



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Watercraft Inspection Station at City Beach Gets A Home

WHITEFISH, MT, May 9, 2016 – The Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) and project partners are constructing an addition to the Hovercraft Garage at City Beach to house a Watercraft Inspection Station.

In 2013, the City of Whitefish began supporting an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Management Plan as recommended by WLI. One component of the plan included a City Beach Watercraft Inspection Station to help prevent the spread of AIS to Whitefish Lake. In the past, employees staffed to inspect boats were subject to inclement weather conditions, including prolonged sun exposure and rain, as they waited for and inspected watercraft. Additionally, there was no place to store equipment to support the inspection program.

Ten years after the construction of the original Rescue Hovercraft Garage, the construction of a small addition to this building will offer staff protection against the elements and house all items related to the boat inspection process.

Mike Koopal, Executive Director of the Whitefish Lake Institute who is facilitating the project said that this effort wouldn't have gone forward without the generosity of the Joe & Cindy Gregory Family. "Joe is adamant that we keep aquatic invasive species out of Whitefish Lake. He has seen their devastating effect in Tennessee and wants to do everything in his power to protect our beautiful lake and our local economy."

Koopal said the Gregory's aren't the only community members who are donating to the project. Key project players include Chris Hyatt, Andrew Bearinowski of Malmquist Construction, Chad Phillips of Phillips Architecture, and Nick Sramek, who will volunteer time to complete his Boy Scouts of America Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge with this project. Once completed, Koopal said the building will be dedicated to the City of Whitefish.

Maria Butts, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director for the City of Whitefish said boaters will have to detour slightly at City Beach during excavation and foundation work but the boat ramp will not be closed at any point during the construction process. The watercraft inspection station will be in operation Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Contact: Mike Koopal, Whitefish Lake Institute, 406-862-4327, mike@whitefishlake.org

Maria Butts, Whitefish Parks and Recreation, 406-863-2470, parksadm@cityofwhitefish.org

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