

## News Release

### **Oakland County launches “Clean, Drain, Dry, Dispose” boat cleaning stations to prevent the spread of invasive species**

*New pilot program will empower boaters and water enthusiasts with free tool to protect environment and wildlife*

**October 8, 2020, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI.** – Oakland County Commissioner **Kristen Nelson** (D-Waterford Township) announced the launch of a new “Clean, Drain, Dry, Dispose” pilot program, which is targeted at the prevention of the spread of aquatic invasive species, at an event held at Dodge #4 State Park in Waterford Township this afternoon. The program will feature the use of two self-service, waterless, solar-powered, mobile boat cleaning stations. These stations will travel to high-use Oakland County boat launch sites under the direction of Oakland County Parks and Recreation.

“As the home to more inland lakes than any other county in Michigan, Oakland County truly is a water wonderland,” Nelson said. “These boat cleaning stations are a great investment to ensure these tremendous natural resources can be enjoyed now and for future generations. The stations are free, quick and easy to use. They are will be a great tool for local water enthusiastic to keep unwanted and harmful hitchhikers out of our lakes and rivers.”

Oakland County Parks and Recreation, led by Executive Officer **Dan Stencil**, will administer the “Clean, Drain, Dry, Dispose” pilot program.

“Oakland County Parks and Recreation is dedicated to stewarding our natural resources including our twelve hundred acres of lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands within the parks system,” Stencil said.

“Currently the parks system invests tens of thousands of dollars each year to treat aquatic invaders such as Eurasian water milfoil in our lakes. The aquatic invasive species, which are non-native plants, animals and other organisms, cause environmental, health and economic impacts.”

The self-service boat cleaning stations can be used to clean, drain and dry any watercraft, plus dispose of any organisms. Three hand tools allow for manual removal of non-native plants and animals, and solar panels power a vacuum and air blower that prevent accidental transport of organisms left on boats to other bodies of water. In removing organisms on watercraft, the stations will help prevent the spread of

invasive species that crowd out or kill aquatic plants native to the area. A demonstration of the device can be found at <https://youtu.be/kzr-3khKDd0>.

One station will be placed at the Crooked Lake boat launch in Independence Oaks County Park this fall, with a second location to be determined. In the spring, both units will travel based on need and request.

The Board of Commissioners approved funding for the pilot program in June after a recommendation by the Special Committee on Invasive Species Prevention. Nelson serves as chair of the committee. Commissioner **Gwen Markham** (D-Nov) serves as the Vice Chairperson.

For more information about OCPR, please visit [www.OaklandCountyParks.com](http://www.OaklandCountyParks.com) or call 248-653-0710. For more information about the Board of Commissioners, please visit [www.oakgov.com/boc](http://www.oakgov.com/boc) or call 248-858-0100.

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