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North Dakota Department of Health Rescinds Blue-green Algae Advisories for Lake Darling and Des Lacs Lake

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) and Agriculture (NDDA), Animal Health Division, have rescinded the blue-green algae advisories which were issued for Lake Darling, located northwest of Minot, and Des Lacs Lake, located near Kenmare. The advisories for both lakes were issued in early July following monitoring conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the NDDoH that showed the presence of blue-green algae and elevated levels of microcystin in the water at several areas around the lakes. Microcystin is a cyanotoxin caused by blue-green algae. When present in water, cyanotoxins are dangerous for both people and animals.

As part of a cooperative project with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, staff with Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge and Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge have been monitoring both lakes at several locations weekly since the advisory was posted. “With cooler temperatures and shorter days, there has been a significant improvement in the water quality of the lakes in recent weeks. As a result, an advisory is no longer necessary,” says Mike Ell with the NDDoH’s Division of Water Quality.

While the advisory has been rescinded for Lake Darling and Des Lacs Lake, the public is reminded that advisories and warnings are still in effect for several lakes and reservoirs across the state and that blue-green algae blooms may still occur on lakes and wetlands in the state. For a list of current advisories and warnings go to the NDDoH Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) website at <http://www.ndhealth.gov/WQ/SW/HABs/defaultHABs.htm>.

For more information on public health issues, contact Mike Ell, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5214, or Susan Keller, State Veterinarian, at 701.328.2655.

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