

February 5, 2016

Dear Patrons, Guests and Friends,

Greetings from Bug-Bee Hive Resort on Bee-Utiful Lake Koronis!

Over the past few years Minnesotans have become increasingly aware of the scourge of aquatic invasive species (AIS) which continue to infest many lakes and water basins throughout the state. Although there are a host of various species, Eurasian Water Milfoil and Zebra Mussels have captured the widest attention and, respectively, have created some of the greatest concern.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the University of Minnesota, our state legislature, most county units of government, lake associations, and concerned citizens throughout the state are actively involved in a variety of efforts to reduce the spread of AIS. If you're a boating or fishing enthusiast please become informed about ways that you can help in preventing the spread of AIS as you plan your summer lake vacations or pursue fishing and other water recreational activities.

The DNR website ([www.dnr.state.mn.us/ais](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ais)) has a number of suggestions for transporting boats or marine equipment to significantly reduce the risk of spreading AIS from one lake to another. Essentially, your boats and equipment need to be free of any weeds or pockets of water residue that may harbor traces of any form of aquatic invasive species.

This past summer, August 2015, a new form of AIS in Minnesota was found in Lake Koronis: Starry Stonewort. This aquatic species is neither a weed (such as Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed) nor a critter (such as Zebra Mussels or Asian Carp). Instead, it is an algae that is suspended in the water that can grow to depths of 12 feet into a very dense mat which can block sunlight penetration needed for healthy aquatic plant growth, fish habitats and lake ecosystems.

The DNR has determined that approximately 250 acres of surface water (out of 3,014 acres) have some infestation of Starry Stonewort in Lake Koronis. The highest density is found in and around the east end of the lake near the "Five Mile Bridge" public access. We suspect that it was first introduced to the lake by a transient boat from another state three to five years ago.

On December 20, 2015, I was featured in an article in the *St. Cloud Times* (What's happened on Lake Koronis since starry stonewort – Ann Wessel) about this aquatic invasive species and its potential adverse recreational and economic impact to Lake Koronis and area businesses (see [www.sctimes.starrystonewort.com/2015/12/19](http://www.sctimes.starrystonewort.com/2015/12/19)). Although we haven't yet seen any adverse effects of Starry Stonewort we are concerned about the potential for it to be inadvertently transported to other lakes by boats and equipment that leave the area; especially among those who may be vacationing here.

Contrary to my suggestions to close all Lake Koronis accesses until we can properly contain, manage or eradicate Starry Stonewort, hoping to prevent its spread to other lakes and water basins, the DNR plans to keep the accesses open while they pursue treatment strategies and management programs.

As a result, if you'll be bringing watercraft or marine equipment to the lake this summer, please take every necessary precaution to prevent AIS "hitchhikers" on your boats, trailers and equipment. If you haven't been in a waterbody for 28 days prior to launch you'll be OK.

Otherwise please consider decontaminating your equipment (thorough cleaning with 160 degree pressure wash) before entering Lake Koronis (or any other lake for that matter). Just as important, please consider a decontamination process for your watercraft immediately after you've pulled your watercraft and equipment out of Lake Koronis. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website has volumes of information on how you can help prevent the spread of AIS.

I know that we can pursue a variety of laws, rules and regulations to restrict lake access and insure the cleanliness of watercraft using our natural aquatic resources, but ultimately the responsibility lies with each one of us. A concerted effort on your part to be aware of the adverse consequences of AIS and doing the right things to prevent its spread will protect and preserve our natural water resources for generations to come.

Thank you for your concern, understanding and action. We can all be good stewards of the lakes and land that make Minnesota such a great state!

We look forward to seeing you at the Hive this summer!

Sincerely,

Paul Bugbee