

8/15/2018-Jeanne Scherer (608-266-0061, Jeanne.scherer@ces.uwex.edu)

During the 2018 Waterfowl Hunting Opener, the weekend of September 29th, the Wisconsin Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Partnership is again reminding hunters of their role in slowing the spread of invasive plants and animals.

Are you a hunter or someone who's hunter savvy who won't be hunting during the opener but would like to spend part of the day with the hunters sharing the AIS message? Read on!

The first two years of the opening weekend AIS outreach campaign was led by the WDNR Water Guard with the support of AIS Partners made up of DNR staff and partnering organizations. The AIS Partnership is taking on the leadership role this year and looking for people to help spread the word by volunteering to talk to hunters at popular hunting access points. Staff and volunteers will be using a hunters' version of the Clean Boats, Clean Waters survey and talking points adapted from the program that reaches out to recreational boaters and fishermen during the summer. We'll also be giving out a Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers (SAH!) brochure designed for waterfowl hunters and collectable bird bands with the SAH! logo. All of the training and materials will be provided. There will be a training webinar on Wednesday, Aug. 29th (morning and evening sessions) that you can join whether you're ready to commit to helping or would just like more information. Register by clicking on this survey by Aug. 27th: https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aVtaoi15LeGgtj7

If you're interested in helping, please contact Jeanne Scherer (Jeanne.scherer@ces.uwex.edu or 608-266-0061). Between Aug. 30 and Sept 10th, Sara Fox will be covering for questions-sfox23@wisc.edu.

We can all help preserve waterfowl habitats and Wisconsin's hunting tradition for generations to come. Join your fellow hunters in taking these simple steps every time you leave the water:

- **Inspect** boat, trailer, motor and hunting equipment. Don't forget your boots, blinds and dogs, too!
- **Remove** all plants, animals and mud.
- **Drain** all water from decoys, boat, motor, livewell and other hunting equipment.
- **Never move** plants or live fish away from a water body.
- A special consideration for waterfowl hunters is to never use non-native plants, like Phragmites, for your duck blind, which can lead to their inadvertent spread to other waterbodies.

Also, remove all mud. Seeds, starry stonewort bulbils and the eggs and larvae of tiny invasive animals can easily be hidden and some may survive drying if in mud.