



Spring Greetings, Big Sand Lake Community —

We have an important update that requires your attention before you put your dock in the water this spring. As many of you know, Zebra Mussels have been confirmed in Big Sand Lake. This is a serious threat to our lake's ecosystem, and the BSLA Board is taking decisive action — but we need your help.

Inspect Your Dock Before It Goes In the Water

This is our most urgent ask: **please inspect your dock for Zebra Mussel encrustation before placing it in the lake this spring.**

Zebra Mussels attached to docks from the previous season do not survive out of the water after 21 days, so there is no spreading risk from your dock going back in the water. However, evidence of last year's encrustation tells us a great deal — it helps the Board map exactly where the infestation is located and how dense it is around the lake. The more members who check and report, the clearer our picture becomes.

If you find evidence of Zebra Mussel encrustation, please report it through both of the following:

- [MN DNR Zebra Mussel Reporting Page](#) — follow the DNR's official reporting guidelines
- [BSLA Zebra Mussel Sighting Report Form](#) — this helps the Board track where the infestation is most concentrated on our lake

What the BSLA Board Is Doing

Your Board has been working closely with the DNR, Hubbard County, and the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Research Center (MAISRC) at the University of Minnesota to explore every available option for addressing this infestation. We are hopeful that Big Sand Lake may be selected as part of a MAISRC experimental treatment study — an opportunity that would place us at the cutting edge of Zebra Mussel eradication research.

We have also developed a comprehensive AIS prevention and treatment plan that examines all potential options. This plan will be posted on our website and presented in full at the **Annual BSLA Member Meeting on June 20** — we encourage every member to attend.

To assist with this effort to map the density and location of the infestation across the lake, **new metal Zebra Mussel dock traps will be distributed at the Annual Member**

Meeting. Your participation in deploying these traps will help us build the strongest possible case to the DNR for a future treatment.

Important note: There is currently no DNR-approved treatment for the eradication of Zebra Mussels in open water. However, the data we gather together could be critical in making a compelling case that treatment is warranted.

What You Can Do Right Now

1. **Inspect your dock** before it goes in the water — look for Zebra Mussel shells or rough, sandpaper-like patches on any surface that was submerged last season. Any encrustation you find is dead, but it's valuable data.
2. **Report any findings** to the [MN DNR Zebra Mussel Reporting Page](#) and the [BSLA Zebra Mussel Sighting Report Form](#).
3. **Follow AIS prevention best practices** whenever you move watercraft or equipment. Visit the [MN DNR: How to Prevent the Spread of AIS](#) for guidance.
4. **Mark your calendar for June 20** — the Annual BSLA Member Meeting, where the full AIS plan will be presented and dock traps distributed.

Big Sand Lake is a treasure worth protecting. We know that together — as a community — we can slow this infestation and fight for the health of our lake. Thank you for your commitment and cooperation.

The Big Sand Lake Association Board of Directors