

Help Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species by Seaplanes

Seaplanes are not unfamiliar sights in Wisconsin. A still Wisconsin inland lake affords a smooth landing and many seaplane pilots have honed their skills landing and taking off from Wisconsin waters. Approximately 52 seaplanes were registered in Wisconsin in 2001 and the numbers appear to be growing. Wisconsin offers eighteen privately owned seaplane bases and nine public bases. As a watercraft that enters and exits the water, the seaplane may involuntarily transport an invasive plant or animal on any one of the multiple parts in contact with water.

Seaplane pilots! Guard against the transport of invasive passengers! Consider the following multi-state guidelines:

Before take-off –

- ✦ *Remove* aquatic plants and animals (e.g., zebra mussels) from floats, rudders, cables, transom, chine, wheel wells, and step area.
- ✦ *Pump* water from floats.
- ✦ *Avoid* taxing through heavy growths of aquatic plants.
- ✦ *Raise and lower* rudders several times to free aquatic plants.

After take-off –

- ✦ *Raise and lower* rudders while over waters you are leaving or over land. If plants remain, return to that waterbody to remove.

Regular Maintenance –

Use one or more of the following methods:

- ✦ *Spray* floats with high-pressure water
- ✦ *Dry* floats by storing aircraft on land for at least 5 days.
- ✦ *Scrub or scrape* undersides of floats (when spraying or drying is not possible) especially if moored for more than a day.

Plan ahead – in addition to the multi-state guidelines Wisconsin suggests pilots consider the following options:

- *Apply* anti fouling paint to the bottom of floats when performing yearly inspection and maintenance. This will not only prevent zebra mussels, algae, and weeds from attaching, but will also increase the aerodynamics of the plane. (Anti-fouling paints are currently being tested on the Boeing 737 for preventing ice build-up on aircraft wings.)
- *Check* the list of known infested waters and choose to moor your seaplane on an uninfested lake for the season if possible (list available at www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/GLWSP/exotics/zebra.html).
- *Plan* flight plans to prevent the spread of invasives - visit uninfested lakes before infested lakes whenever possible.

Protect Your Property And Wisconsin's Water Resources