# APPLICATION FOR
# COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT ELIGIBILITY

**Date**: November 15, 2022

**Project Title**: Onota Lake Boat Wash Station

**Name of Applicant**: James McGrath with Doug Spoehr and Michael Riordan

**Name of Organization**: City of Pittsfield Pittsfield Department of Community Development with the Lake Onota Preservation Association (LOPA)

**Address**: 70 Allen St., Pittsfield, MA 01201

**Telephone**: (413) 499-9344 **Email**: jmcgrath@cityofpittsfield.org

**CPA Category** (circle all that apply): **Open Space** **Historic Preservation** **Recreation** **Community Housing**

**CPA Funding Requested**: $74,500 **Total Project Cost**: $74,500

**Project Description:** The project proposes the installation of a boat wash station within Burbank Park near the public boat ramp to help thwart the spread of invasive species into Onota Lake, primarily zebra mussels.

**Estimated Project Budget: The estimated project budget is $74,500**

**Where appropriate, signature of property owner (or City representative if City-owned) and/or chief executive officer of organization:**

JAMES MCGRATH CPO 11/18/22

**NOTE: This application enables the CPC to review the request to ensure eligibility and offer guidance. If eligible, an Application for Funding must be completed.**

# APPLICATION FOR
# COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT ELIGIBILITY

**Project Description:** To preserve and protect recreational use, and reduce an imminent ecological threat to Onota and Pontoosuc Lake(s), CPA funding is being sought for the site development and construction of a Decontamination Boat Wash Station (BWS).

Aquatic invasive species (AIS), plant and animal, have caused environmental damage throughout North America and represent a recreational, ecological and economic threat to Onota Lake and its sister lake, Pontoosuc Lake.

Presently, the most serious and imminent animal invasive species are zebra mussels and quagga mussels. Zebra mussels are now firmly established in our bordering states of VT, NY, and CT (c.f. Attachment 1: USGS map of zebra mussel occurrences) and include: 8 large lakes in the Finger Lakes region, Lake George, Lake Champlain, Saratoga Lake, and Ballston Lake. Established colonies of zebra mussels are confirmed in Laurel Lake, Lee, Mass. The City is one boat away from zebra mussels being introduced into our City's invaluable lake resources. Once infested, there is currently no available remedy to treat and remove zebra mussels. Removal or eradication of invasive plant species, such as Eurasian milfoil, is expensive. Zebra mussels and invasive plant species are commonly spread via boats and trailers (including bilges, engines, live wells, ballast tanks).

Lake Onota Preservation Association (LOPA) in partnership with the City of Pittsfield believe strong proactive interventions are needed to avoid introduction of zebra mussels and/or other plant invasive species. To date, the City and LOPA have focused our coordinated and cooperative efforts in this regard on increasing public awareness with robust education. But providing a Decontamination/Boat Wash Station is a critical additional tool in this fight that will enable boat users to easily decontaminate their watercraft and help prevent or mitigate irreversible ecological damage to Onota and Pontoosuc Lake(s).

High pressure hot water steam decontamination of watercraft has been scientifically proven to be the most effective method at eliminating plant and animal invasive species from being introduced into a body of water. Hot water washing at a temperature of 140°F or higher has proven to be the fastest, ecofriendly, and most effective means to destroy juvenile stage mollusks

known as "veligers", and to remove invasive plant fragments. This practice has been successfully implemented across the United States and has been recognized as best practice.

In May, 2022, LOPA commissioned a feasibility study with White Engineering Inc. to determine a suitable site plan for a BWS to be located nearby the public boat ramp at Burbank Park. In August, 2022, this feasibility study was presented to the Board of Park Commissioners for their input and feedback. Details of and the underlying logic behind the proposed site plan were presented. The Board voted unanimous approval of the proposal.

In addition to the BWS as a stand alone asset, its development we believe will enhance the public safety of Burbank Park. After dusk lighting with surveillance may help reduce illegal and/or problematic behavior by the community. The proposed site will also be available to boat users of Pontoosuc Lake determined to be in need of decontamination. Minimal expenditures will be required to energize the system and maintenance costs while not expected to be significant should be dedicated so as to not draw against existing City resources.

**Statement of Need:** Following the discovery of zebra mussels at Laurel Lake, The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Lakes and Ponds Program performed survey studies at 21 lakes in the region. Based on their susceptibility to successful colonization by zebra mussels, lakes or great ponds in our area estimated to be of *high risk* included Cheshire Reservoir, Housatonic River (Great Barrington to Pittsfield), Lake Buel, Lake Mansfield, Ashmere Lake, Onota Lake, Pontoosuc Lake, Prospect Lake, Richmond Pond, and Stockbridge Bowl.

The current state mandatory protocol in use today at the Burbank Park public boat ramp involves a brief interview by a (City of Pittsfield employed) boat steward and a voluntary self-certification completed by the boat owner prior to launch. Self-inspection programs have proven helpful however limited in their effectiveness because they rely on self-compliance; contaminated watercraft can still be launched by unknowing or irresponsible boaters. Under current practice, boaters who report having visited a lake with known colonies of zebra mussels are asked to trailer their boat to a car wash station several miles from the public boat ramp. This is highly inconvenient for users, decontamination at the car wash is ineffective due lower than required water temperature and adherence to the protocol suspect.

Adding urgency to this funding request is the recent discovery of Asian clams in Lake Onota. A survey was conducted on June 14, 2022 to 1) document locations occupied by live Asian clams in various parts of the lake, 2) determine general abundance in these locations, and 3) characterize the type of habitat in Onota Lake that supports Asian clam populations. The survey confirmed that Asian clams are present, apparently well established, and reproducing in Onota Lake. Based on these findings, it seems likely that Asian clams were introduced to the lake at the boat launch and (or) one of other the public access points on the eastern side of the lake, perhaps 3-4 years ago. The presence, broad distribution, and successful reproduction of Asian clams in Onota Lake further highlights the lake's susceptibility and vulnerability to the invasion of zebra mussels.

**Proposed Location:** The proposed location of the BWS lies within the existing overflow parking area of the public boat ramp (c.f. Attachment 2).

Several key considerations to the site plan include but are not limited to:

- Enhancing safety by widening Lakeway Drive with guard rails
- Minimal disruption to existing boaters and their trailers
- Minimal displacement of existing parking
- Enhanced after dusk solar powered motion safety lighting and surveillance camera(s).

The BWS consists of a concrete pad with high pressure washer, security fencing, 250 gallon polyethylene tight water tank, 1000 gallon holding tank for drainage, a widened driveway with guard rails to accommodate vehicles with boat trailers, solar powered motion sensor night lighting, and surveillance camera(s). (c.f. Attachment 3)

**Estimated Project Budget:** The following projection of cost estimates were prepared by Brent M White, MCE, PE, LEED, AP; Principal; White Engineering Inc.

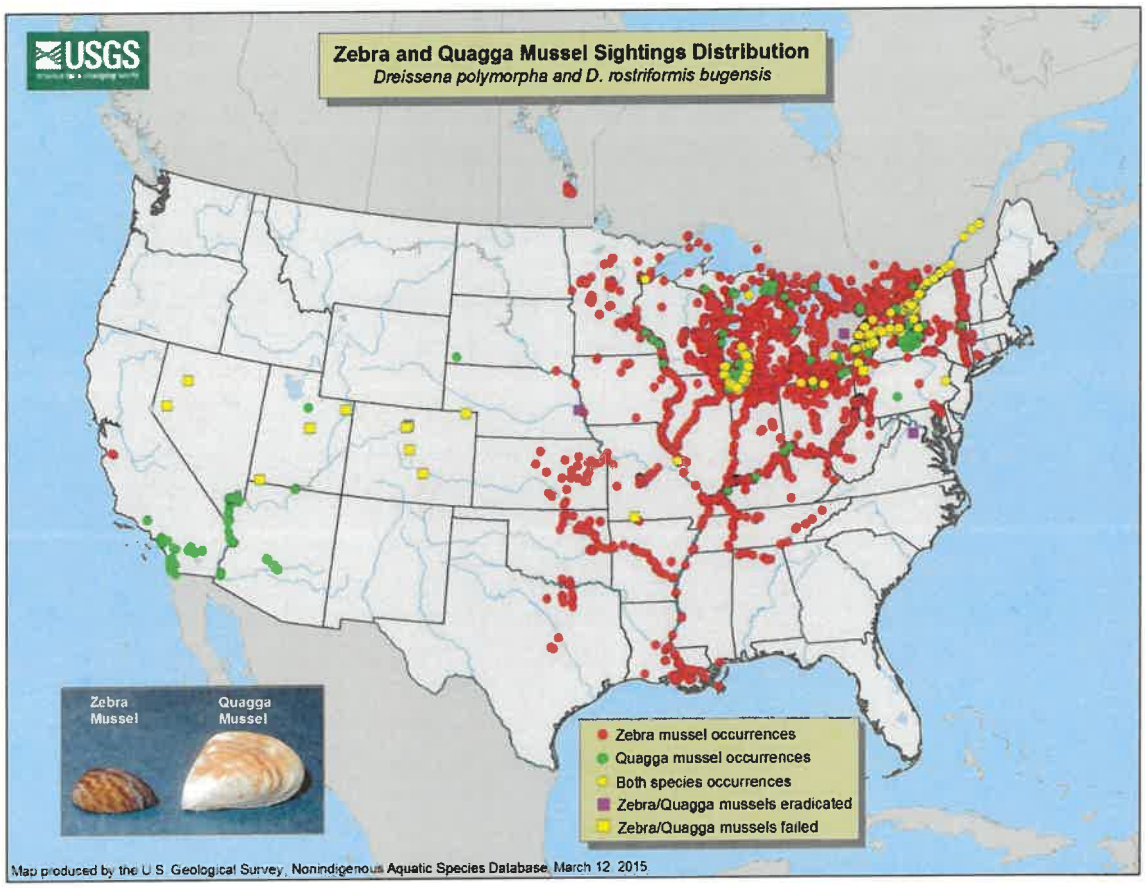
1. Procurement, Oversight, Documents: $2500
2. Site Preparation including erosion controls and land clearing, widening of driveway $35,000
3. Proposed 250 gallon polyethylene water tank $1,000
4. Proposed 1,000 gallon, H-20 rated holding tank and concrete pad $20,000
5. Proposed Security fencing and gate to store equipment $3,000
6. Solar powered motion sensor lighting and surveillance camera(s) $2,000
7. Contingency $4,000
8. Self Contained, Gas Engine, Diesel-Oil Heated, Hot Water Pressure Washer with Freight and Delivery $7,000

Total Estimated Cost = $74,500

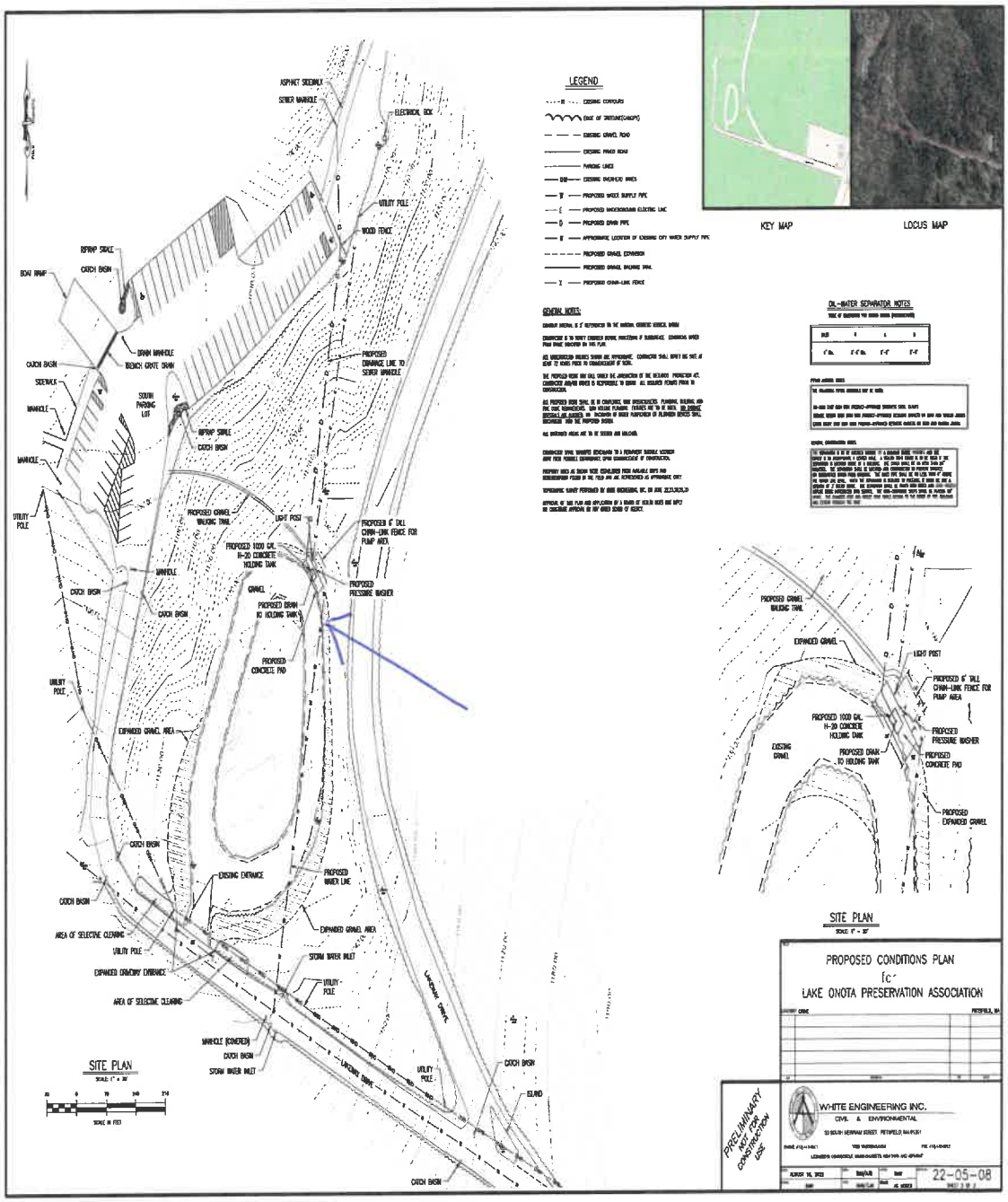
**Note:** Feasibility Study funded by LOPA $13,500

**Letter of Support:** James Conant, Chairman, Pittsfield Conservation Commission

**Attachment 1.**
**Established Zebra Mussel Colonies**
**On Our Doorstep**



**Attachment 2: Proposed Location**
**Burbank Park Public Boat Ramp**
**Overflow Parking Area**




**Attachment 3:**
**Decontamination/Boat Wash Station**
**Concrete Pad and Security Fencing**

**CITY OF PITTSFIELD**

PITTSFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION, CITY HALL, 70 ALLEN STREET, PITTSFIELD, MA 01201

October 24, 2022

Community Preservation Committee, c/o Cornelius Hoss
Department of Community Development
70 Allen Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

RE: Lake Onota Preservation Associations Application for Eligibility of a Boat Wash Station at Burbank Park

Dear Committee Members:

The Pittsfield Conservation Commission is writing you in a show of support of the eligibility application submitted by the Lake Onota Preservation Association (LOPA) seeking financial assistance for the design and construction of a boat wash station at Burbank Park.

The City of Pittsfield is fortunate to have numerous Great Ponds within its landscape that provide extraordinary public value. Onota and Pontoosuc Lakes are the largest of the City's Great Ponds and receive higher levels of public and private investments. Through diligent oversight and sound management practices the ecological condition of these lakes remains strong, and because of that they continue to act as a socioeconomic contributor that provides important physical and financial assets to the Pittsfield community.

However, the translocation of invasive non-native plant and animal species to Pittsfield lakes from outside lakes pose real threats to their ecological functions and values. While strides have been made to reduce populations of invasive species, such as Eurasian Milfoil, the City's navigable open waterbodies remain highly susceptible to other invasive species that could be detrimental to these lakes and the ecological and socioeconomic benefits they provide.

Zebra mussels for instance have been found to decimate aquatic habitats and greatly impact the ability to recreate. Unfortunately, these mussels can be found as close as ten roadway miles from out of town waterbodies. While lake groups and City officials work vigorously to prevent their introduction, capturing invasive species attached to vessels only through visual inspection programs at boat ramp locations is not sustainable. However, adding a wash station to the inspection program would offer that practical solution that would significantly expands the assurances that invasive species are being properly removed from watercraft prior to being deployed in to the lakes. For this reason, the Pittsfield Conservation Commission fully endorses the funding of such project at the design and/or construction level.

Sincerely,

James B Conant RSV

James Conant, Chairman

Enclosure

Cc: Robert J. Van Der Kar - City of Pittsfield Conservation Agent

TEL. (413) 499-9368 – FAX: (413) 395-0152