

Socially Distant Boater Outreach and Watercraft Inspection in the Lake Champlain Basin

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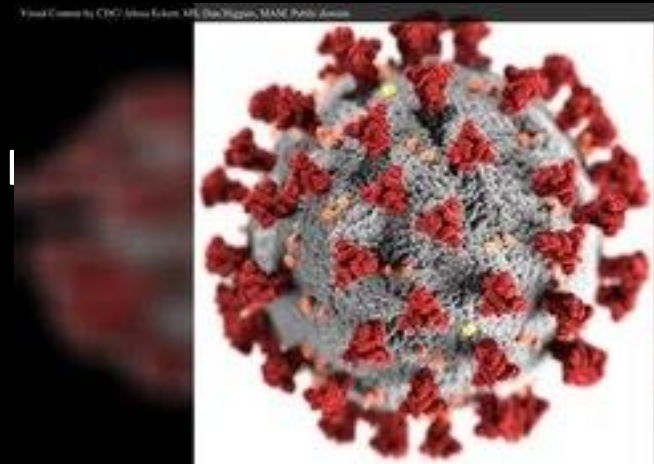
MA



Atlantic

Go – No Go? (2020 steward field season)

- NY, VT and QC have different COVID-19 stay at home orders – what is essential vs. nonessential in March and April
- Virtually interviewed staff – unknown start date
- LCBP partners with Adirondack Watershed Institute at PSC for training and moved the entire training moved online
- OSHA COVID training certificates
- Permits obtained days before field season start



Training becomes virtual

Benefits:

- All training modules moved online to the PSC Canvas platform
- AIS 101, aquatic plant ID, watercraft anatomy, species overview, survey data collection, sexual harassment, public interpretation, COVID 19 training, watercraft decontamination
- Steward access at their own pace with module study guide, narrated and unnarrated power points, quizzes for confirm course completion and followed up with live webinars for questions
- Internet connections
- Steward retention of info and ability to access throughout season

Challenges:

- Some training really has to happen in person
- Interpretation – conducted in zoom chat rooms
- Watercraft inspections – hands on training needed
- Decontamination – planned small group training for hands on
- We have never done this before – some quiz questions did not appear, folks had trouble joining zoom, etc.



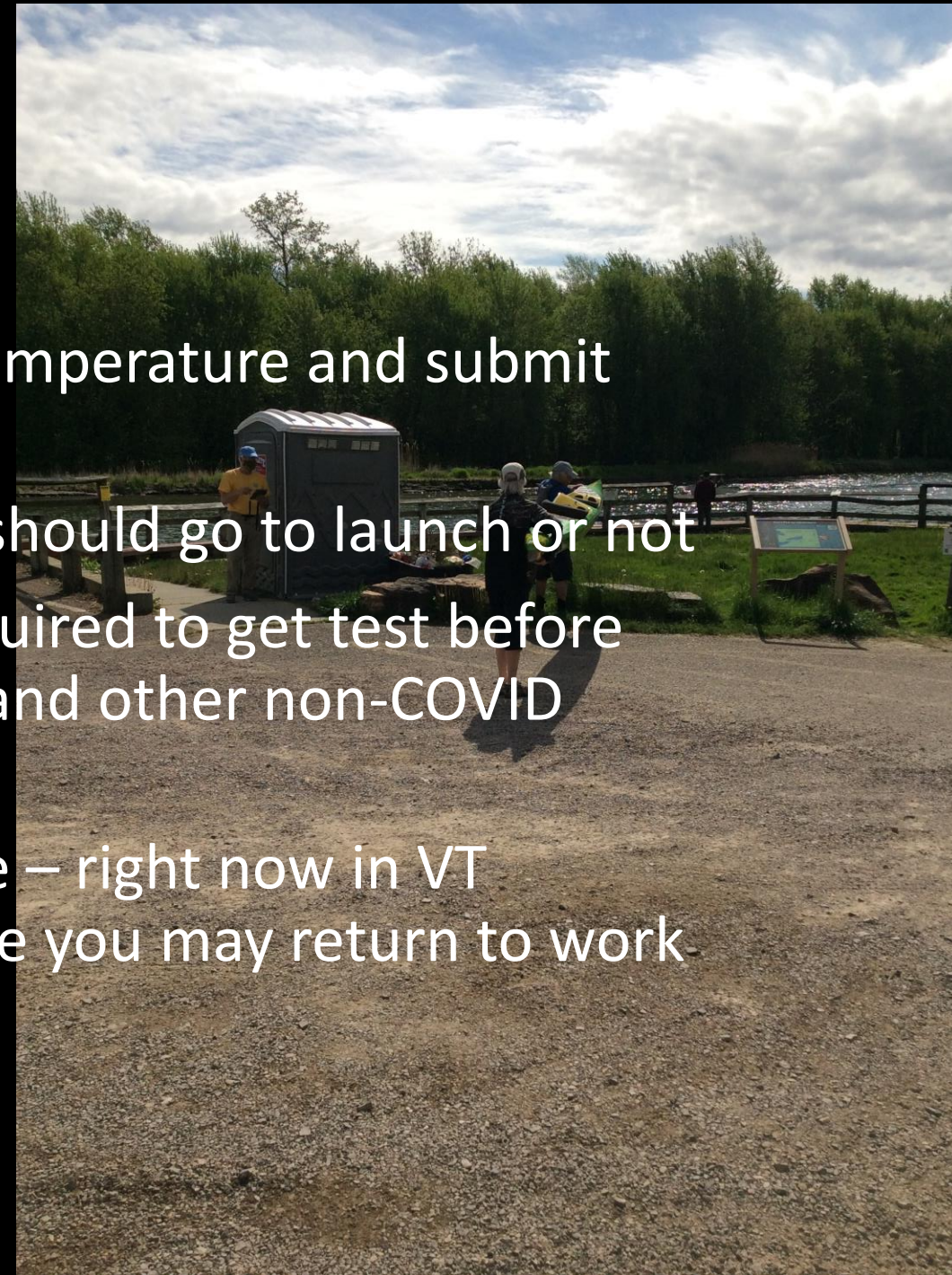
Adjust to new COVID permit requirements

COVID-19 Precautions & Requirements – At a minimum, all greeters/lake stewards must:

- a. **Wear a facemask** that covers an individual's mouth and nose **at all times**;
- b. Maintain a **6 ft distance** when interacting with anyone at Department properties;
- c. Have **hand sanitizer** available, or the ability to **wash an individual's hands** with soap and water on site, and use before and after contact with watercraft, trailer, or other equipment if necessary to remove suspect mud, water, or visible aquatic nuisance species;
- d. All **boat inspection equipment** shall be **wiped down with a sanitizing solution** at the beginning and end of each shift;
- e. Obtain **verbal permission from a boat owner** prior to touching their boat, trailer, or other equipment;
- f. Permittee shall keep a **log of all reported illnesses**. If any inspection staff have been in contact with anyone who has been sick or staff themselves are sick, they shall NOT report to a boat inspection station;
- g. Follow the most recent guidelines from **Governor Scott** in accordance with his **executive order** and subsequent addendums.

Tracking steward health!?

- Some programs require stewards to take temperature and submit before shift
- Supervisors duty to determine if stewards should go to launch or not
- If stewards do have fever then they are required to get test before they can return to launch (lots of allergies and other non-COVID sicknesses)
- What if stewards want to travel out of state – right now in VT Governor requires 14 day quarantine before you may return to work unless you are tested
- Lots of time to monitor employees



What it looks like on the launch?

- It all comes down to bathrooms
- Boating public largely receptive and NOT wearing face masks
- 6ft quickly becomes 4ft so we are trying to start with 8 or 10ft distancing
- We expect more harassment this field season due to general public stress and anxiety



2020 field season off and running

- Constantly working to get more PPE – local partners donated masks/staff making masks
- Not handing out educational material this season
- Virtual weekly staff meetings
- New unknown challenges
- Helping out with trash pick up
- Decon stations not fully deployed yet
- Docks just made it in the water



Thank you!

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