

## **Rally Lake Hopatcong community to vote for grant and protect it from “aquatic hitchhikers”**

*BoatUS Grassroots Grant finalist includes Lake Hopatcong Foundation project*

LAKE HOPATCONG, N.J. (March 11, 2015)—Water chestnut, hydrilla, fanwort... they all sit on “Lake Hopatcong’s Least Wanted” list, and the public can help assist the Lake Hopatcong Foundation in keeping them out of New Jersey’s largest lake by voting daily through March 24 with the click of a mouse at [boatus.org/grants/vote.asp](http://boatus.org/grants/vote.asp).

The BoatUS Foundation annual Grassroots Grants finalist list includes a Lake Hopatcong Foundation project that would create 10,000 copies of a Lake Hopatcong Guide Map on durable, synthetic paper that will show depth contours, landmarks, municipal borders, lakefront businesses, and public launch sites. Most important, the map will include information on how to stop aquatic hitchhikers and educate boaters on how to prevent the transporting of aquatic invasive species, helping to keep the lake from getting taken over by species that have taken over water bodies throughout the region and across the country. The focus will be on species that most threaten Lake Hopatcong. There will also be information on clean boating, including providing the locations of pump-out stations on the lake.

The project would include distribution of the free, printed maps to all lakefront businesses, beach clubs, and public launch sites on the lake as well as targeted locations in surrounding counties. The information on the map would also be uploaded onto the LH Guide App, the Lake Hopatcong Foundation’s free app. To vote for this project, supporters can go to [boatus.org/grants/vote.asp](http://boatus.org/grants/vote.asp), look for the foundation’s logo, and vote for the Lake Hopatcong Foundation. Voting is open to individuals aged 13 and over. Each individual may vote once a day for the Lake Hopatcong Guide Map until March 24.

Lake Hopatcong is New Jersey’s largest lake, and thousands of boaters use the lake every boating season, including many who come from other bodies of water. This project would help protect this important natural and recreational resource from being taken over by aggressive invasive species, and ensure the lake remains a beautiful and fun destination for many generations.

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that was established in 2012 with a mission of improving Lake Hopatcong for all, now and in the years to come. To learn more, visit [lakehopatcongfoundation.org](http://lakehopatcongfoundation.org).

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is a national leader promoting safe, clean and responsible boating. Funded primarily by donations from the over half-million members of Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS), the non-profit provides innovative educational outreach directly to boaters and anglers with the aim of reducing accidents and fatalities, increasing stewardship of America’s waterways and keeping boating safe for all. A range of boating safety courses – including 33 free state courses – can be found at [BoatUS.org/courses](http://BoatUS.org/courses).

##