# Partnering with Law Enforcement to Strengthen our AIS Efforts

Presenters:

John Preuss and Ka Yeng Vue



#### R GUARD PROGRAM: Protecting Wisconsin's Waterways

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To protect, enhance and promote the safe and wise use of our natural resources through education and community based wardening that guarantees fair and equal prestment.

### Initial Class – 2008

Initial hiring included 9 Deputy Warden Water Guards. Training was held at the State Patrol Academy under the direction of the WDNR Law Enforcement Bureau.





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## Warden Tom Wrasse

The Water Guard program was the creation of Warden Supervisor Tom Wrasse. Warden Wrasse developed the concept and detailed the mission for aquatic invasive enforcement while completing the WDNR Leadership Academy.





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## Funding

Initial funding was provided via the Wisconsin legislature. Funding provided salary, equipment, vehicles and supplies. The funding encompassed a work schedule of 40 hours per week beginning May 15<sup>th</sup> and ending after the Labor Day weekend. Funding did allow for special operations such as lake association meetings, specific events and limited winter sporting events such as ice fishing tournaments.

#### onsin Dept. of Natural Resources Water Guards...



en Water Guards were trained and regions where they were most in 2008. Three of those Water are still in place. Seven more ined in 2010 to replace those who t, some for other DNR positions. eq Stacey, DNR Deputy Warden, ates the Water Guard program. ond class recently completed their at the State Patrol Academy at Coy, the same facility where Vardens are trained annually to retiring field Wardens. hen the Water Guards completed ining, they were sent to assigned across the state and are being ed by Area Warden Supervisors in gions.



Cover photo: New Water Guard Bill Her, talks with fishermen on the Wisconsin River about fishing and bait regulations. Photo to the left: Deputy Warden Water Guard John Preuss inspects a boat for any aquatic plants still attached. Above photo: Water Guard Justin Wershofen reiterates the importance of removing aquatic vegetation before leaving and to the right, a concerned citizen pulls off aquatic plants from their boat trailer, and Photo lower left: A Water Guard washes off a boat ...all in an effort to stop the spread of aquatic invasives.



### Water Guard Locations

Recognition of risk factors assisted in guiding the location of the Water Guards. With a team of 10 individuals projected, assigned locations were based on two specific facts. One, stop the movement of aquatic invasives from a known infected area and two, identify water bodies with the potential to be subject to the transfer of aquatic invasive species. (Which lakes, rivers and streams were likely to attract persons and equipment exposed to an invasive).



Strategic Goal #6— Lead, adapt and manage the organization to achieve our mission while providing our people with fulfilling careers.

#### APPLICATION AND HIRING PROCESS

The application and hiring processes for an LTE Deputy Warden–Water Guard are similar, but abbreviated, compared to becoming a permanent Conservation Warden.

First applicants' education and experience are assessed using an online application, followed by an examination.

Candidates take a written entry level law enforcement assessment, followed by demonstrating a basic identification knowledge of native species, invasive species and recreational equipment.

Candidates are then interviewed by a threemember panel, which this year included an out-ofstate Conservation Warden that could assist with the Hmong language assessments. These applicants prepare and then present an aquatic species lecture demonstration. Hmong language skills are assessed for the Hmong candidates. English language and communication skills are assessed for all applicants.

Offers are then made to the number of Water Guards able to be hired. In 2010, seven were hired, two of which were women, and three of the men were Hmong. Our Water Guards who happen to be Hmong will help us with liaison relations with the Hmong community, who commonly enjoy fishing and recreating on Wisconsin's waters.

Extensive background investigations, medical exams and drug testing are done before they are certified as a Deputy Warden Water Guard.





## **2010 Hiring Process**

# Understanding the Community and Recognizing Diversity



The original class of Water Guards began to shrink in 2009. Three of the original Water Guards were selected to become full time Conservation Wardens and others of the initial class had moved on to permanent positions either within the State or with other agencies.

The Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division has always monitored the users of Wisconsin resources. Though not unexpected, the demographics of Wisconsin has changed much the same as other States. Hmong and Spanish plus other middle European transplants have altered the customer base of those who use Wisconsin resources.

Understanding and recognizing the cultural changes present the Wisconsin DNR Law Enforcement division sought to address, with respect, those new and welcome residence; opening up the hiring process to encourage the non-traditional Wisconsin sportsman.

During the 2010 hiring process a number of fine folks of the Hmong community applied to be Water Guard's. There were many highly qualified applicants and the Water Guard program was very fortunate to hire three of the top qualifiers; all Hmong.

As we move forward the Law Enforcement Division will encourage other non-typical resource users to join others and become members of the Warden team.

#### INTENSE TWO-WEEK TRAINING AT FORT McCOY

Each class of new Water Guards interacts with staff and guest presenters during an intensive two-week training session at Fort McCoy, in Monroe County. Then they hit the beaches, shores, river banks and public events' scheduled during the summer and fall.

In addition to bringing their college and personal backgrounds to the position, the Water Guards hear DNR staff and invited guests discuss and demonstrate necessary experiences these Water Guards must understand to be successful stewards of the natural resources.

Because the Water Guards' main thrust is aquatic invasive species and diseases, current invasive species laws are discussed, including species identification. Watercraft inspections, including where these organisms may hitchhike, are highlighted.

Talking with the public during a variety of venues is a large part of the Water Guards' responsibilities, so interviewing skills, constitutional law, communication skills and media relations are discussed and acted out in various scenarios. Sometimes it is necessary for these Water Guards to write citations, so those procedures are discussed and practiced in detail.

Fishing and boating rules and regulations, as well as local town, village and city ordinances are important to understand, too.

Water Guards must file weekly reports and know how to operate the equipment issued to them, including their vehicles.





WATERWAY PROTECTION AND RECRUITMENT AT THE SAME TIME

"The Water Guard Program achieves two important goals simultaneously" according to Chief Warden Stark. "First, we accomplish important work of protecting our waterways from aquatic invasive species. And second, the Water Guard Program acts as a recruiting tool for full time Conservation Warden positions and other full time DNR jobs."

The Water Guard program creates a great way to find out if someone has what it takes to become a Conservation Warden by having them do parts of that job, and at the same time get some very important work done for the State's aquatic natural resources. "We've learned over time that not everyone has the desire or necessary attributes to be a Conservation Warden," he said. "By providing opportunities for people to work as Water Guards, it gives them and us an opportunity to see if the fit might match other needs of the Department."

In order for a Water Guard to become a field Warden, much more extensive training is necessary.

Three of the 2010 recruit warden class were part of the first Water Guard program in 2008. Mac Hannon, one of the 2010 full time recruit Wardens, said he owes much of what he is today to first being a Water Guard. "You get to run your own program and you have to maintain your own schedule as a Water Guard."

In addition to helping Mac gain professional experience, he is now very well trained to function in the role of invasive species watchdog after he is assigned his field station next year.

### TRAINING

#### -Aquatic invasive Knowledge

### -(Onsite LE)

#### -Terrestrial

-Value of Partnerships: AIS, CBCW, Lake Assoc, Local LE (Weekly reports, Conference Calls) EG STACEY was part of the initial Water Guard gram in 2008 and continues to coordinate the gram for the DNR. His career with the Departnt began in 1990, first as the South Central join Chief Pilot, then Chief Pilot/Aeronautics, and n DNR Aviation Manager. Greg graduated from DNR warden law enforcement academy in 1995, oming a Warden with wings, so to speak. Prior working for Wisconsin, Greg was an Airline stain for Air Midwest, a Trans World Airlines sidiary. His love of flying began while he was ving his second tour in Viet Nam as a Crew Chief/ or Gunner on a Huey helicopter.



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Interested in helping spread the word to your group or organization, and at your festival or ournament? contact:

Greg Stacey at 608-576-9123 or gregory.stacey@wisconsin.gov

For information about the Water Guard Program and/ or scheduling Aquatic Invasive presentations for your group or organization, or for a Water Guard presence at a festival or tournament etc., give Greg a call. For information about required qualifications, and the Water Guard hiring process contact Shenry Van Haren 508-266-2174 or shenry.vanharen@wisconsin.gov







The Bureau of Law Enforcement Mission is to protect, enhance and promote the safe and wise use of our natural resources through enforcement, education and community based wardening that guarantees fair and equal treatment.

More information about a career as a Conservation Warden can be found at the following website.

www.dnr.wi.aov/ora/es/enforcement/recruit.html

## **2011 Outlook**

-Close Alignment with Partners

#### -Enforcement



-Cooperation with Local Law Enforcement Agencies

-Mobile Pressure Washer



#### -DVD Scenario's

In the spring of 2010 all Wisconsin Conservation Wardens received aquatic invasive species training during annual law enforcement recertification training.

Water Guard team members as well as Warden Supervisors and Field Wardens are actively interacting with their local law enforcement entities to further increase the enforcement of all aquatic invasive rules and regulations.

In May selected Water Guard team members will attend annual recreation officer training in Wausau offering the opportunity to reach out and focus enforcement cooperation to specific county, regional and local law enforcement teams .

A pilot program to increase enforcement of AIS rules and regulations at the community level, incorporating local lake associations, river alliance groups and watershed managers is being pursued with both the Madison Police Dept. and the Dane County Sheriff's Dept. Via media avenues we plan to announce this bold approach in a more public arena TACEY was part of the initial Water Guard in 2008 and continues to coordinate the for the DNR. His career with the Departgan in 1990, first as the South Central Chief Pilot, then Chief Pilot/Aeronautics, and R Aviation Manager. Greg graduated from warden law enforcement academy in 1995, ig a Warden with wings, so to speak. Prior ng for Wisconsin, Greg was an Airline for Air Midwest, a Trans World Airlines ry. His love of flying began while he was his second tour in Viet Nam as a Crew Chief/ inner on a Huey helicopter.



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#### Aquatic Invasive Species Statute Guide as of January 2010

All minimum and Maximum Penalty's have court costs included

\* 30.07(2)(a)- Launching or placing a vehicle, boat, boat trailer, equipment, or gear of any type into waters of the state, which has an aquatic plant or aquatic animal attached to the exterior. (1st Offense) (W26)

Citation Penalty Amount: \$295.00 Maximum Penalty: \$767.50

\* 30.07(2)(a)- Launching or placing a vehicle, boat, boat trailer, equipment, or gear of any type into waters of the state, which has an aquatic plant or aquatic animal attached to the exterior. (2nd Offense within 3 years) (W26)

Citation Penalty Amount: \$547.00 Maximum Penalty: \$2,657.50

\* <u>30.07(2)(b)-</u> Transporting a vehicle, boat, boat trailer, equipment or gear of any type on a public highway which has an aquatic plant or an aquatic animal attached to the exterior. (1st offense) (W26)

Citation Penalty Amount: \$232.00 Maximum Penalty: \$767.50

\* <u>30.07(2)(b)-</u> Transporting a vehicle, boat, boat trailer, equipment or gear of any type on a public highway which has an aquatic plant or an aquatic animal attached to the exterior. (W26) (2nd offense within 3 years) Citation Penalty Amount: \$358.00 Maximum Penalty: \$2,657.50

\* <u>30.07(5)(b)-</u> Fail to post and maintain notice provided by department at public access sites. (M69) Citation Penalty Amount: \$150.10 Maximum Penalty: \$190.10

\* <u>30.07(6)-</u> Fail to comply with a law enforcement officer's order to remove all aquatic plants or animals before placing any vehicle, boat, seaplane or other object in a navigable water, or to remove the vehicle, boat, seaplane, or other object from a navigable water. (1st Offense) (W26)

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#### Citation Penalty Amount: \$610.00 Maximum Penalty: \$2,657.50

\* <u>30.07(6)-</u> Fail to comply with a law enforcement officer's order not to transport or operate a vehicle, watercraft, or other object on a highway if the officer has reason to believe that it has aquatic plants or animals attached. (1st offense) (W26) Citation Penalty Amount: \$295.00 Maximum Penalty: \$767.50

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The bid process is in the works. We hope to know which manufacturer will provide the mobile washing units within the next two weeks. GREG STACEY was part of the initial Water Guard program in 2008 and continues to coordinate the program for the DNR. His career with the Department began in 1990, first as the South Central Region Chief Pilot, then Chief Pilot/Aeronautics, and then DNR Aviation Manager. Greg graduated from the DNR warden law enforcement academy in 1995, becoming a Warden with wings, so to speak. Prior to working for Wisconsin, Greg was an Airline Captain for Air Midwest, a Trans World Airlines subsidiary. His love of flying began while he was serving his second tour in Viet Nam as a Crew Chief/ Door Gunner on a Huey helicopter.



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# Water Guard Contact Information

Kaitlin Kernosky	608-228- 7237	Wisconsin Rapids	WCR	kaitlin.kernosky@wisco nsin.gov
Bill Her	608-228- 7250	Waukesha	SER	bill.her@wisconsin.gov
KaYeng Vue	920-660- 5530	Green Bay	NER	kayeng.vue@wisconsin. gov
Tim Werner	715-645- 0054	Spooner	NOR	timothy.werner@wiscon sin.gov
Vacant	n/a	Sturtevant	SER	n/a
John Preuss	715-889- 0593	Woodruff	NOR	john.preuss@wisconsin. gov
Justin Wershofen	715-491- 6177	Eau Claire	WCR	justin.wershofen@wisco nsin.gov
Greg Stacey	608-576- 9123	Madison	SCR	gregory.stacey@wiscon sin.gov
2 Deputy Wardens	n/a	Oshkosh	NER	n/a

# **QUESTIONS?**