

Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid

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Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference

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Overview

- How did the program start?
- What are the requirements?
- What are the roles of:
 - Minnesota DNR
 - Local Government Units (LGUs)
 - Stakeholders
- What has been done so far?
- What are some lessons learned?
- What are the future directions?



How did the aid start?

- **AIS impacts, and the associated costs to prevent and manage AIS populations, are often absorbed at the local level.**
- **Grassroots advocacy by Minnesotans to secure local funding for AIS prevention and management activities.**
- **Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid is signed into law (Minnesota Statute 477A.19) in June 2014.**



Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid

Minnesota Statute, Section 477A.19



- “A county that receives a distribution under this section must use the proceeds **solely to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species at all access sites within the county.**”
- Each county must create guidelines for use of the funds and submit a copy to the DNR each year.

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MINNESOTA STATUTES 2015

477A.19

477A.19 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION AID.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) When used in this section, the following terms have the meanings given them in this subdivision.

(b) "Aquatic invasive species" means nonnative aquatic organisms that invade water beyond their natural and historic range.

(c) "Watercraft trailer launch" means any public water access site designed for launching watercraft.

(d) "Watercraft trailer parking space" means a parking space designated for a boat trailer at any public water access site designed for launching watercraft.

Subd. 2. **Distribution.** The money appropriated to aquatic invasive species prevention aid under this section shall be allocated to all counties in the state as follows: 50 percent based on each county's share of watercraft trailer launches and 50 percent based on each county's share of watercraft trailer parking spaces.

Subd. 3. **Use of proceeds.** A county that receives a distribution under this section must use the proceeds solely to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species at all access sites within the county. The county must establish, by resolution or through adoption of a plan, guidelines for the use of the proceeds. The guidelines set by the county board may include, but are not limited to, providing for site-level management, countywide awareness, and other procedures that the county finds necessary to achieve compliance. The county may appropriate the proceeds directly, or may use any portion of the proceeds to provide funding for a joint powers board or cooperative agreement with another political subdivision, a soil and water conservation district in the county, a watershed district in the county, or a lake association located in the county. Any money appropriated by the county to a different entity or political subdivision must be used as required under this section. Each county must submit a copy of its guidelines for use of the proceeds to the Department of Natural Resources by December 31 of the year the payments are received.

Subd. 4. **Payments.** The commissioner of revenue must compute the amount of aquatic invasive species prevention aid payable to each county under this section. On or before August 1 of each year, the commissioner shall certify the amount to be paid to each county in the following year. The commissioner shall pay aquatic invasive species prevention aid to counties annually at the times provided in section 477A.015.

Subd. 5. **Appropriation.** \$10,000,000 each year is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of revenue to make the payments required under this section.

History: 2014 c 308 art 1 s 11; 2015 c 21 art 1 s 91,92

How is the aid distributed?

Minnesota' General Fund → Department of Revenue → Counties

- **Statewide:**

- \$4.5 million in 2014
- \$10 million each year thereafter

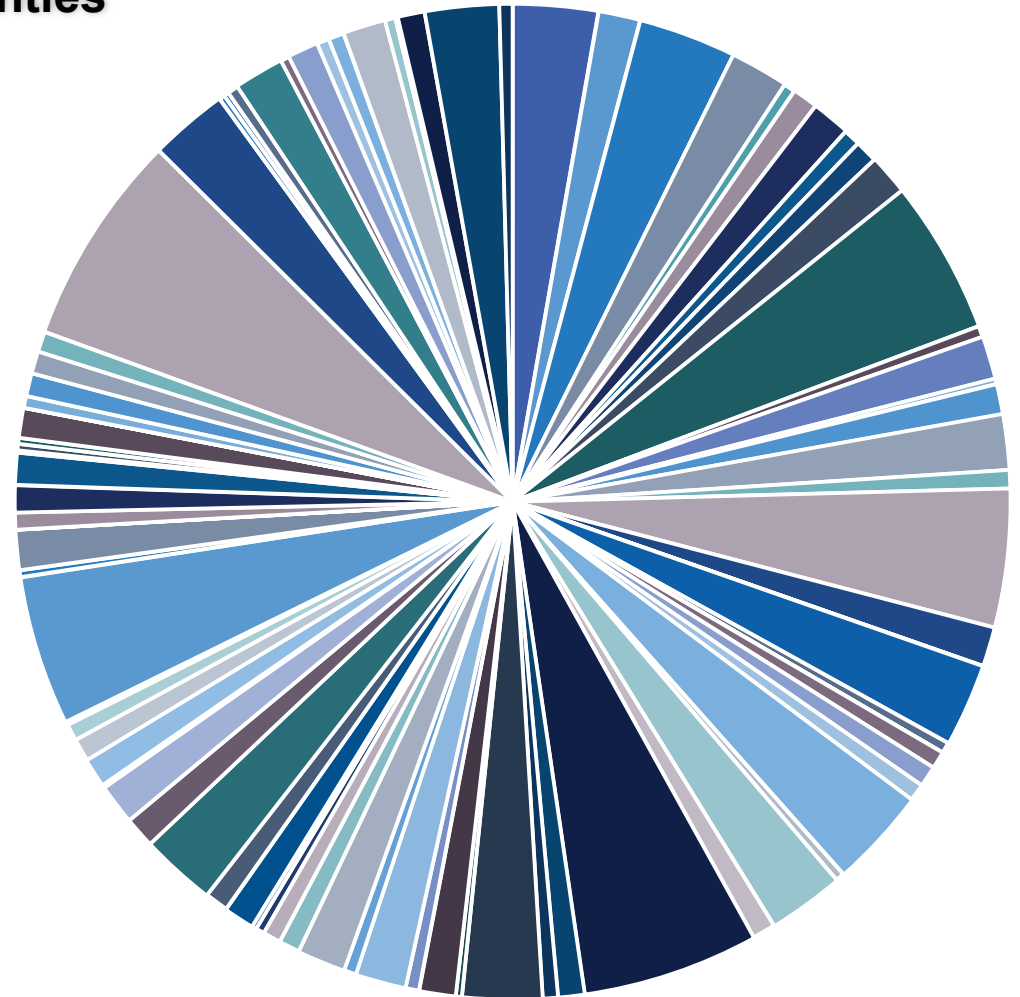
- **County:**

- 50% based on watercraft trailer launches (public)
- 50% based on watercraft trailer parking spaces
- 4 counties out of 87 do not receive aid
- ½ payment on July 20th and ½ on December 26th

- **Range (2016 allocation):**

- Highest: \$680,785
- Average: \$114,00
- Lowest: \$2,300

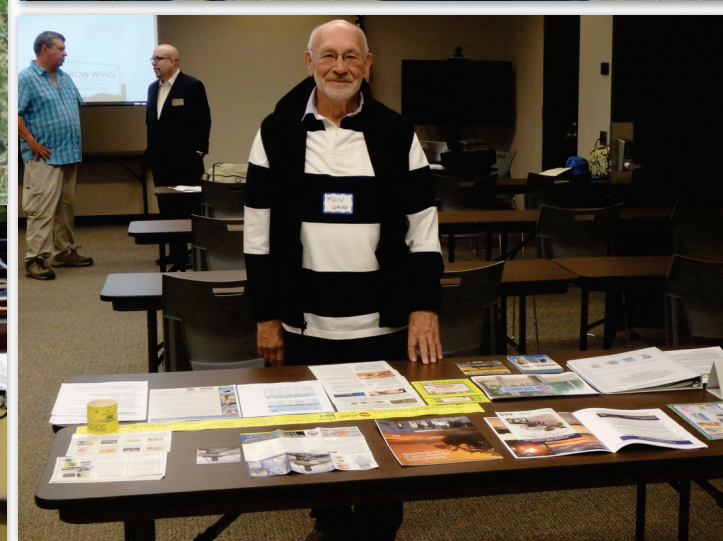
Aid Allocation per County



Role of Counties: A Spectrum of Activities



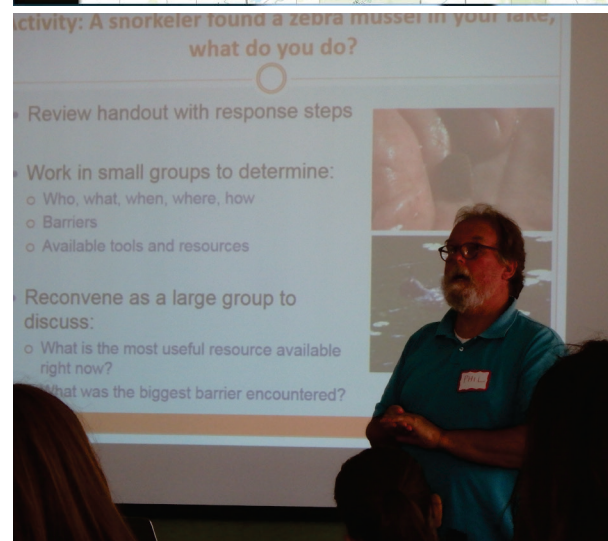
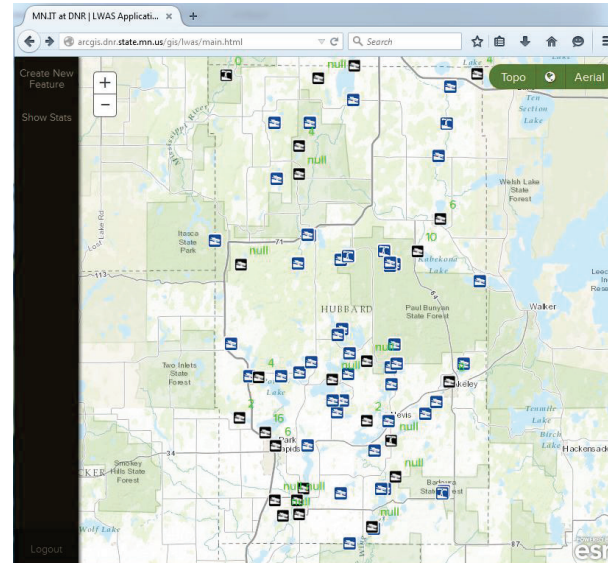
- Complete oversight to allocate the funding in accordance with the statute
- Each County Board designates oversight to a LGU within the county
- Programs are:
 - Diverse
 - At different stages of development and implementation
 - Cover a spectrum of AIS activities



Role of Minnesota DNR



- **Receives guidelines (plans and resolutions)**
- **Provides list of watercraft trailer launches and parking spaces**
 - **Counties may update this list using the “Local Water Access Site Editor Tool”**
 - **Minnesota Department of Revenue uses this list to certify the payments each year**
- **Provides technical support (Planners and Trainers)**



Role of Minnesota DNR: Provide Technical Support



○ DNR Planner Role

- Maintain repository for submitted plans and resolutions
- Provide technical support to LGUs as they draft, implement, and evaluate their AIS prevention programs
- Facilitate collaboration amongst LGUs
- Build relationships between LGUs and the DNR

○ DNR Trainer Role

- Provide authorized watercraft inspector training to LGU staff. Number of staff trained:
 - 2013 (before aid): 129 DNR staff, 298 LGU staff
 - 2014 (first partial year of aid): 124 DNR staff, 363 LGU staff
 - 2015 (first full year of aid): 105 DNR staff, 705 LGU staff
 - 2016: **Nearly 1,000 inspectors trained**



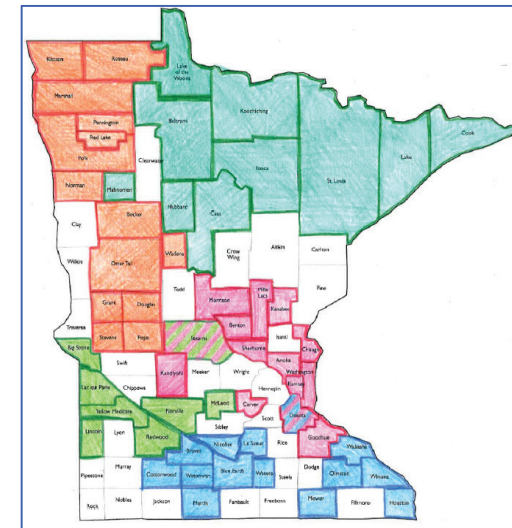
Regional AIS Prevention Workshops & Informal AIS Learning Sessions



- **Goals:**
 - Share collective AIS experiences
 - Learn from the experiences of others
 - Build stronger inter-county relationships
 - Create regional approaches to AIS prevention
- **Intended Audience:** local government staff leading their AIS Prevention Aid programs.
- Attendance is optional (not required by statute)
- Over 20 organizations represented



	# Workshops / Sessions Statewide	Total # County Reps	# (and %) of Counties Attending
Workshop Series #1 (May/June 2015)	10	119	67 counties (81%)
Workshop Series #2 (January 2016 – see map)	5	93	58 counties (70%)
All workshops	15	212	75 attended one (90%) 45 attended both (54%)
Informal AIS Learning Sessions (August/Sept. 2016)	2 “In the Field” 2 “Communications”	48 28	27 counties 23 counties



Themes Shared at the Workshops

Program Startup and Prioritizing Activities



Working with Local Law Enforcement



Public Awareness



Invasive Aquatic Plant Management



Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination



Early Detection, Monitoring, Rapid Response Planning



Workshop Take-Aways

- **Appreciated the opportunity to share successes, challenges, and experiences and to learn from others**
- **Many ideas and projects shared were “taken home” by others**
- **Would like more collaboration opportunities in the future**
- **The plan development process is valuable – it engages stakeholders, encourages conversations, reflects local needs, and creates buy-in**
- **A consistent AIS prevention message should be used across the state**
- **Local funding is essential in order to build community capacity to address AIS**
- **Long term, stable funding is essential for program success**



Quickly Evolving



Local Governments

- Many did not have an AIS program before the aid
- Those with existing AIS programs vastly expanded them
- Creating guidelines to fit their local needs
- Increasing local staff knowledge on AIS
- Building on existing partnerships between organizations
- Creating new partnerships with neighboring counties
- “Top 10” counties receiving the most aid are collaborating on projects with broader statewide impacts
- Implementing innovative AIS outreach, prevention, monitoring, and management projects

Minnesota DNR

- Increasing training capacity for authorized watercraft inspections
- Increasing technical support
- Providing tool for counties to update their watercraft trailer launch and parking information
- Streamlining current DNR programs to better fit county needs (signs, publications)
- Finding new opportunities to partner with counties on local AIS projects
- Relying on county AIS leads to expand outreach, monitoring, and management efforts statewide

Continued Communication & Collaboration



- **Counties continue to improve communication and collaboration between themselves and with local stakeholders.**
- **The DNR will continue to provide technical support through workshops and other actions/materials**
- **A single organization cannot tackle the issues of AIS alone – everyone needs to work together.**



“Invasive species do not have boundaries, so educational and prevention measures shouldn’t either”

Future Directions

- **Minnesota DNR**
 - Expand or streamline current programs
 - Create new tools and resources
 - Host workshops to meet the needs of the counties and their stakeholders
- **Counties**
 - Create innovative ways to engage water users
 - Think regionally
- **Local stakeholders**
 - Get involved with your county's AIS program
- **Legislature**
 - The AIS Prevention Aid is in statute and will continue as written indefinitely
 - Has the power to amend the language or even repeal the statute altogether



Summary

- AIS Prevention Aid provides \$10 million per year to Minnesota counties.
- This local funding helps build community capacity to address AIS issues.
- The plan development process is valuable – it engages stakeholders, encourages conversations, reflects local needs, and creates buy-in.
- County programs are diverse, at different stages of development and implementation, and cover a spectrum of AIS activities.
- Technical guidance from experts will continue to be beneficial in order to keep up with emerging threats and new ways of addressing AIS issues.
- Continued collaboration internally and externally at local, regional, and statewide levels is key to program success.
- It's everyone's responsibility – everyone can do their part to protect our waters from invasive species.



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