

Whitefish Pilot

GROUPS FUND BOAT INSPECTION STATION AT CITY BEACH

May 18, 2016



The boat dock at City Beach on Whitefish Lake.

The Whitefish Lake Institute and several community partners are building an addition to the hovercraft garage at Whitefish City Beach to house a watercraft inspection station.

The city of Whitefish began supporting an aquatic invasive species management plan in 2013 as recommended by Whitefish Lake Institute. One component of the plan included an inspection station at the public beach to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species to Whitefish Lake. In the past, employees who inspected 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, according to the institute. Ten years after the construction of the original rescue hovercraft garage, the construction of a small addition to this building will offer staffers protection against the elements and house all items related to the boat inspection process.

Mike Koopal, executive director of the Whitefish Lake Institute, said the effort wouldn't have gone forward without the generosity of the Joe and Cindy Gregory family.

"Joe is adamant that we keep aquatic invasive species out of Whitefish Lake," Koopal said in a press release. "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."

Other key 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 Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge with this project. Once completed the building will be dedicated to the city.

Whitefish Parks and Recreation Director Maria Butts 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.