



# Lake of the Woods County Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan



Date 4/28/2015

## INTRODUCTION

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are threatening Minnesota waters. These nonnative species harm fish populations, water quality, and water recreation. This plan outlines the efforts that Lake of the Woods County will undertake to help prevent the spread of harmful AIS within Minnesota. Lake of the Woods and the Rainy River are one of the top fishing and boating destinations in the state. Protecting these waters from aquatic invasive species is crucial to the ecology and economy of the area.

## MISSION AND VISIONS STATEMENTS

### MISSION:

The mission of the Lake of the Woods County Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, acknowledging the potential ecological, economic and social impact of aquatic invasive species, is to coordinate and implement a comprehensive county-wide prevention and management plan.

The Task Force will utilize the collective resources of all partners to aggressively plan, pursue and implement strategies to prevent all forms of aquatic invasive species from entering the public waters of Lake of the Woods County through the many potential lake access points by providing ongoing education, watercraft inspection and decontamination. The plan seeks to collaborate with bordering counties and Canadian entities to ensure the most efficient use of resources. This plan guides the county and its partners in a way that enhances the existing state program and provides a road map for defining local priorities and needs. The goal is to prevent infestations from occurring, and manage those waters that are infested.

## STRATEGIES

In the following pages the plan utilizes 8 strategies with various tactics and actions to accomplish the mission of the Lake of the Woods AIS Task Force. The 8 strategies are as follows:

1. Communication / Education / Outreach
2. Risk Assessment
3. Partnership and Consistency
4. Early Detection / Rapid Response
5. Inspection / Decontamination
6. Manage existing populations of AIS
7. Enforcement
8. Accountability

The actions identified are tasks that are intended to be accomplished with the limited resources of the program and to supplement the existing programs through other local, state, provincial or federal programs.

## Lake of the Woods County Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan 2015

### Strategy 1 - Communication / Education / Outreach

**Tactic A: Work with the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers campaign to strengthen awareness of AIS issues in the county. Explore partnership opportunities with existing outreach efforts developed by the DNR and the Minnesota Sea Grant Program**

Timeline	Actions	Priority	Lead Agency	Partners	Expenses	Fund	Outcomes
2015	1. Educate through newspaper, radio and other media	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau		Free		
Spring 2015	2. Receive signage through MN DNR grant program and educational materials through the MN Sea Grant at resort accesses, bait shops and more	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries, DNR CO	Tourism Bureau	Free		
2015	3. Utilize Koochiching SWCD Brochure Template to develop a local brochure for AIS in LOW County	High	SWCD				
2015	4. Electric sign : use for AIS and Keep It Clean	Medium	SWCD, DNR Fisheries		\$3,000 to \$5,000	AIS County Funds, Grants	
Spring 2015	5. Banners through Coca-Cola or Pepsi to use on the Catch and Release Billboards, liquor stores, etc.	High	DNR Fisheries Office	SWCD	Free		
2015	6. Coordinate with the DNR to publicize new infestations at access sites in lake association/SWCD newsletters and other local publications.	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries	SWCD	Free		

**Tactic B: Ensure that local businesses are reducing the risk of AIS spread in their operations & receiving needed trainings.**

Timeline	Actions	Priority	Lead Agency	Partners	Expenses	Fund	Outcomes
2015	1. Work with area resorts to provide education and leadership to their clients for AIS prevention and education.	High	LOW Tourism	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, SWCD	Free		
2015	2. Work with DNR to provide Lake Service Provider Trainings in the area.	Medium	DNR, LOW Tourism	SWCD	Free		
2015	3. Continue to hold local bait industry trainings	High	DNR	Tourism Bureau	Free		Training held 3/5/2015
Spring 2015	4. Meet with area resorts during the LOW Tourism Bureau Spring Meeting before fishing opener. To present AIS to the group.	High	LOW Tourism	SWCD, DNR Fisheries	Free		

**Tactic C: Develop curricula for schools and informal education materials for events such as county fairs to support youth education about AIS**

Timeline	Actions	Priority	Lead Agency	Partners	Expenses	Fund	Outcomes
2015	1. Provide Education for various levels of students through the following programs: the River Watch Program participants, Enviorthon participants, Water Residency Curriculum with the elementary grades and the Outdoors Club.	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries		Minor	AIS County Funds	
2015	2. Promote AIS Prevention through County Fair Displays – DNR and/or SWCD	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries		Minor	AIS County Funds	

### Strategy 2 - Risk Assessment

**Tactic A. Understand the variety of pathways of introduction to local waters including boats, trailers, canoes, kayaks, docks, lifts, waders, float**

Timeline	Actions	Priority	Lead Agency	Partners	Expenses	Fund	Outcomes
2015	1. Work with partners in the basin including the members of the International Multi-Agency Technical Advisory Committee's AIS Subcommittee to map out pathways of risk and utilize this data to prioritize actions.	High	IMA-TAC	SWCD, DNR Fisheries	Minor	AIS County Funds	
2015	2. Use the DNR's list of water bodies that are designated as infested to identify potential linkages to other water bodies that might be susceptible and utilize this information to prioritize actions.	Medium	SWCD	BWSR, LWPO	Minor	AIS County Funds	

**Lake of the Woods County  
Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan 2015**

<b>Strategy 3 - Partnerships &amp; Consistency</b>							
<b>Tactic A: Collaborate with other counties, watershed groups, and/or jurisdictions whose water bodies connect to the county's to develop a regional approach to AIS prevention</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015	1. Work with partners in the LOW – Rainy River Watershed to promote AIS Prevention and education specific to this watershed	High	SWCD	IMA-TAC, Roseau, Koochiching, Beltrami, International Watershed Coordinator	Minor	AIS County Funds	Meeting held 3/4/2015
<b>Tactic B: Seek additional funds to implement unfunded actions in the county prevention plan. Effectiveness of AIS prevention actions can be limited by inadequate financial resources.</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015	1. If eligible projects arise, apply for the Initiative Foundation Grant	Medium	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	TBD	Initiative Foundation Grant	
2015	2. Working with Roseau County and Koochiching County (Joint Meeting with Roseau County coming soon)	High	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	Minor	AIS County Funds	Discussions in early 2015
<b>Tactic C: Develop and maintain contacts/partnerships with other local organizations, businesses, and government entities</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Ongoing	1. Participate in basin wide local AIS funding meetings	Medium	SWCD	IMA-TAC, Roseau, Koochiching, Beltrami, International Watershed Coordinator			Coordinated a meeting on 1/20/2015 at AIS Summit
Spring 2015	2. Work closely with Roseau, Beltrami and Koochiching Counties (Joint Meeting with Roseau County coming soon)	High	SWCD	Roseau, Koochiching, Beltrami			
<b>Tactic D: Facilitate the establishment of local organizations and volunteers to create partners in implementing the county's AIS prevention plan</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015	1. Work to establish partnerships with local organizations such as 4-H, Boy Scouts, Outdoor Club and others to assist with AIS activities	High	LWPO	SWCD			
<b>Strategy 4 - Early Detection / Rapid Response</b>							
<b>Tactic A: Develop Early Detection / Rapid Response Strategies</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Spring 2015	1. Obtain and distribute Watch ID cards from the Minnesota Sea Grant Program	High	SWCD		\$200	County AIS	
2015	2. Encourage county staff, businesses, and individuals to submit samples of suspected AIS to the DNR	Medium	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO,	SWCD, Tourism Bureau			
2015 - 2016	3. Implement an early detection and rapid response program to ensure that all new infestations are properly reported and rapid response is deployed, if required	Medium	DNR Fisheries	SWCD, Tourism Bureau			
Summer 2015	4. Create a volunteer program to monitor accesses (cinder block and rope)	High	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	Minor	AIS County Funds	
<b>Strategy 5 - Inspection / Decontamination</b>							
<b>Tactic A: Investigate the cost and feasibility of purchasing decontamination trailers for use in cleaning boats and equipment used in infested lakes within the county</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Summer 2015	1. Install boat washing and bait water exchange facilities at public accesses with a sand point well and a pump	High	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	\$500 per access (\$5,000)		
2016	2. Decontamination unit at the tower on HWY 72 with an electric sign	Medium	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	\$7,500 decon unit \$3K to \$5K sign		
<b>Tactic B: Encourage the development of a boat decontamination service or partner with existing businesses like car washes that could provide such services</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015	1. Outdoors Again Boat Washing Station: Work with this business to promote boat washing / decontamination	High	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	TBD	County AIS Funds, Initiative Foundation Grant	Preliminary discussions.
Summer 2015	2. Encourage boat washing at resorts with accesses	High	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, Tourism Bureau	Minor	County AIS Funds	

**Lake of the Woods County  
Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan 2015**

**Strategy 6 - Manage existing populations of AIS**

<b>Tactic C: Develop management strategies for controlling known populations of AIS</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015 - 2016	1. Where appropriate, use integrated pest management to control populations of high priority aquatic invasive plant species (purple loosestrife)	Medium	DNR AIS Specialist	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, SWCD	TBD		
2015 - 2016	2. Coordinate with the DNR for information on management of AIS, and adopt control plans utilizing safe and cost-effective techniques	Medium	SWCD	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO	TBD		
2015 - 2016	3. Evaluate AIS prevention efforts and cooperative relationships for possible improvements	Medium	DNR Fisheries, DNR CO, SWCD		TBD		

**Strategy 7 - Enforcement**

<b>Tactic A: Ensure that the county's peace officers, including water safety patrol staff, have been trained to enforce AIS laws, and increase the number of peace officers. Utilize county AIS deputies to patrol roadways near infested lakes to issue compliance checks with AIS laws</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Spring 2015	1. Set up a training for local law enforcement with DNR Staff	High	SWCD	DNR AIS Trainers	Free		

<b>Tactic B: Increase watercraft inspections at accesses</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Spring 2015	1. Working with DNR to increase inspectors in the Lake of the Woods Rainy River area, if other areas already have a more robust inspector programs	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries Office	DNR AIS regional staff			
Summer 2015	2. Work with resorts and DNR training staff to provide training to resorts staff to better be able to inspect boats and identify AIS.	High	Tourism Bureau, DNR				

<b>Tactic B: Increase watercraft inspections at accesses</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Spring 2015	1. Working with DNR to increase inspectors in the Lake of the Woods Rainy River area, if other areas already have a more robust inspector programs	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries Office	DNR AIS regional staff			
Summer 2015	2. Work with resorts and DNR training staff to provide training to resorts staff to better be able to inspect boats and identify AIS.	High	Tourism Bureau, DNR				

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Spring 2015	1. Working with DNR to increase inspectors in the Lake of the Woods Rainy River area, if other areas already have a more robust inspector programs	High	SWCD, DNR Fisheries Office	DNR AIS regional staff			
Summer 2015	2. Work with resorts and DNR training staff to provide training to resorts staff to better be able to inspect boats and identify AIS.	High	Tourism Bureau, DNR				

**Strategy 8 - Accountability**

<b>Tactic A: To provide consistent accountability measures to improve AIS programs going forward as well as efficiency and allocation of resources.</b>							
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015	1. Establish awareness of AIS impacts.	High	All				
2015	2. Establish level of concern.	Medium	All				
2015	3. Establish level of confidence in AIS measures to impact outcome.	Medium	All				
2015	4. Record number of inspections, decontaminations, trainings and infested water-related equipment intercepted.	High	All				

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2015	1. Establish awareness of AIS impacts.	High	All				
2015	2. Establish level of concern.	Medium	All				
2015	3. Establish level of confidence in AIS measures to impact outcome.	Medium	All				
2015	4. Record number of inspections, decontaminations, trainings and infested water-related equipment intercepted.	High	All				