

# Vermont Public Access Greeter Program

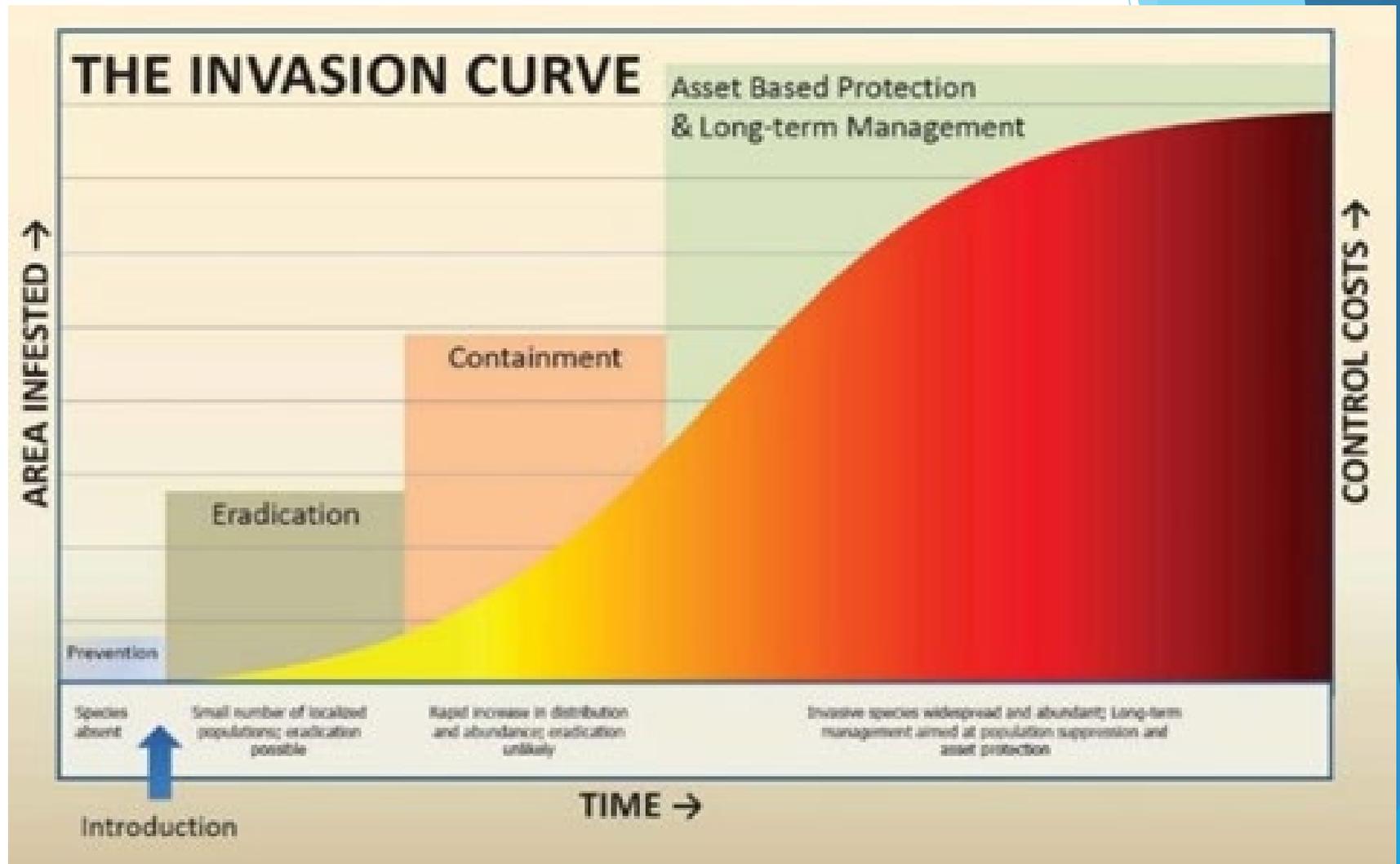


# Greeter Program Goals

- ▶ To prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species by establishing a well-trained network of watercraft access greeters who:
- ▶ Educate recreational boaters about the harmful effects of invasive species and what they can do to help prevent spread.
- ▶ Provide watercraft inspections and decontaminations to help boaters “do the right thing” to prevent the spread of AIS.
- ▶ **STOP** new invasive species introductions



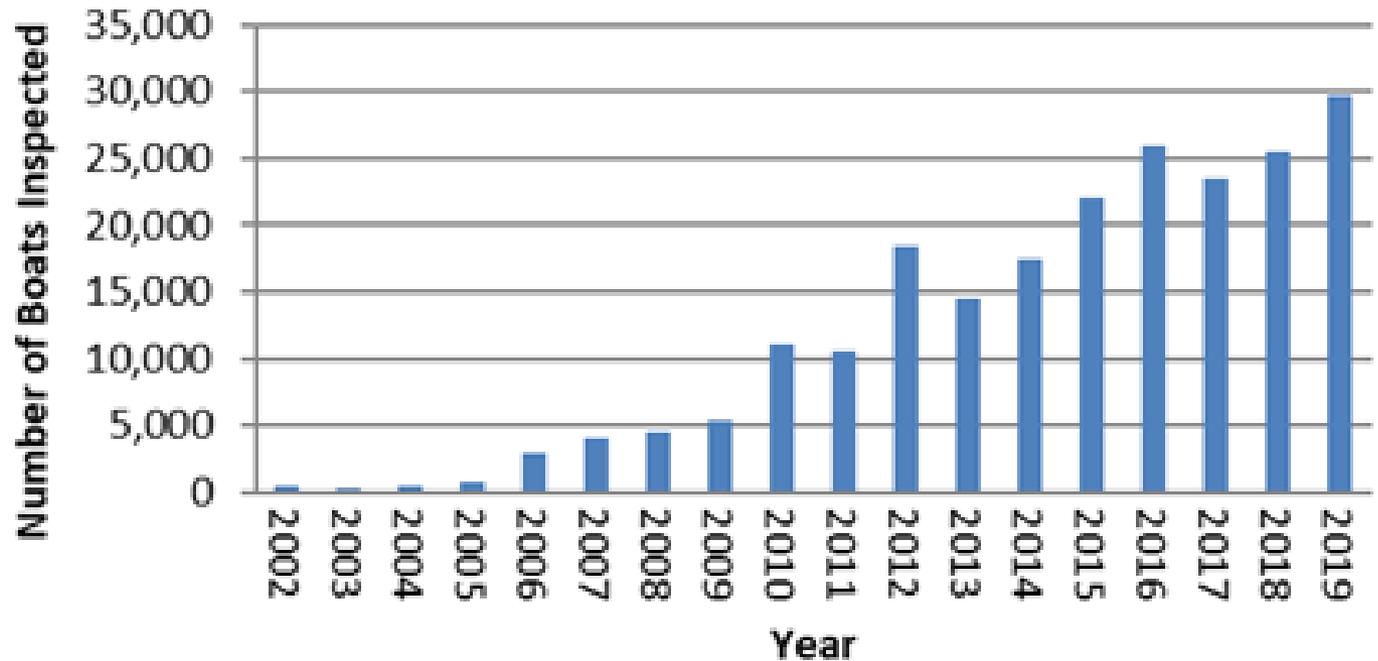
# Greeter Program Goals



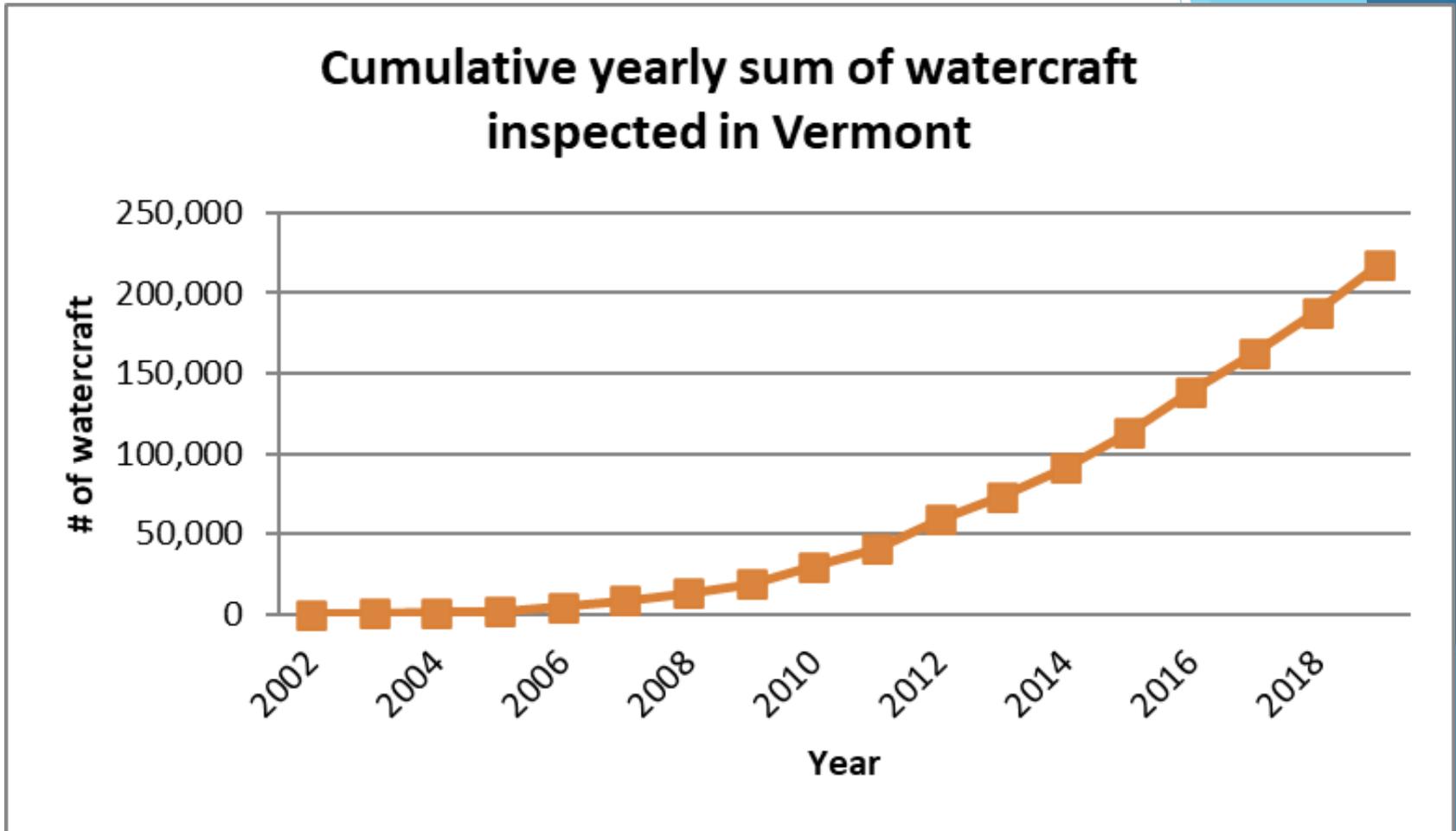
# Greeter Program Historic Data

During 2019, 29,734 watercraft were inspected by greeter programs statewide.

## Number of Watercraft Inspected Per Year in Vermont



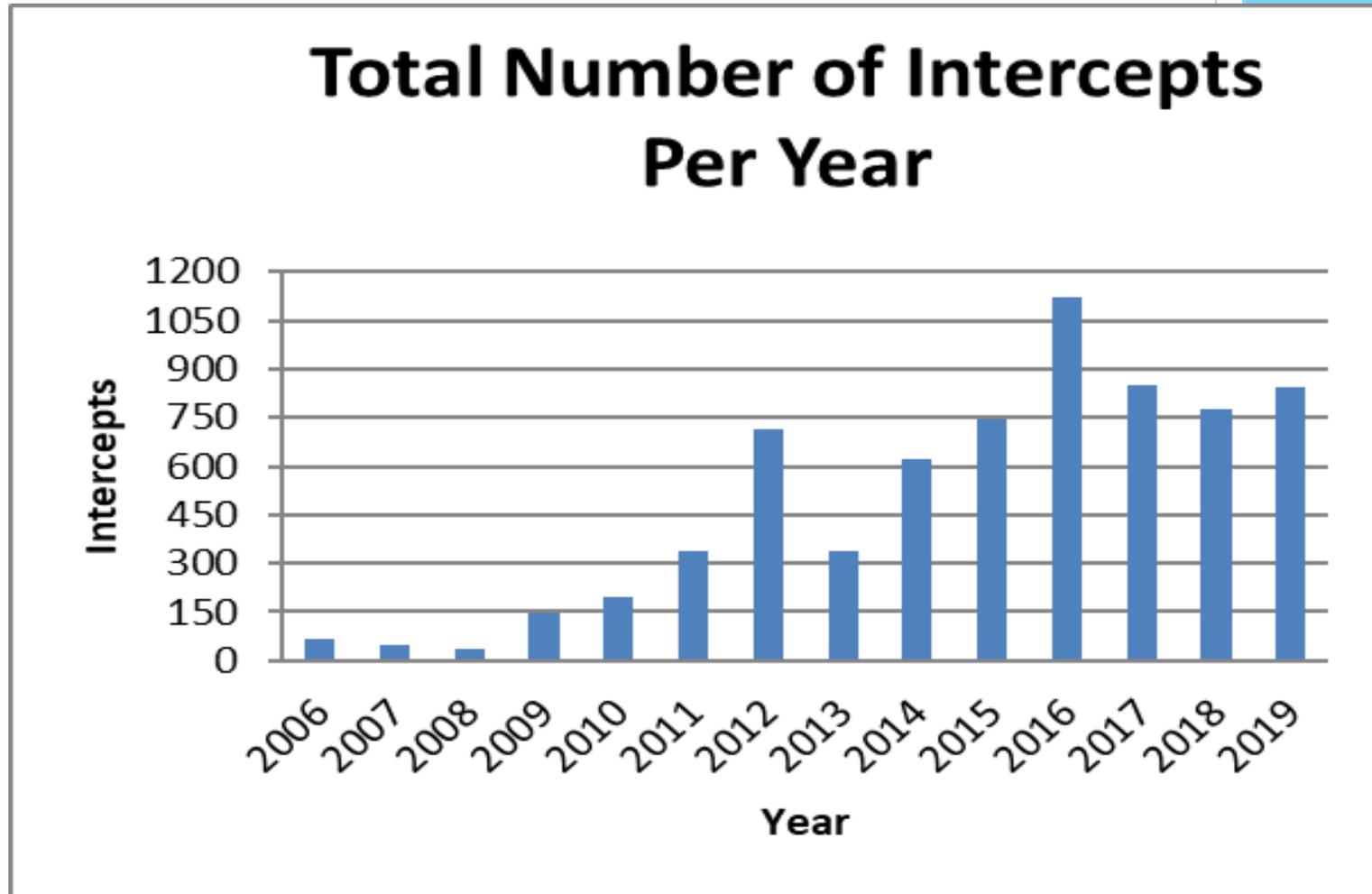
# Greeter Program Historic Data



As of 2019, a total of 217,735 watercraft have been inspected by Vermont public access greeter programs.

# Greeter Program Historic Data

Intercepts are considered as instances in which plant material or animals are removed before a watercraft is launched or after it is retrieved. In 2019, 843 of total intercepts were recorded as instances of invasive species.



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## Daily Equipment Needs

- Tablet with Survey123 app or Greeter Program Datasheet
- Greeter program t-shirt
- “Greeter on duty” sandwich board
- Personal safety materials (sunblock, insect repellent, raingear, shelter, **WATER!!**)
- Informational materials (rack cards, watch cards, etc.)
- Sponge
- Sealable plastic bags (for sample submission)
- Cell phone/camera (optional; but helpful for specimen ID)
- Adjustable wrench (for boat plug removal)





# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 1 – Greet the Boater

Approach the boater at a time that will be most convenient. Let them get settled in before you approach – do NOT ambush them as soon as they pull up.

- Introduce yourself, your association, and your role
- Ask politely if they would give you a few minutes to convey your message
- Provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the inspection
- Provide information and educational materials as necessary. Point the boater to AIS signage available at the access area.

## INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT

### Asian Clam

(*Corbicula fluminea*)



Confirmed in  
Lake Bomoseen  
in 2016

#### How can you identify them?

- This invasive freshwater bivalve is slightly triangular in shape with distinct concentric rows of elevated ridges on its shell.

#### Why the concern?

- Asian clams are filter feeding organisms that deplete resources needed by native species and reduce biodiversity.
- They can form dense populations very quickly in sediment, clogging intake pipes to lakeside houses, industrial water systems, and irrigation canals.



#### What can you do?

- Take these steps before launching **AND** before leaving any waterbody.
- ✓ **Clean** off any mud and sediment from boats, trailers, and anchors. Rinse with hot water.
- ✓ **Drain** your boat and equipment, including motors, all live-wells, bait buckets, bilges, ballast tanks, and other reservoirs that could transport lake water.
- ✓ **Dry** anything that comes into contact with the water.



For more information or to report an invasive species sighting, call 802-828-1535, or visit [dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds](http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds)



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## Interacting with Access Area Users

### Addressing public access users

- Approach when you will not be interrupting them
- Let them get settled before you approach
- Wear an official program shirt and name tag, carrying your clipboard with datasheets
- Politely convey your message about AIS.
- Inspect and, if applicable, decontaminate their equipment.



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## Interacting with Access Area Users

### DO

- **Respect the wishes of a boater who does not want to be spoken to, but inform them of pertinent legislation**
- **Convey your message politely and respectfully**
- **Convey your message in your own words and in your own way but keep facts accurate**
- **Offer educational handouts as additional resources about AIS**
- **Thank the boater for their time and consideration**
- **Walk away from confrontation and leave the launch site if you feel unsafe**



# **Public Access Greeter Duties**

## **Interacting with Access Area Users**

### **DON'T**

- **Bombard boaters with questions immediately upon approaching them**
- **Engage in conflict or debate, argue or lose your temper**
- **Frame your message as though the access area user is doing something wrong**
- **Delay people from launching their watercrafts or cause backups**
- **Provide personal information**

# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 2 – Ensure personal and public safety

**Safety is the top priority at all times! You should always:**

- **Make sure all vehicles are in park with the engine off**
- **Stay out of dangerous weather**
- **Remove yourself from a situation in which you feel threatened or are uneasy about suspicious behavior**
  - **In these situations, get to a safe place and call law enforcement if needed**
    - **Record vessel/vehicle registration # if possible**



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 3 – Conduct Initial Risk Assessment

A few simple questions can provide a lot of info on a vessel's risk of carrying AIS.

- Last waterbody?
- Time since last use?
- Familiarity with AIS? Steps taken to prevent spread?

You will use this information to fill out the Greeter Program Survey in Step 7

- Time
- Launch/Retrieve
- Watercraft type
- Last waterbody visited
- Time since last use
- Familiar with AIS?

List of Vermont waterbodies with a confirmed presence of an aquatic invasive species	Aquatic Invasive Species Key:												
	AL - alewife						RC - rusty crayfish						
May, 2020	AC - Asian clam						SS - starry stonewort						
	BN - brittle naiad						SWF - spiny waterflea (FWF - fishhook waterflea)						
	CLP - curly-leaf pondweed						VLM - variable-leaved watermilfoil						
	EF - European frogbit						WC - water chestnut						
	EWM - Eurasian watermilfoil						ZM - zebra mussel						
	<i>These species are considered the most problematic in Vermont.</i>												
	Waterbody	Town	AL	AC	BN	CLP	EF	EWM	RC	SWF	SS	VLM	WC
Arrowhead Mountain Lake	Milton				X		X						
Austin Pond	Hubbardton						X						
Beaver Pond	Proctor						X						
Beaver Wetland	Mendon						X						
Beebe Pond	Hubbardton				X		X						
Berlin Pond	Berlin						X						
Big Marsh Slough	Highgate					X	X				X	X	
Black Creek Marsh	St. Albans				X							X	
Black Pond	Hubbardton				X		X						
Black River	Springfield						X	X					
Blissville Wetland Pond	Blissville											X	
Bomoseen, Lake	Castleton		X	X	X	X	X					X	X

# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 4 – Determine Risk Factors

How likely is it that the vessel is carrying AIS?

- Vessel is dirty, slimy, crusty, or has evident plant/animal material
- Vessel complexity
- Standing water present?\*
- Last used in an infested/suspect/unknown water within 30 days
  - Especially high-risk if used very recently



**The relative risk of the vessel should inform the rest of the inspection process**

# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 4 – Determine Risk Factors

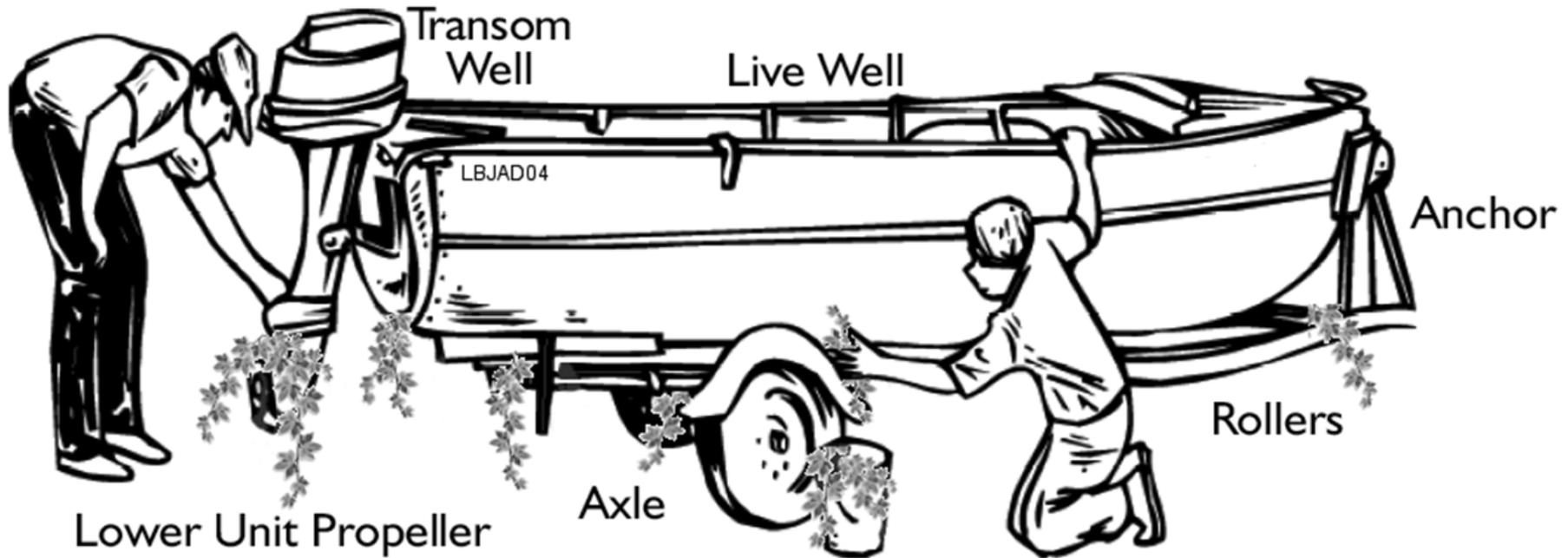


# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

4 areas of focus:

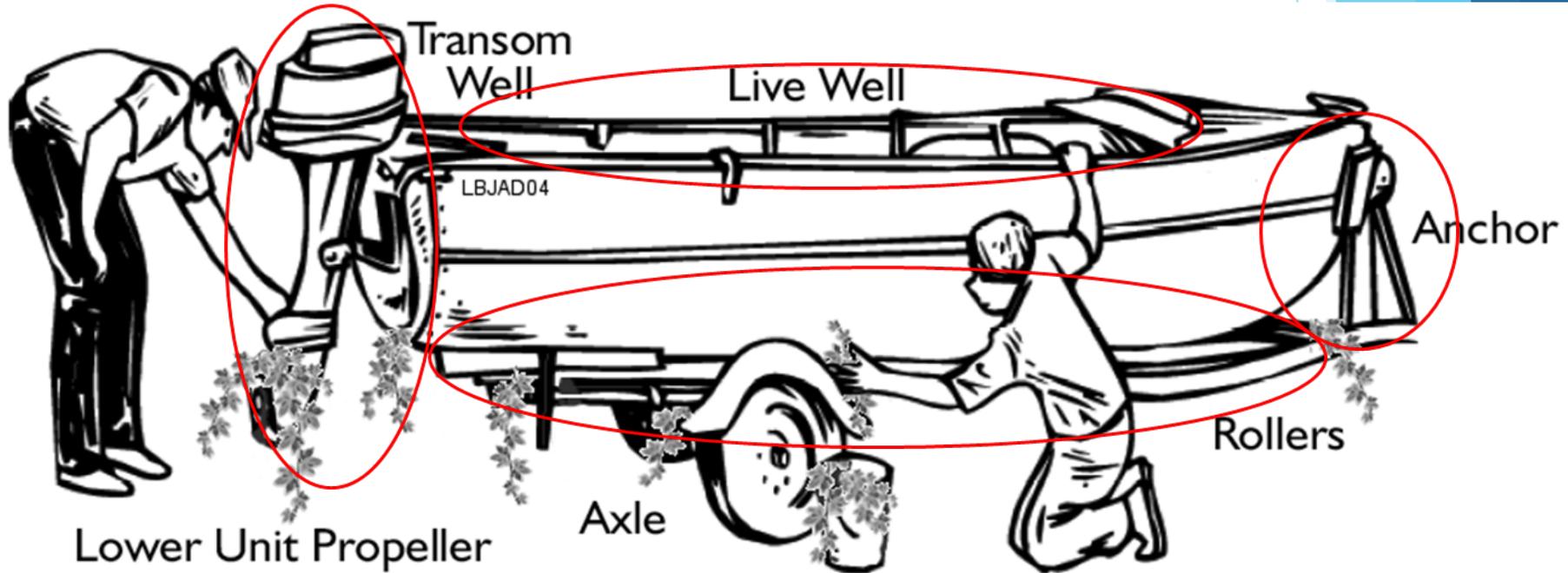


# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

4 areas of focus:



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

#### Watercraft exterior, hull, trailer

- Trailer bunks/rollers, tire wells, lights
- Bilge area – check for standing water. Remind the boater that it is illegal to travel to or from a waterbody with their bilge plug or other water retention device in place.
- Anywhere else plant material could be snagged



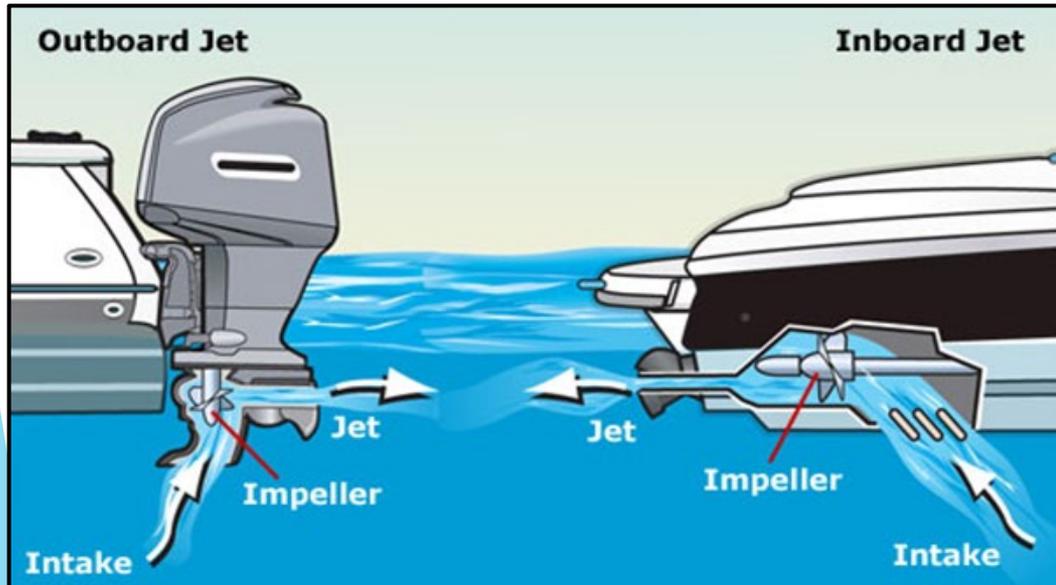
# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

#### Engine or motor

- Ask that the outboard or inboard/outboard motor be lowered. Allow water to completely drain from the motor
- Visually and physically inspect the motor
- For jet skis/jet boats, ask that the owner “burp” the motor if they have visited any waterbody with Asian clam, zebra mussel, or spiny waterflea present during the last five days.



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Motor Types



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Other Watercraft



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Slightly less likely watercraft



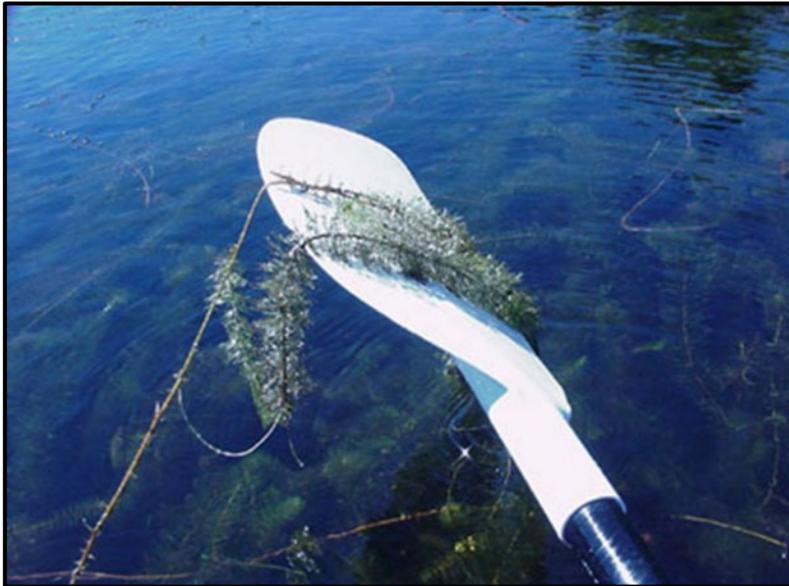
# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

#### Anchors and Equipment

- Check all anchors, ropes, and any equipment that would typically come in contact with water



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

#### Internal compartments

- Ensure all are drained and dry



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

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# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 5 – Conduct Inspection

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- Ensure all are drained and dry



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 6 – Closeout Interaction with Boater

- Remind boater to replace drain plug
- Remind boater to raise engine or motor
- Thank the boater for their time and for keeping their vessel drained, clean, and dry



# Public Access Greeter Duties

## How to Inspect a Watercraft

### Step 7 – Record data

- Record the data you collected in Step 3
  - Use either the Survey123 app or the Program Greeter Datasheet
- Information to collect includes:
  - Time
  - Launch/Retrieve
  - Watercraft type
  - Last waterbody visited
  - Time since last use
  - Familiar with AIS?
  - Inspection/decon performed?
  - Any aquatic organisms found?





# Public Access Greeter Duties

## Decontamination?

Should you require that a watercraft undergo decontamination?

Boat inspection and decontamination are required at all authorized aquatic nuisance species inspection stations **if and only if**:

- the inspection station is maintained where the vessel is entering or leaving the water,
- the inspection station is open, and
- an individual operating the inspection station identifies the vessel for decontamination.

You **CANNOT** require a decontamination if there is no decontamination unit onsite.

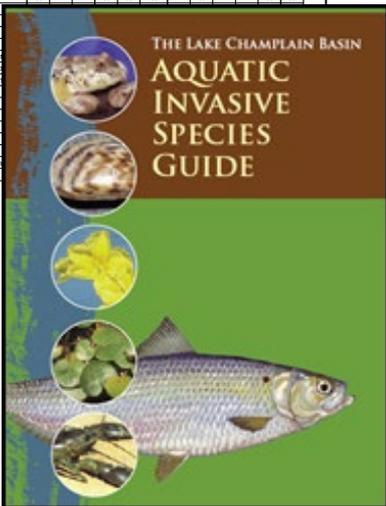


# Public Access Greeter Duties

## Decontamination?

### Identifying and handling a suspicious specimen

Waterbody	Town	Aquatic Invasive Species Key:										
		AL - alewife	RC - rusty crayfish	AC - Asian clam	SS - stary stonewort	BN - brittle naiad	SWP - spiny waterflea (B.W. - fishhook waterflea)	CLP - curly-leaf pondweed	VLM - variable-leaved watermilfoil	EF - European frogbit	WC - water chestnut	EWM - Eurasian watermilfoil
<i>These species are considered the most problematic in Vermont.</i>												
Arrowhead Mountain Lake	Minou											
Austin Pond	Hubbardton			X								
Beaver Pond	Proctor					X						
Beaver Wetland	Mendon					X						
Bebe Pond	Hubbardton				X							
Berlin Pond	Berlin					X						
Big Marsh Slough	Highgate				X	X				X	X	
Black Creek Marsh	St Albans			X							X	
Black Pond	Hubbardton					X						
Black River	Springfield					X	X					
Blissville Wetland Pond	Blissville											X
Bonniegreen Lake	Castleton	X	X	X	X	X						X
Broad Brook	Vernon						X					X
Brookside Pond	Orwell					X						X
Brownington Pond	Brownington					X						X
Bullis Pond	Franklin			X								X
Burr Pond	Sudbury			X		X						X
Cabot Clark Marsh	Highgate											X
Carms Lake	Franklin	X		X	X	X						
Castleton River	Castleton			X								
Cedar Lake	Moistown					X						
Champlain Lake - Burlington Bay		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Isle LaMotte		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Main Lake		X		X	X	X	sewe					X
Champlain Lake - Mallets Bay		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Missisquoi Bay		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Northeast Arm		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Otter Creek		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Port Henry		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - Shelburne Bay		X		X	X	X	X					X
Champlain Lake - South Lake		X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Champlain Lake - St. Albans Bay		X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Chipman Pond	Tinmouth											
Clay Brook	Warren											
Clyde Pond	Derby											
Coggan Creek	Rockingham											
Coggman Pond	West Haven											
Connecticut River	Brattleboro											
Connecticut River, Herricks Cove	Rockingham											
Connecticut River, Hoyt's Landing	Springfield											
Connecticut River, TransCanada launch	Concord											
Connecticut River, Wilder Dam	Hartford											
Cranberry Pond	Highgate											
Cristal Lake	Barton											
Daniels Pond	Glover											
Dead Creek	Ferrisburgh											
Dead Creek	Highgate											



### Intercepting Aquatic Organisms:

Protocol for Boat Access Area Greeters when an aquatic organism has been found

When inspecting a boat before it launches or after it has been taken out of a water body, one may encounter plant or animal material on the boat, boat trailer, or equipment. After completely removing all material found and recording what water body the watercraft was last in, determine if you have plant or animal material and follow the appropriate steps below.

#### Plant Material

- If you can, identify the plant. The State of Vermont offers an aquatic plant species guide to assist you in doing this.
- If you have determined that the plant is a suspected aquatic invasive species, cross reference it with the list of water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species. If the plant is coming from a location where its establishment is known, continue to record the incident, but no further action is required. If the plant is **not** on the list, you **must continue** to the following step.
- If you have identified a species that is not on the list of water bodies known to have aquatic invasive species, one of the following should occur within two days:
  - Take several photographs of the plant. These pictures should include a view of the plant as a whole as well as a close-up of the leaves (see sides). Please email these pictures to [misha.cetner@state.vt.us](mailto:misha.cetner@state.vt.us) with the suspected identification and which water body it came from. Press or freeze the plant so a state botanist can confirm its identity at a later date if the plant cannot be identified by the photographs.



View of the plant as a whole



Close-up of a cross section of stem with leaves

- Mail the plant. Please wrap a representative piece (please collect 8-12 inches of a plant specimen if possible, if not, collect all parts possible) in a wet paper towel and place it into a sealable plastic bag. If there is more than one species, individually wrap them. If there are samples from more than one water body, separate the samples into separate plastic bags and clearly mark the different locations on the bags. Continue to fill out a sample submission form and follow the mailing directions on the form. Samples should be mailed Monday-Wednesday only. Keep the sample(s) in a cool place until mailing can occur. Sample submission forms can be downloaded from the Vermont Aquatic Invasive Species webpage under the "Additional Resources" section.

### Aquatic Specimen Submission Form

Keep the sample in a cool place until it is mailed, then follow the directions below to mail this completed form with the sample (Monday - Wednesday only) at the address below. Questions? Call (802) 828-1115. ATTN: Plant Sample, VTDEC - Watershed Management Division  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3, Montpelier, VT 05620-3522.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a:  VIP  Greeter  Other **Waterbody:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

If a Greeter, was this sample collected during a boat inspection?  Yes  No

If yes, name of previously visited water body: \_\_\_\_\_  
If no, description of the location of collection: \_\_\_\_\_

Suspected Species ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Collected: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you contacted VTDEC?  Yes  No If yes, with whom did you speak: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Sample Packaging Directions:

- Please wrap a representative piece (collect 8 - 12 inches of a plant specimen, including any flowers or fruit, if possible) in a wet paper towel and place it into a sealable plastic bag.
- If there is more than one species obtained per waterbody, individually wrap them.
- If there are samples from more than one water body, divide the samples into separate plastic bags and clearly mark the different locations on the bags.
- Place the plastic bags in a manila envelope and mail the sample to the address above or use the mailing label below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ATTN: Aquatic Specimen  
VTDEC - Watershed Management Division  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522

Are you a:  VIP  Greeter  Other

# Vermont Aquatic Invasive Species and Baitfish Laws – NEW!



## Aquatic Invasive Species Laws

**NEW!** On June 8, 2017, the Vermont Legislature enacted new rules regarding aquatic invasive species. The changes include the following:

**PROHIBITED SPECIES:** In addition to zebra mussels, quagga mussels, and all aquatic plants, the possession of rusty crayfish, Asian clam, spiny water flea, and fishhook water flea is *now prohibited*.

**VESSEL INSPECTIONS:** All watercraft operators are now required to inspect their own vessels and trailers and remove and dispose of all aquatic plants and aquatic invasive species prior to launching and upon leaving a state water.

**DRAINING OF VESSELS:** Prior to leaving state waters, all watercraft operators are now required to drain their vessels, trailers, and all other equipment of water, including water in live wells, ballast tanks, and bilge areas. When transporting vessels on the road, all drain plugs, bailers, valves, and other devices that are used to control the draining of water must be removed or placed in the open position. Bait buckets, water hauling, and emergency-response vehicles are exempted from this requirement.

**MANDATORY BOAT INSPECTIONS:** Boat inspections are now mandatory whenever a Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) authorized inspection station is present, is open/staffed, and one's vessel is identified as requiring inspection. Refusing to comply with a mandatory inspection and decontamination is now considered a violation of state law.

*NOTE: the term "vessel" means any type of watercraft that can be used as a means of transportation on water, including boats, canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, personal watercraft, and so on.*

### Aquatic Invasive Species Identification

It is illegal to possess or transport the following aquatic invasive species found in Vermont:

#### Rusty Crayfish

**NEW THIS YEAR**



Jeff Gunderson, Minnesota Sea Grant

A new invasive crayfish species that can displace native crayfish and destroy aquatic habitat has been found in Vermont. Rusty crayfish can reach 5 inches in length and can be identified by dark reddish spots on either side of their shell and large, strong, smooth claws that can be a brownish-olive color or a reddish-brown color with black or orange tips.

#### Alewife



North American Native Fishes Association

#### Asian Clam



QS Invasive Species Secretariat

#### Eurasian Watermilfoil



Alison Fox, University of Florida, Bugwood.org

#### Spiny Water Flea



Jeff Gunderson, Minnesota Sea Grant

#### Water Chestnut



E. Smorgers

#### Variable-Leaf Watermilfoil



Dennis Roberg, Courtesy of Maine W.M.P.

#### Zebra Mussel



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

**Note:** Transporting any aquatic plant or aquatic plant part, zebra mussel, or quagga mussel on the outside of a vehicle, boat, personal watercraft, trailer, or other equipment is illegal. Violators are subject to a penalty of up to \$1,000.