

CLEAN BOATS CLEAN WATERS



ESLA CO-SPONSORING 3 BOAT WASH DAYS

Bob Campbell, ESLA Vice President

ESLA will partner again this summer with Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council to offer three boat wash days at the newly paved DNR Baggs Road public boat launch and the Whitewater Township public ramp. Anyone launching or retrieving a watercraft will be offered a free hull and trailer high pressure spray washdown aimed to removing any invasive plant or animal species that may have been transported from the last waterway where the craft was used.

The boat wash schedule is:

- May 29 (Saturday), 12-4 p.m., DNR Baggs Road ramp on the south side of Skegemog Lake.
- June 27 (Sunday), 12-4 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Park, southwest shore of Elk Lake.
- August 28 (Saturday), 12-4 p.m., Baggs Road ramp.

This year's events were selected because the ramps will host state-registered bass fishing tournaments those days. Most tournament sponsors encourage members to follow state law requiring boaters to clean, drain and dry between launches to insure they are not transporting invasive species on hulls or trailers or in bilge water or bait tanks. Still, the events offer an important reminder.

The mobile, high-pressure tank and trailer is on extended loan from the U.S. Forest Service to Tip of the Mitt and will be operated by TOM seasonal employees at lakes throughout northwest lower Michigan. ESLA will have at least two volunteers on site at each local event to greet boaters and offer free literature on the importance of boat wash downs to control invasive species. Board member Linda Slopsema, who this year takes over the ESLA boat wash program from Vice President Bob Campbell, said ESLA could still use some volunteers. She can be reached at 517-614-4887. Slopsema said ESLA is in the process of updating all public boat launches on Elk and Skegemog Lakes and the Elk and Torch rivers with new signage courtesy of the state Dept. of Environmental Quality.