

Cooperstown officials emphasize the importance of keeping boats clean

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Cooperstown, N.Y. -- The boat washing station in Cooperstown was officially dedicated to Carl B. Good Friday evening to continue the village's effort to protect Otsego Lake.

Cooperstown officials are emphasizing the importance of keeping your boat clean, which will hopefully prevent invasive species from spreading into or out of the lake.

On Fish Road in Cooperstown, you can find the Carl B. Good Boat Wash Station. In recognition of Good's dedication to Otsego Lake and its water quality, the station was named in his honor on Friday in front of family and friends.

"He (Good) put in a lot of time making sure boats were washed, weren't carrying invasive species into the lake and it was fitting to name this boat wash after him," said Mayor Jeff Katz.

The station was completed in the summer of 2016, and the goal is to promote clean boats when leaving and entering lakes in upstate New York.

Otsego County Conservation Association program director, Jeff O'Handley, explained it further.

"It's a high-pressured water system that will either wash off or disinfect invasive species such as zebra mussels larvae or invasive plants such as water chestnut to keep them from spreading either into or out of Otsego Lake into other water bodies," said O'Handley.

These invasive species not only disrupt the ecology of the lake system but they can also be hazardous.

"Otsego Lake had an issue several years back with zebra mussels, which impacts the ecosystem and the muscles themselves clog intake pipes for water and are a hazard to people who are bathing or swimming."

Around this time last year, New York State implemented regulations that makes it the owners responsibility to make sure their boats are clean to prevent any invasive species from spreading.

"The Department of Environmental Conservation regulations require that boaters take reasonable precautions to remove plant or animal material from their boats when leaving a lake or launching into a water body," continued O'Handley.

The OCCA aims to educate people on the importance of keeping their boats clean and how that can help preserve the lake.