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TITLE: Online class helps Michigan paddlers learn best practices to identify and avoid transporting invasive species

Despite these extraordinary times, it is still possible to safely – with social distancing – enjoy paddle sports on Michigan’s many wonderful water trails and lakes. Kayakers, paddle boarders and canoeists can also be key in the fight to protect the waters they love by identifying and reporting aquatic invasive species they encounter.

The MI Paddle Stewards new self-paced, online program from [Michigan Sea Grant](#) and [Michigan State University Extension](#) will help paddlers learn about important invasive species, how to properly clean a watercraft, and how to report invasive species. Paddlers will learn to use the MISIN (Midwest Invasive Species Information Network) app, a reporting tool used by Michigan’s Department of Natural Resources and others to locate invasive species of concern. The MI Paddle Stewards program is funded by the Michigan Invasive Species Grant program (www.michigan.gov/invasives).

Registration is open for the online course, which features six short sessions and costs \$20. Participants who complete the class will receive a certificate, bucket hat, towel, waterproof phone case, dry bag and more. (The class is free if participants choose not to receive the items.) Participants must complete the six sessions of the course by Dec. 31, 2020. Registration Info: <https://bit.ly/paddlestewards>.

For questions and more information about the MI Paddle Stewards online course, contact MSU Extension educator Mary Bohling (bohling@msu.edu).

[Michigan Sea Grant](#) helps to foster economic growth and protect Michigan’s coastal, Great Lakes resources through education, research and outreach. A collaborative effort of the [University of Michigan](#) and [Michigan State University](#) and its [MSU Extension](#), Michigan Sea Grant is part of the [NOAA-National Sea Grant](#) network of 34 university-based programs.

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