



# Frequently Asked Questions about Clean Angling:

**1: On a typical day of fishing in southwest Wisconsin, I fish three or four streams, maybe more. Do I need to disinfect my gear after fishing each one?**

**Answer:** The simple answer is yes. It is Wisconsin state law that you inspect and remove all mud, plant material, and water from your equipment prior to leaving a waterbody. We should continue the tradition of good sportsmanship anglers are known for by protecting fisheries and the habitats that we frequent. New Zealand mudsnails have now infested 6 Wisconsin streams and are notorious for being transported on the waders and boots of anglers from one stream to another. Other invasives that detract from the fishing experience, such as Wild Parsnip, also spread between popular fishing spots via seeds on wading boots.

**2: How can I possibly remove all of the dirt from my waders and boots when hopping from stream to stream?**

**Answer:** One simple way anglers can limit the spread of invasive species between streams is to carry a stiff synthetic scrub brush in our vehicles or wader bags. Prior to moving to another stream, take a minute to brush off boots and waders, including the insides, laces and tongue. This doesn't guarantee that we won't transmit invasives to a new stream, but it is all about minimizing risk. If you wish to more thoroughly clean your gear, use a pump-sprayer filled with clean tap water to rinse your waders and boots AFTER you've given them a good scrubbing with a brush.

**3: I have a trip planned out west this summer. Many of the rivers I plan to fish are infested with AIS. What should I do to prevent further spreading them?**

**Answer:** While fishing out of state, if possible, plan to visit uninfested rivers first. Ask guides or shops which rivers are infested with invasive species—they will know. After fishing an infested river, you are at a HIGH RISK of spreading invasive species on your gear. HIGH RISK anglers should follow one of the three decontamination recommendations on the right in the figure below: soak gear in a mild bleach solution for ten minutes, freeze gear, or allow gear to dry completely for five days minimum after brushing off mud and debris. Before leaving and upon returning to Wisconsin, it is IMPERATIVE that you follow those same steps. Or do as many others do, keep a pair of waders and boots for strictly fishing in Wisconsin and another for out-of-state fishing, which is the safest bet, but shouldn't preclude cleaning your gear.

**4: Do I have to give up my felt-soled wading boots? Felt is not the only culprit and if I fall in a river, my fishing days are done. What steps can I take to minimize the risk of my spreading AIS on my felt-soled boots?**

**Answer:** The most important thing to remember is that felt takes a long time to dry, it is difficult to clean and often disinfection solution does not fully penetrate the felt to kill invasives. This is why rubber is the better option when it comes to preventing the spread of invasives. However, if you must use felt, you should use a pressure sprayer (like the small herbicide applicators) and a stiff-bristled scrub brush to clean the felt the best you can when moving between Wisconsin streams. If traveling between states, it is once again recommended to have two pairs of waders, one for use within Wisconsin, and another pair for elsewhere.

**5: What should I do if I see something suspicious in Wisconsin waters that I think might be invasive?**

**Answer:** The best thing you can do is take a picture of the suspicious plant, animal or algae and email it to your Regional DNR AIS Coordinator or local Fisheries Biologist for identification. More information can be found here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/report.html>.

