

Protocol for Wetland Decontamination

To prevent the potential introduction and spread of pathogens during field work, we encourage all individuals who work in freshwater habitats to follow a disinfection protocol. This protocol for wetland decontamination is required for the prevention of aquatic invasive species, including fungi that are harmful for wetland animals and their habitats. These diseases include: the fungus *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*, cause of chytrid disease, *Didymo*, reed canary grass, broadleaf cattail, Eurasian watermilfoil, curlyleaf pondweed, spiny water flea and mystery snail. These steps should be completed between any sites that are not "water-connected" or that amphibians don't freely move between.

- 1) Before leaving the site, wash off as much of the mud/dirt on equipment and gear, in the site water and remove any vegetation or detritus attached to gear by shaking, rinsing in water, and hand picking
- 2) Do all sterilizing well away from streams or ponds.
- 3) Fill bucket with two gallons (8 Qts) clear water from pond or spigot.
- 4) Add 6 Tablespoons (1/3 cup) of bleach (6% concentration of sodium hypochlorite) for a 1% concentration.
- 5) Stir to mix with brush
- 6) Clean off any remaining vegetation or mud with brush that may have been missed earlier.
- 7) Dip and rotate folded minnow traps/swooping nets in solution, shake off, open, and lay out in sun to dry.
- 8) Dip shoes in solution and scrub, shake off and let dry in sun.
- 9) Either dip and scrub waders in bucket or lay waders on ground and pour solution on them while scrubbing. Spray bottle (with same solution concentration) can also be used to apply solution where needed.
- 10) Sterilize brushes in solution.
- 11) If possible, save any remaining sterilization solution in a sealable container for future use (5 gallon bucket with cover). If solution must be discarded, dispose of on asphalt, cement or hard roadbed, well away from any water bodies.
- 12) If at all possible, allow all gear and equipment to dry completely before reuse at next site. Alternatively, use a spray application of isopropyl alcohol (70%) or dry completely over 3 hours.

It is crucial to meet minimum concentrations and contact times. Overly diluted solutions or shortcuts on contact times will not be effective. Note also that solutions of sodium hypochlorite, including bleach, gradually weaken with time. Old bleach is not the same as new bleach.