



LILLY CENTER FOR  
**LAKES  
& STREAMS**

GRACE  
COLLEGE

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## The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams Prepares to Launch Three Summer Programs

WINONA LAKE, IND. -- While the community prepares to enjoy its favorite summertime lake activities, the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams is preparing technical equipment and making plans for summer in a different way. The team is ready to launch a summer of scientific research designed to benefit waterways throughout Kosciusko County.

### **Study 1: Potential Boating Impacts**

The first summer study focuses on the potential impact boats have when they stir up the bottom of the lakes. The research team aims to answer several often-asked questions: How much bottom sediment and buried nutrients do watercraft churn up while operating at various water depths? How might this impact change with different types of watercraft? How much does a sand bottom versus a muck bottom contribute to the measured impacts?

Answers to these questions have far-reaching implications. Any nutrients that get stirred up into the water become available to grow more algae and weeds. Excess weeds can limit recreational activities like boating, and blue-green algae can produce toxins which can be harmful to people and pets.

The Lilly Center is launching the boating study in May. The current research plan will test a variety of watercraft at various depths with both sand and muck lake bottom conditions. To garner a complete understanding, underwater video footage and aerial drone images will be captured. Water samples and measurements will also be collected

to quantify potential impacts of the various boating activities, with a special focus on nutrient changes. The Lilly Center hopes to publish science-based recommendations for appropriate water depths for operation of specific watercraft, including personal watercraft, standard pontoons, inboard/outboard runabouts, center mount inboards and V-drive wakeboard/wakesurf boats.

### **Study 2: Tracking Zebra Mussel Populations**

The Lilly Center's second summer study is about zebra mussels, a prolific, invasive species that has become a problem for residents on several area lakes. Zebra mussels are filter feeders, meaning they filter certain kinds of algae out of the lake water. In fact, zebra mussels give a competitive advantage to bad kinds of algae, including blue-green algae.

Using 100 samplers that will be connected to piers, this study will quantify and track zebra mussel populations in local lakes. Zebra mussels will colonize on the samplers, and the Lilly Center's research team will regularly visit each sampling site to gather data. Understanding zebra mussel populations in our lakes will provide a way to better interpret other collected data and better assess causes and solutions for any identified threats.

### **Study 3: Yearly Health Check-up**

Throughout the summer, the Lilly Center will also give local lakes their yearly check-up, which can be used to guide future strategic action for the lakes. Later this year, the data will be compiled with previous research to create a more complete picture of the lakes and streams' health.

Are you ready to help us make the lakes clean, healthy, safe and beautiful? Visit [lakes.grace.edu](http://lakes.grace.edu) to sign up for informative e-newsletters, learn about the lakes and support the Lilly Center's work.

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The Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams at Grace College conducts research, provides resources, engages and educates residents, and collaborates with local organizations to make the lakes and streams of Kosciusko County clean, healthy, safe and beautiful. To date, the Lilly Center has conducted scientific research on over 30 streams and 40 lakes. The Lilly Center is driven to create a legacy of stewardship by equipping community

members, visitors and future generations to understand and enjoy the county's natural beauty. For more information, visit [lakes.grace.edu](https://lakes.grace.edu).