliberate over mandatory boat inspections, and how best to protect Lake George from aquatic invasives, the LGA’s Lake Stewards program reports have proven invaluable,” said Walt Lender, LGA executive director. “In our four years of operating the program, we have inspected hundreds of boats coming to Lake George. These boats have come from over 200 different lakes and rivers. Many of these lakes have dozens of invasive species already in them,” he said.

“In addition to inspections, we must also employ a full range of tools to combat invasives,” Lender continued, “including a statewide ban on the transport and sale of invasive species, similar to that passed by Warren County in 2011. We also need a comprehensive way to reach every casual boater, so that everyone will understand the threats, and prevent the spread of invasive species from one water body to another.”

The 2011 Lake Steward Program was funded by the Lake George Park Commission (\$35,000) and the Lake Champlain Basin Program (\$25,000), with additional funding coming from the LGA’s Helen V. Froehlich Foundation grant awards.

About the LGA

The LGA is a non-profit membership organization of people interested in working together to protect, conserve, and improve the beauty and quality of the Lake George Basin. It is the nation’s oldest lake association. For more information, contact the LGA at (518) 668-3558 or visit the LGA website at www.lakegeorgeassociation.org.

Photo captions, clockwise from top left:

1. Michael Abrahamson begins an inspection of a motor boat at Dunham’s Bay, prior to launch in Lake George.
2. Brandon Bezio inspects a kayak.
3. Lake Steward Alison Canavan takes a close look underneath a boat and on its trailer for any specimens of plants or animals.
4. Britt Gellenthien works at the Rogers Rock launch site.
5. Aly Birch records data from a motor boat at the Mossy Point launch site.

