

Diann Fritsch
Council President
City of Lake Mills
200 Water St.
Lake Mills, WI 53551

Hope Oostdik
Chairperson
Town of Lake Mills
1111 S. Main St.
Lake Mills, WI 53551

Re: Boat cleaning stations

March 20, 2019

Dear City Council President and Town Chairperson,

The Rock Lake Improvement Association (RLIA) strongly supports the Joint Rock Lake Committee's recommendation to establish boat cleaning stations at *every* Rock Lake boat launch. Some might dismiss invasive species as minor nuisances, but in fact they can be disastrous. One invasive species, the spiny water flea, is now found in all Madison's lakes. It's explosive population growth cost Lake Mendota an entire month of "clear water" conditions, reduced water clarity by 3 feet, and transformed the food web of the lake, reducing prized game fish like pike and walleye. Invasive species cannot be "managed" once established. We can only hope to keep them **out** of Rock Lake. Unfortunately, our proximity to Madison places us at great risk of invasion and Rock Lake's cool waters, which encourage game fishing, are exactly what this invasive species prefers and in which it thrives. And unfortunately there seem to be new invasives popping up regularly.

It is our understanding that significant money in boat launch fees are taken in annually and, at least in the City, are put into the general fund rather than designated for lake related issues. It is important to remember the critical role the lake plays in our town. Rock Lake gives our town its aesthetic beauty and appeal and we are dependent on a healthy, clean lake to drive our economy through tourism and property values. In short, our local economy depends on the lake.

There are many threats to the lake like excessive nitrogen runoff that present particularly complex economic and political challenges. Trying to prevent the spread of invasive species, on the other hand, has some straight forward, relatively economical solutions which can be taken now rather than face potentially irreversible consequences later.

We strongly urge both the City and the Town to invest *now* in boat cleaning stations at *every* Rock Lake Boat Launch. The price of the stations depends on the model and design, ranging from \$1000 up to \$30,000 for a state of the art cleaner. Our contact from the UW Extension, Tim Campbell (Tim.Campbell@wisc.edu or cell phone 203-501-7855), would be happy to provide a comprehensive menu of choices. As a sign of our concern and commitment, the RLIA is willing to fund two basic cleaning stations, one each for the township and city, and is signing on to a \$2000.00 commitment to purchase these stations which consist of enhanced signage and simple tools.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Neemann
Secretary, Rock Lake Improvement Association