



Watercraft Inspection Steward Training & Field Guide



Refer to handbook page 6:1



Lake Ontario at Oswego, NY



Watercraft inspection stewardship programs exist across New York State (NYS) to protect the integrity of NY’s waters and prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

New York State’s watercraft inspection programs educate watercraft operators at launch sites to increase public awareness of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and how the boating public can help control the spread of AIS through proper watercraft inspection practices and care of recreation equipment. The goal of this training manual is to provide you with the tools and resources to help you be part of a professional and well-received watercraft inspection program.

A Professional Approach to Stewardship

By becoming a watercraft inspection steward, you are joining and strengthening an existing network of educators and people interested in natural resource protection. Your actions as a steward represent yourself, your program, the supervising organization and program partners, and watercraft inspection programs in New York State and elsewhere. As paid stewards and volunteers conducting the watercraft inspections, you are “the face” of your respective programs, and represent New York State to local residents and the thousands of visitors who come to New York to enjoy our water resources.

Prepare Yourself to Engage the Public

Your demeanor while conducting inspections impacts the effectiveness of your program as a public education tool and an AIS prevention method. Professional delivery of the watercraft inspection and the AIS messages encourages the public to take an interest in implementing best management practices to support the program’s ultimate mission of protecting pristine waters and preventing the movement of AIS into and out of your region.

Dealing with the public can be both rewarding and challenging. Four key elements to demonstrate professionalism as watercraft inspection stewards are:

- *Appearance*
- *Safety*
- *Interaction with Public and Staff*
- *Documentation.*

Refer to handbook page 6:2

**APPEARANCE:****Identifying Yourself Visually**

Stewards should wear program-approved dress while on duty. Your uniform helps the public visually identify you as an official representative of the watercraft inspection program. It may draw people to you, creating educational opportunities. When you approach boaters to offer an inspection, your uniform lets the boaters know that they are being approached by someone in a professional capacity for a legitimate reason.



Most programs supply a uniform or uniform components: shirt, jackets, caps, etc. Your clothing should be clean and unwrinkled. Neat personal grooming is expected. Maintain good posture at all times; do not lounge or lay down on duty. Be alert at all times.

SAFETY: Maintaining Personal and Public Safety

Your safety and the safety of those around you is your top priority. Boat launches and ramps are typically active places with frequent movement of watercraft, people, vehicles, animals, children, etc. The boaters and visitors are there to relax and may be eager to launch their vessels or load watercraft to leave after a fun day on the water. You are there to work. To protect public and personal safety, follow these steps:

- When setting up your work area, assess the safety hazards and take all appropriate measures to eliminate risks.
- Ask boaters to turn off vehicle engines during inspection.
- Be alert to your surroundings and aware of where the boat owner and others are at all times, particularly those with moving watercraft.
- While checking around wheels, motors, trailers, etc., you will sometimes be out of the direct line of drivers' vision during inspections, so keep those around you alert to your location.
- Always plan for a personal exit path should a boat/vehicle start moving in your direction for any reason. Be especially aware of trailer wheels, propeller, and hitch.
- Have a charged cell phone and a key contact list that includes your program coordinator/immediate supervisor, launch manager, and local law enforcement.
- Avoid dangerous situations and confrontations with the public.



SAFETY: Special Risks and Circumstances

Special safety concerns may occur spontaneously. Stewards should be alert as you may be called upon to communicate your observations as a witness of an incident. Be a good observer and record as much detail about the occurrence as possible.



In Case of Emergency: Be Prepared & Equipped to Call 911

Stewards working in areas with limited cell phone access should know the locations of the nearest accessible landlines.

If you must leave your launch site for safety reasons, notify your designated supervisor/contact person immediately. Follow your program's specific protocol when dealing with the following risks and circumstances. In all circumstances, maintain your composure.

- **Storms/Lightning/High Winds:**
Storms can approach quickly without warning when on/near water. Use your judgment to determine if you can seek shelter in your vehicle or a nearby building.
- **Rude/Threatening Public Behavior:**
Do NOT confront people acting in a rude/threatening way. If your personal safety is threatened, retreat to your vehicle and lock the doors. Leave the site, record as much information about the individual and location as possible and relay that information to your supervisor or designated contact person immediately.
- **Fear for Personal Safety:**
If you fear your safety is being jeopardized, enter your vehicle and/or leave the launch site. Contact your supervisor, and, if appropriate, law enforcement, immediately. Remember that you do not have law enforcement responsibilities or powers; your role is to educate the public.
- **Potentially Dangerous Facilities:**
If your assigned launch is unsafe because facilities are in need of repair, potentially dangerous people or animals are frequenting the site, or similar site-related risks exist, notify your supervisor, and, when appropriate, the launch manager.
- **Nuisance/Potentially Dangerous Wildlife Encounter:**
Do not approach or feed the animal. Make others aware of the animal and notify property manager. In extreme cases, calmly leave your site to enter your vehicle or a nearby building, contact Wildlife Control or appropriate local authority, and notify your supervisor.



- **Environmental Quality Incident: gas/toxic spill, litter, sewage/head release, dumping of materials into water, etc.:**
Contact property manager and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) regional headquarters. If the incident occurs after regular business hours, call NYSDEC 24-hour tip line: **1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332)**.
- **Lost Person:**
Call 911 immediately. Record as much information about the lost person as possible, e.g., age, gender, height, weight, complexion, clothing, distinguishing characteristics (scars, tattoos, piercings, etc.), and last known whereabouts. Notify your program supervisor or designated contact person. Complete and submit an incident report as instructed by your program coordinator.
- **Public Injury:** Assess the situation and person's condition; work within the limitations of your steward training and level of comfort. Call 911. Call your supervisor. Complete and submit an incident report as instructed by your program coordinator.
- **Public Fatality:** Assess the situation and call 911. Call your supervisor. Keep the area as secure as possible to prevent contaminating potential evidence.

INTERACTION with the PUBLIC and STAFF:

Communicate Professionally

Communicating effectively and efficiently with boat launch users, managers, program coordinator and fellow stewards increases the opportunity to actively engage the public in controlling the spread of AIS and protecting uninfected waters.

- Maintain a professional but pleasant manner appropriate to the working environment, i.e., a recreational setting for the public. Boaters are more willing to participate in activities when they feel comfortable.
- Be polite and respectful to all boaters and other people at launch sites.
- Stand up to address the public.
- Be respectful if a boater has misinformation or a different point of view. Do not challenge to "prove your point," rather offer to inform them of other details/resources.
- Be punctual for duty; this is especially important at launches where inspection hours are posted at launch facilities.
- If you are working with other stewards, treat one another as professional colleagues at all times.





Establishing Credibility

The most successful stewards are those that the public view as responsible, credible and helpful, and those with the ability to engage and make the public feel comfortable.

- **Identify yourself verbally**

Always introduce yourself by name; identify the steward program for which you work, and why you are at the launch site.



Boaters should be completely clear about why you are approaching them. For example, once you are close to the boater, calmly say:

“Hi, my name is Sam. I work for the Paul Smith’s College’s Watershed Stewardship Program and am here to demonstrate ways to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species between waterbodies. Do you mind answering a few questions and participating in a watercraft inspection?”

- **Use an upbeat approach**

Maintain a respectful attitude in all situations. People are more likely to engage in conversations when you are polite, pleasant, and confident.

Although rare, some conversations can become negative, especially if a boater arrives already irritated about something. It is vital in these situations that you are positive during and at the close of your conversation. Thank the boaters for helping to protect New York’s waters.

- **Be knowledgeable, honest, and realistic**

One of the best ways to achieve credibility with boaters is to be knowledgeable, honest, and realistic when responding to their questions.

Inevitably, you will be asked questions that you cannot answer or cannot answer correctly; in those instances, relay the questions to your supervisor with the boater’s contact information for follow-up response.



Framing the Message to Inform Boaters

Each time you engage a boater in conversation about AIS, communicate the **Clean~Drain~Dry** message, why it is important to limit the spread of AIS, and the benefits to boaters of practicing watercraft inspection.

Because boaters typically want to protect their access to recreational opportunities, they are likely to listen and implement simple AIS spread prevention practices like watercraft inspection.

When provided with the appropriate educational messages, boaters will quickly understand that their actions, or inaction, can spread AIS and threaten their ability to boat, fish, or otherwise enjoy the water resource.

To maintain consistent educational messaging within your program and across the state, use the primary message: **Clean~Drain~Dry**.

- **CLEAN:** Remove and properly dispose of any visible mud, plants, fish or organisms from boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.
- **DRAIN:** Before leaving the launch, empty all water from spaces (i.e., bilges, buckets, live wells, ballast tanks, etc.) that can hold water. Dump live bait at bait disposal sites or in an approved trash receptacle. For more information, see NYSDEC Baitfish Regulations: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/47282.html>.
- **DRY:** Dry boat, trailer, and anything that comes into contact with water. Drying time varies greatly with localized environmental conditions. The minimum recommended dry time before launching in new waters is no less than 5 days. [The 100th Meridian website](#) has a Drying Time Estimator (for zebra/quagga mussel contaminated boats) interactive map with average drying times based on air temperature and humidity by month and by state.





Conducting Inspections: Expectations of Stewards

During the course of each interaction with boat operators, stewards will teach boaters how to look for and remove aquatic hitchhikers and drain all water from the vessel and compartments; collect visual data; ask survey questions; and provide AIS information to the boaters.

Your responsibilities as a watercraft inspection steward include:

- Engaging boaters and demonstrating how to look for hitchhiking organisms/debris on boats, trailers, and other boating and water recreation equipment
- Informing boaters of the importance of draining water from all water containers, including bilge, bait buckets, live wells, motor, and other compartments
- Informing boaters on properly removing and disposing of any aquatic organisms and/or debris encountered
- Collecting inspection data from launch users, e.g., whether or not the boater takes any measures to prevent the spread of AIS, and the last body of water the vessel was in during the prior two weeks
- Delivering AIS spread prevention messages during inspection
- Distributing AIS educational materials, and
- Responding to boaters' AIS-related questions.

Emphasize the **Clean~Drain~Dry** educational message adopted by existing watercraft inspection programs, and remind boaters why they should follow the easy-to-remember procedures every time they launch and retrieve their boats.



Follow instructions for locating workstation: table, chair, sign, display materials, etc. (above) and inspection station (right).

Conducting Inspections: Setting Up Your Inspection Station

Your program coordinator has worked with property owners to determine the best location to set up your stations.



Refer to handbook page 6:8



In general, your inspection station should be located in an area in close proximity to the launch area, but in a place that does not create congestion on a semi-permeable dirt or gravel surface.

Whenever possible, set up far enough away from the water and launch ramp that drained water and removed debris cannot flow back into the waterbody.

Removed debris, including plants, should be bagged and trashed, or placed in an approved AIS disposal facility, e.g., Nuisance Invasive Species Disposal Stations (right) at New York State Department of Environmental Conservation-managed launches.



Boat inspections, bilge draining (left) and removal of visible organisms and debris should all occur in one location. This helps limit unnecessary visitor movement and enhances your ability to inspect boats quickly and correctly.

Refer to handbook page 6:9



Conducting Inspections: Steward Supplies

- Uniform items (shirt, hat, nametag, etc.)
- Steward on-duty sign (sandwich-board design works well)
- Fully-charged cell phone
- Emergency Contact Lists: Program-related emergency and law enforcement contacts
- Chair, and table, if not available at site
- Data sheets
- Clipboard and weatherproof (e.g. Rite in the Rain) notebook
- Pens/pencils
- AIS specimen sample collection materials: pruning shears, waterproof markers to label plant samples, zip-lock bags, cooler
- Flashlight, magnifying glass, mirrors on extendable wands
- 5-gallon bucket
- Plastic file box with distributional materials
- Paper towels and/or rags
- Hand sanitizer and sunscreen
- First aid kit
- Drinking water for yourself
- Optional: Rake to clear launch of aquatic plants, organisms and other debris.

Refer to handbook page 6:10



Conducting Inspections: Recommended Distributional and Display Materials

Select distribution and display items based on the needs of your area/region:

- Clean Boats, Clean Waters rack card ([Section 6:12](#))
- AIS Watch Cards (two examples below)
- Species-specific AIS fact sheets, e.g., Asian Carp: [Appendix A, Section 8:3-4](#)
- Display copies of AIS-related regulations and safety guides, e.g., NYS fishing regulations, NYS boating safety guide, firewood transport restriction notice, etc.
- AIS distribution maps: [Appendix B](#).
- Laminated/preserved specimens to illustrate AIS vs. native look-a-likes
- Local Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) information with upcoming AIS education outreach events, brochure, newsletter, etc.

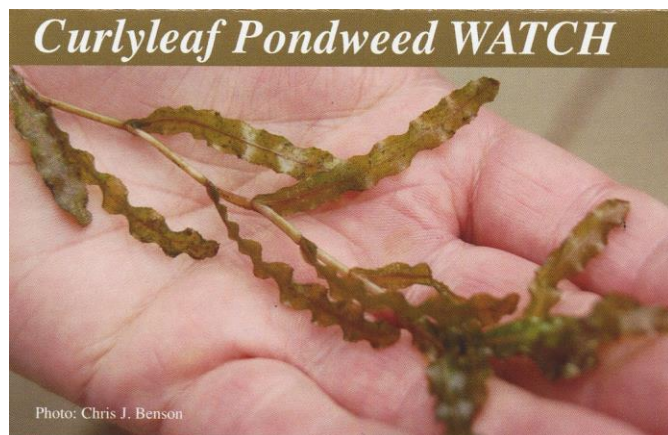


STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



Refer to handbook page 6:11



CLEAN BOATS CLEAN WATERS

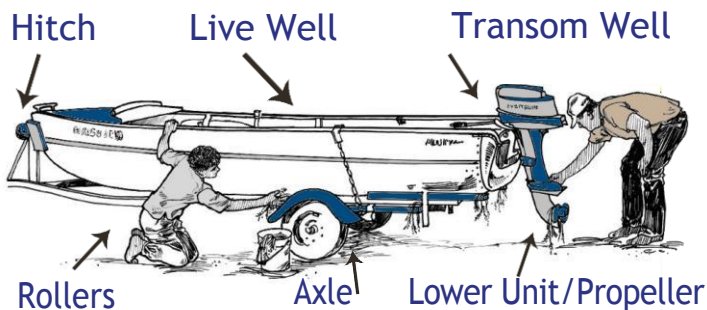


Watch for unwanted aquatic hitchhikers when you move from one waterway to another!

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native plants and animals that threaten native plants, wildlife, and their habitat. AIS degrade boating and fishing areas, and can reduce lakeshore property values and tourism.

Once AIS are established, containment is difficult. By practicing watercraft inspection, you can help **SLOW** the **SPREAD** of AIS.

WATERCRAFT CHECK POINTS



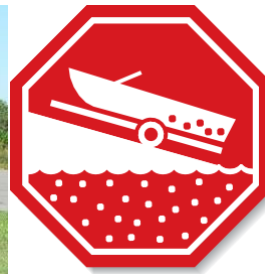
Before you leave a waterway:

CLEAN & INSPECT: Inspect, remove, and properly dispose of any visible mud, plants, fish or organisms from boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.

DRAIN: Before leaving the launch, empty all water from spaces (i.e., bilges, buckets, livewells, etc.) that can hold water. Dump live bait at bait disposal sites or in the trash. Never move live bait fish between bodies of water.

DRY: Dry anything that comes into contact with water.

Never release plants, fish, or other animals into a waterway unless they came from that waterway.



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.

www.ProtectYourWaters.net

Aquatic Invaders to Watch For:



H. Smith, APFP

Water Chestnut

- Triangular leaves & toothed edges
- Forms dense floating mats
- Seeds & plants attach to trailers



J.E. Marsden, UVM & D. Jude

Zebra & Quagga Mussels

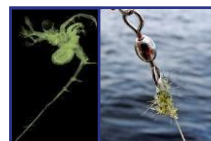
- Tiny, "D" or oval shaped striped shells
- Cover hard surfaces; sharp shells cut feet
- Shells attach to plants & boat bottoms



A. Fox, Bugwood.org & Michigan DNR

Eurasian Watermilfoil

- Feathery leaves in whorls of 4
- Forms dense beds
- Plant fragments attach to boats & trailers



DFWI & J. Gundersen, MN Sea Grant

Spiny Waterflea

- Tiny, 1/2" crustacean with long, barbed tail
- Competes with fish for food
- Masses collect on fishing line



D. Moorhead & R. Vidali, Bugwood.org

Hydrilla

- Blade-like leaves in whorls of 4-8
- Forms dense beds
- Plant fragments attach to boats & trailers

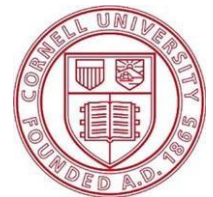


J. Gundersen & D. Jude, Bugwood.org

Live Bait

- Non-native crayfish and minnows
- Alters aquatic habitats & may carry pathogens
- Often released or illegally stocked

The Launch Steward Program is a collaborative education program offered at water access sites in New York's Lake Ontario and Oneida Lake region to help slow the spread of aquatic invasive species and help preserve the integrity of water resources, recreational opportunities, and local economies.



Design courtesy of Adirondack PRISM. For more information go to: www.sleloinvasives.org or www.nyis.info



Conducting Inspections: How to Conduct a Watercraft Inspection

NYS watercraft inspection programs strive to change the behavior of boaters through instructional demonstration of watercraft inspection designed to encourage boaters to self-inspect boats, trailers, and equipment in the absence of stewards.

Approach

- Approach boaters as they prepare to enter (launching) and exit (retrieving boat) the water.
- Identify your name, your organization, and why you are there.
- Initiate conversation with boaters on or near launch ramp. Ask if the boater has time to answer a few questions and participate in a short watercraft inspection. Inform the boater the inspection and associated questions will take only a few minutes.

**For Every Inspection:
Identify your name,
your organization, and
your purpose**

Sample Steward Introduction Script

“Good morning, my name is Gretchen. I am a lake steward with the Lake George Association. We are here to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in New York’s waters. Aquatic invasive species spread from lake to lake by hitchhiking in water and attaching themselves to boats, gear, and trailers. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions and participate in a quick inspection for hitchhiking organisms? Please join me and I will point out some common places where these organisms collect.”

Delivery

- Traffic levels vary at most boat launches. Adapt the length of your message to the traffic level to minimize delays and boat ramp congestion.
- Invite boater to walk around the vessel with you during the inspection. Assisting you in the inspection process makes boaters more likely to conduct inspections on their own. Hands-on participation by the boat operator during the inspection provides stewards with the opportunity to ask valuable survey questions, helping to minimize inspection time.
- Point out the places aquatic hitchhikers are typically found ([Section 6:15](#)).
- Collect visual and boater survey data.
- Ask if the boater has any questions. (Also, [see Appendix E](#).)
- Give the boater a [Clean Boats, Clean Waters rack card](#).
- Thank the boater for his/her time and participation, and emphasize as your final prevention message: *“Remember to Clean~Drain~Dry to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.”*



Conducting Inspections: Physically Inspecting a Boat

Although the duration of each inspection will vary depending on the size and type of the boat, conversation with the boater, the amount of hitchhiking debris present, and the level of launch traffic, most inspections generally take about three minutes.

- Do not board watercraft. To inspect interior compartments, ask the operator if they will assist you by boarding the boat and inspecting livewells and bilge compartments for standing water.
- If any aquatic materials or water are found, ask the operator to drain the water and remove and properly dispose of the materials. Offer to use your bucket to catch water draining from internal compartments. Ask that the operator move motors to vertical position. Place your bucket underneath to catch water draining from the lower unit of inboard/outboard motors.
- While moving through the inspection, refer to the Inspection Checkpoint List (Section 6:15).

**Stewards do not board watercraft.
Ask the boat operator to check areas
that require being onboard the vessel.**

Conducting Inspections:

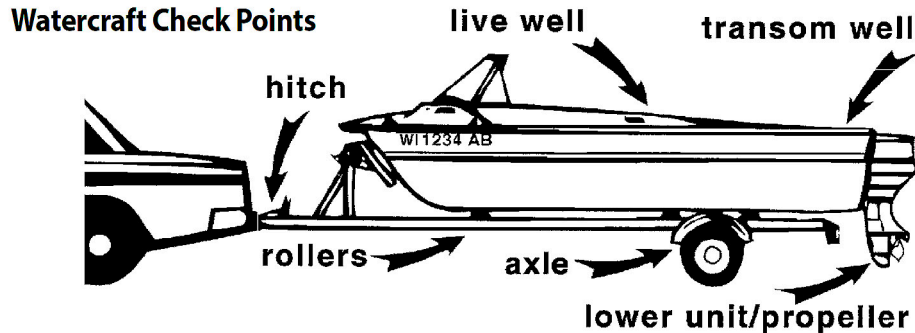
What to Do When Observing Water and Hitchhiking Organisms/Debris

- If in the course of an inspection you encounter water and non-AIS debris, dispose of water and aquatic debris as instructed.
- If you discover an aquatic species that you cannot identify or you suspect may be an invasive species, follow AIS identification and specimen collection protocols as designated by your program (see below) and refer the boater to additional **Clean~Drain~Dry** details on the [ProtectYourWaters.net](https://www.protectyourwaters.net) and NYSDEC websites.

In general, a “bag and tag” specimen collection approach is followed:

- Using the provided waterproof permanent marker, write the date; time; collector’s name and contact information, name of waterbody, name of launch site or, if the specimen is found aboard a boat, the boat name; and any ID numbering/lettering system your program uses on a ziplock bag provided as part of your steward supplies.
- Follow your program instructions for placing and sealing specimen in bag for delivery for identification. Keep it cool per your program instructions.
- Follow your program’s specimen delivery and reporting protocol developed for:
 - where the specimen goes
 - how the specimen gets there
 - who (contact information) will receive the specimen, and
 - how the expert notifies the program (steward, coordinator, both, etc.) of specimen identification results.
- Update data records and [iMapInvasives.org](https://www.imapinvasives.org) database when results are received.

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Inspection Checklist for Thoroughly Inspecting Boats, Watercraft, and Water Gear

BOATS

- ☐ Motor
 - ☐ Prop
 - ☐ Intake pipes
- ☐ Trailer
 - ☐ License plate
 - ☐ Taillights/wiring
 - ☐ Wheels and axels
 - ☐ Frame
 - ☐ Rollers
- ☐ Boat
 - ☐ Floor
 - ☐ Hull
 - ☐ Livewell
 - ☐ Transom well
- ☐ Accessories
 - ☐ Anchor
 - ☐ Bow Line
 - ☐ Ladder
 - ☐ Life jackets
 - ☐ Tow ropes
 - ☐ Water skis, wake boards, tubes
- ☐ Recreational Gear
 - ☐ Swim fins
 - ☐ Scuba/snorkeling gear, including BCDs: buoyancy compensator devices

☐ Fishing Gear

- ☐ Bait bucket
- ☐ Landing net
- ☐ Tackle
- ☐ Fishing reel/rod
- ☐ Waders
- ☐ Boots

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT (PWC)

- ☐ Trailer (at left under BOATS)
- ☐ PWC body
- ☐ Intake
- ☐ Propulsion
- ☐ Life jacket

KAYAKS & CANOES

- ☐ Boat
- ☐ Paddles
- ☐ Life Jacket



DOCUMENTATION: Data Collection & Reporting

Data collection and reporting are crucial tasks. Data analyses are only as good as the data collected. The information gained from data surveys, reports, and analyses is useful to natural resource managers for their AIS control activities. The information also supports requests for steward program funding.

Follow the reporting and data-related protocol provided by your coordinator. This includes meeting established deadlines for reporting and data entry, reviewing your data, and correcting errors.

If your program uses paper survey forms, write legibly; properly completed hard copies of the field survey forms are imperative for quality assurance checks. If your program collects data electronically, enter data carefully. Record the GPS coordinates of your launch in decimal degrees. If you need a GPS unit, notify your program coordinator.

Data Attributes and Data Collection Protocol

All watercraft inspection field survey form mandatory fields must be filled out completely. Lack of data entry is considered “no information was collected.” (Some programs use additional optional datafields.)

All watercraft inspection field survey form mandatory fields must be filled out completely.

Lack of data entry is considered “no information was collected.”

Standardized attributes and how entries should be recorded follow. Items with an *asterisk below may be collected without any contact with boat launch users.

*Time

- Use military time format (midnight is 0000, noon is 1200; e.g., 1:30pm is 1330)
- This is the time when the boater approaches area (from road or boat launch) to launch or retrieve boat from the water and the steward begins collecting survey data.

*Launch/Retrieve

- “L” if vessel is preparing to go into the water.
- “R” if the vessel is coming out of the water.

*Boat Type

- “M” for a motorized vessel
- “C” for canoe
- “K” for kayak
- “PWC” for personal watercraft or jet ski
- “PB” for paddleboard
- “S” for sailboat
- “R” for rowboat
- For another boat type, record the best match for the vessel encountered, e.g., a barge is not listed, but is motorized and should be recorded as “M.”

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***Group Size**

- Record the total number (numeric form) of people in the vessel party.

***State of Registration:**

- Record two capital letters for the U.S. state of vessel registration.
- Some non-motorized vessels do not have a state of registration for these vessels leave the field blank.
- For vessels registered in Canada, record two capital letters for the province, e.g., Quebec: QC, New Brunswick: NB, with exception of Prince Edward Island: PEI.
- Record other abbreviations (from the boat registration) for later decoding.

Inspected (Y/N):

- “Y” indicates yes, you conducted a courtesy boat inspection on your own or with the assistance of the vessel owner.
- “N” indicates you did not conduct the inspection either because you did not have time or because you did not have cooperation from the vessel owner.

Aquatic organism(s) (Y/N):

- “Y” represents yes, you found organisms (native non-native aquatic plants or animals) on the boat, trailer, or other recreational equipment during inspection.
- “N” indicates no organisms found.

Species Identification

- Record the abbreviation for the species found; if no abbreviation is provided on the field survey form, write in the species name
- If multiple species are found, record each one in this cell
- A blank cell indicates no species were found (record “N” in Aquatic Organism/s Found cell) or that a species was found but was not able to be identified in the field. In such a case, the steward is required to collect a sample to send to the program-designated expert for identification. The steward is responsible for filling in this data point once the species has been identified.

Spread Prevention Methods

- The appropriate question is “*Do you take any steps intentionally to prevent the spread of AIS?*”
- Do not list possible AIS spread prevention measures to elicit a response from the vessel owner. If the owner indicates that he/she does not take any measures, record “None,” then provide examples of easy measures the vessel owner may take.
- Indicate whether or not the boat launch user/vessel owner has taken any spread prevention measures to reduce the spread of AIS. Abbreviations are provided for common spread prevention steps on the field survey form.
- If the vessel owner takes some action to prevent the spread of AIS that is not indicated on the sheet, write that method in.

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- If the vessel owner has not/does not take steps to prevent the spread of AIS, indicated on the field survey form as “None.”
- Multiple spread prevention measures may be entered in the space provided.

Last Waterbody Visited in 2 Weeks

- Record the name of the last water body visited. You must record the name of the body of water and the state in which it is located. Record the town/county name when possible. Pay particular attention to spelling.
- If a vessel has not have been in any body of water in the past two weeks, record “None.” Only record the name of the body of water, town/county, and state of the body of water if the vessel has visited it in the past two weeks.
- If a vessel has been in multiple bodies of water in the past two weeks, record only the most recent body of water that the vessel was in during the past two weeks.

Exiting the Inspection

Because boat launches can be hectic with the movement of people, vehicles, trailers, pets, children, etc., make certain you and the boater acknowledge when the inspection is over and when you are safely away from all moving parts of the vehicle and tow equipment. One method is to call out “*CLEAR*” at the end of each inspection.

Conducting Inspections: When Boaters Don’t Want to Participate

When a boater does not want to participate in an inspection, respect the boater’s wishes. Depending on the circumstance and receptivity of the boater, you might ask

“May I share this information card with you with tips to limit the spread of unwanted aquatic hitchhikers? Aquatic invasive species grow quickly and have the ability to outcompete native species. Once established, the invasive species can disrupt the food web, change species composition, limit or prevent recreational activities such as swimming and boating, and lower property values.”

Offer boaters a Clean Boats, Clean Waters rack card and thank them for helping to protect New York’s waters.

Summary: Key Points

- How you represent yourself as a steward reflects on you, your program, the supervising organization and program partners, and all watercraft inspection programs, and impacts how well your message is received. Know the proper watercraft inspection protocol from approach to exit.
- Make personal and public safety a priority at inspections sites.
- Maintain professional conduct and composure at all times.
- Stress the boater education message of **Clean~Drain~Dry**.

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[illegible]

Steward Number: _____
Date: _____
Site Name: _____

[illegible]