

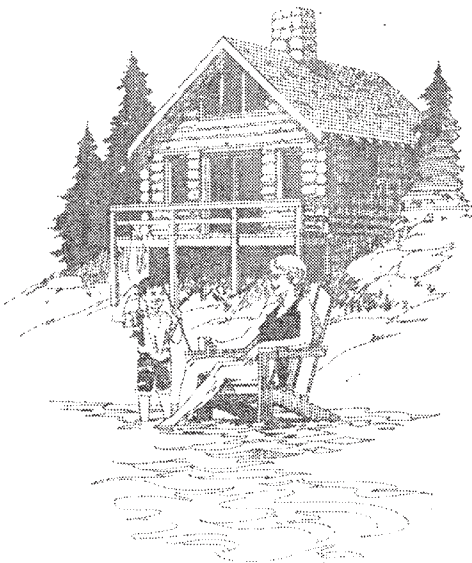
Safety

10. Be a courteous boat operator. Be aware that noise and movements of boats disturbs some local residents—including waterfront homeowners. High speeds, quick turns, and wave jumping should be conducted far away from shore.
11. Ride at controlled speeds so you can see any animals, swimmers, and other boats ahead of you. Steer well clear (200 feet) of docks, rafts and shorelines.

Exotic Species

12. Wash off your boat and trailer after you use it to prevent the spread of exotic plants and animals to other lakes and rivers. Exotics have few natural enemies and spread easily, killing off native species and decreasing important plants and animal diversity.

Adapted from educational materials produced by the Personal Watercraft Industry Association.



Helping You Protect Your Vital Resources

The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council was formed in 1979 by local lake associations with assistance from the University of Michigan Biological Station. The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council is the voice for Northern Michigan's waters. We are dedicated to protecting our lakes, streams, wetlands, and ground water through respected advocacy, innovative education, technically sound water quality monitoring, and thorough research. We achieve our mission by empowering others and we believe in the capacity to make a positive difference. We work locally, regionally and throughout the Great Lakes Basin to achieve our goals.

The Watershed Council is a nonprofit organization supported primarily through private donations. Please join our efforts.

Yes! I want to support the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council's work to protect Northern Michigan's valuable water resources!

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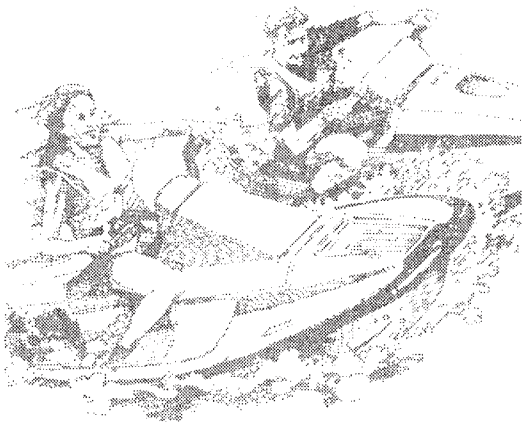
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Be Aware, Show You Care.



Vital Resources Series

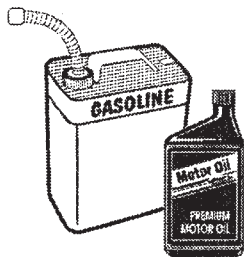




Personal watercraft operators (PWC) can have significantly less environmental impact if they do their part to protect northern Michigan's bountiful water and wildlife resources. Please take a moment to learn how you can protect the environment while riding your PWC. Observe the helpful boating tips listed below:

Refueling & Maintenance

1. Refuel on land to reduce any chance of spilling oil or gas into the water. Check and clean your engine well away from shorelines. Oil can harm the water's delicate micro-organisms and the animals that feed on them.
2. Be careful when filling the tank, do not overfill. Catch any accidental spills with an absorbent pad and dispose of it properly.



Appropriate Areas of Use

3. Do not operate in waters less than three feet in depth. Ride in main channels and limit riding in shallow water or close to shore.
4. When it is necessary to ride in shallow water, keep watercraft at an idle speed. This will help reduce turbidity (the stirring up of bottom sediments which limits light penetration and depletes oxygen, affecting fish and bird feeding).
5. Avoid areas with aquatic vegetation or docking or beaching where plants such as reeds and grasses are located. Ingestion of these into your craft may cause engine or pump problems and reduce performance. These essential plants control erosion and provide a nursery ground for many small animals and fish.
6. Observe posted no wake zones near shore. Excessive boat wakes may contribute to shoreline erosion, which can affect the habitats of plants and animals, and damage shoreline property.

Protecting Wildlife

7. Stay at least 300 feet away from Common Loons. These threatened birds are very sensitive to engine noise and will not nest on lakes where watercraft come too close to their nests. Most waterfowl are "spooked" by boat noise and may permanently leave a waterway if approached too closely.

8. Steer clear of swans. These large birds may view you as a threat and may actually attempt to attack you on your watercraft.
9. Avoid grass marshes and other aquatic plant beds found in fresh water coastal areas or rivers. Hidden in the thickets are nesting birds, frogs, turtles, snakes, muskrats, and beavers. Also bald eagles, osprey, and marsh hawks feed in those marshes. Birds feeding or nesting in shallow areas or on the shoreline should not be disturbed. When docking or beaching, look for turtles, birds, and other animals along shore so as to avoid them.



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