

Minnesota DNR AIS Advisory Committee

February 27th, 2025 Final Meeting Minutes

Online via Teams

Members Present: Shelly Binsfeld, Nick Bluhm, Andrew Dickhart, Beto Garcia, Jared Langer, Spencer McGrew, Carrie Ohly-Cusack, Amanda Weberg, Raining White

Members Absent: Stephanie Hadler, Liz Kaltenhauser, Christine Maxwell, Patrick Selter, M. Mahmood Tajbakhsh

Ex-officio Members Present: Maddie Hayden

Ex-officio Members Absent: Nicole Lalum, Amy McGovern

DNR Staff Present: Doug Jensen, Rafael Contreras-Rangel, Tina Fitzgerald, Kelly Pennington, Scott Staples, Nancy Stewart

Motion to approve Agenda: **S. McGrew** motion, **B. Garcia**, seconded

Motion to approve January Minutes: Tabled until April meeting

Motion approved to record meeting for internal use only to assist with developing minutes

Action Items

- **DNR** will check with MNIT to explore other ways to share information other than personal emails.
- **DNR** will invite Eric Kenney to present at a future meeting.
- **DNR** will invite Adam Doll to present at the March meeting.
- **DNR, S McGrew** and **A Weberg** will identify sections in the 2024 Annual Report for the committee to review during the March and April meetings
- **DNR** will invite Mimi Daniel to present for the March meeting to talk about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- **K. Pennington** will check to determine if SAISAC letter to Commissioner can be posted to SAISAC website.
- **K. Pennington** will inquire about invasive aquatic plant control in the presence of wild rice.
- **D. Jensen** will share the metrics 2024 template for the committee to review.
- **D. Jensen** and **R. Contreras-Rangel** can look into having a calendar added to website.

Today's Meeting Expectations

- Everyone has the responsibility to contribute.
- Be an active listener and speak honestly.
- Share information in ways that can help others be successful.
- Be respectful and open to new ideas and new ways of doing things.
- Everyone participates, no one dominates.

AIS Prevention at Public Water Accesses

Tina Fitzgerald, Watercraft Inspection Supervisor DNR and Nancy Stewart, Water Recreation Consultant, Div. of Park and Trails

Nancy has over 15 working with water access program and figuring out the needs for prevention. The presentation is where we've been, where we are, and where we are going next.

Signs as AIS Information:

- Most people prefer to have information on signs at water accesses. Survey of 2019 and result on presentation.
- Signs as prompts to take action, most helpful when they promote positive behavior.
- Moving away from negative behavior (e.g. EWR kills lakes).
- Current signs have around 17 different invasive species.

Considerations – What is feasible at the site?

- Case by case basis on signs because each water access is different (e.g. accessibility, maneuverability)
- Process of installing signs
 - Interested party consults with Parks and Trails Area Supervisor
 - DNR determines if activity is feasible on site
 - DNR drafts proper agreement (e.g. Special use Permit or Memorandum of Understanding, Joint Power Agreements)

AIS Best Management Practices for Water Accesses

- National guidelines have been created (e.g. States Organizations for Boating Accesses (SOBA))
- These show examples of where to put signs, where to clean, put cleaning station, etc.

Compost Bins

- Remind people to take off plants from boats, but the bin was being used as garbage.
- The bin would also get pretty smelly from bait, and it was tough to upkeep cleaning.
- Lesson learned: the bin did not do the job, but the sign is useful.

Cleaning Tools Observation study (data on slides)

- Usage (data on slides)
- Interviews (data on slides)
- Recommendations
 - Maximize tool use by paring stations with designated AIS cleaning areas for both arriving and exiting boats
 - Provide popular tools (e.g. aqua weed stick and grabber)
 - Maintenance

N Bluhm mentions cleaning stations (aqua weed stick and grabber.) are not home-made, the DNR gave recommendations for these cleaning stations. **T Fitzgerald** responds the sign is not homemade, the tool stations are homemade. **N Bluhm** mentions the tools followed DNR recommendations to create these stations and they are inexpensive to make. He proposes to ask the DNR for funding and take the lead to create more of these

stations. **S McGrew** responds that is a possibility and it is another tool in the toolbox. He also mentions these tool stations and signs help with behavior change. The small costs to install these stations achieves success by seeing behavior change due to their presence.

Get Out More

- Parks and Trails has 35M to modernizing boat accesses, this would help completely rehabilitate 40+ accesses by 2029. Examples include:
 - New panel/kiosk style sign
 - General information and rules in one place
 - Clean in - clean out areas

New DNR Sign Manual and State Brand Standards (examples shown on slides)

- There are specific guidelines and color required by the DNR to use
- The goal is to not completely replace all signs out there, but to slowly replace the signs as they age.

N Bluhm asks whether there is a possibility the state will have their own sign printing location. **T Fitzgerald** responds that right now we have a contract, and all signs purchased by the state following these guidelines. The DNR is exploring just having one vendor rather than having them out to bid.

Possibilities of New AIS Signage

- Each color will have specific meanings, meaning that we will use colors for specific purposes.

Discussion:

N Bluhm asks who goes out and manages these signs. **N Stewart** responds that every two weeks or so DNR staff inspect the signs, but during storms they would be more frequent. When there are not normal seasons, the inspection can change. We also have a log where our staff can take picture of the signs and can also make notes if the signs is missing. The staff are good at taking care of the signs. **N Bluhm** asks who is actively managing and checking these photos. **N Stewart** responds that it would be the supervisor of the region, so it would be the supervisor of the site. But any of the technicians would have the authority to take action. **N Bluhm** asks if there is a program to pick up the trash at sites. **N Stewart** responds that they have volunteers that pick-up trash, also staff does when they're checking the sites. The sites also attract household dumping such as couches and when they are located, they are removed. That is one of the worse parts but that is part of our job. **S McGrew** mentions that their watercraft inspectors are on these sites frequently and they use pictures when they see these and send them to the regional manager.

B Garcia asks that if the new sign design is not going to have a decal, whether it will have a QR code. **T Fitzgerald** responds that not necessarily, it's just a concept, it could be a mixed of all these things. For example, on the Mississippi river if there a new species then there would be thousands of signs to be updated, this would be different compared to a single lake. **B Garcia** asks whether these QR codes are per water body or a general one for the entire state. **T Fitzgerald** responds that this would likely go to a single website or go to LakeFinder. There are many opportunities. Conservation officers can point at a sign and give a ticket, but these regulations have been around for a long time, people should know the rules, so we are currently exploring whether we need to have the entire statute on a sign. **B Garcia** mentions he likes the use of QR codes, but it brings accessibility issues. **T Fitzgerald** agrees, she adds that there can also be malicious activity where another QR code that sends you to a different site can be placed on top.

D Jensen mentions the Boundary Water Coalition have been doing inventory on the northern part of the state. What they were looking for is what signs were there, damaged or missing and if water bodies that were infested had a sign showing that. He has learned that red, blue and black are especially prone for UV degradation. He asks whether there will be UV coating applied to the new signs. **T Fitzgerald** responds that she would assume so, the sign teams are experts, and they know much more than her.

S Binsfeld mentions that this was brought up at Sherburne County 5-year planning session. Their epiphany there was to have signs that have a QR code that takes you to a video that educates more in depth. They were focusing on education and prevention. She mentions she did not know the DNR were doing this and is glad is happening. There can be some negative things associated with QR codes, but there are many positives as well.

N Bluhm asks whether the DNR AIS group provides the information the QR code sends you to and if there is a different team that connects that content and creates the QR code. **T Fitzgerald** responds that the AIS team would create the information and MNIT group would create the QR code. MNIT is part of the DNR and the MN Government.

S McGrew asks **A Dickhart** if he could talk about his QR code usage. A Dickhart responds that the idea for them came from a lake association member. First, they wanted to put a camera but then they moved over to QR codes on signs. They are going to start in one lake and see what happens. **T Fitzgerald** asks to keep the DNR updated because we want data on QR code usage on signage. They are popular at restaurants, but we want to see what happens on signs.

C Ohly-Cusack asks through chat if a QR code is present on an infested lake with AIS, whether it suggests to boaters leaving the lake to redirect to a decon unit. **T Fitzgerald** responds that the QR code would take you to a website that gives information about actions they can take.

Discussion Time for Committee

Sharepoint

A Weberg and **B Garcia** express that their organizations would not be comfortable with a SharePoint.

D Jensen provides some background on the reasons why Sharepoint is on the agenda. The committee used to use Basecamp, but that had been used less and less over time. Basecamp is no longer supported by DNR. Our questions are do you all want something like basecamp and would Sharepoint be a good option for that.

B Garcia mentions that he wants to bring the discussion back to the SharePoint because it is important to share information. He asks if the DNR has something that is used for this. **S McGrew** mentions they could use google share and that his organization would not be comfortable using SharePoint. **R White** mentions his organizations uses SharePoint with the DNR and DNR hosts it. He also mentions that you must sign an agreement that the DNR owns any data being shared on SharePoint. **S McGrew** states that they need to find something that works for everyone. We have government people, LGUs, and more. **J Langer** asks if the DNR provide them Microsoft emails, because that would solve their problems. He also also would not like to use his personal email. **S Binsfeld** adds that it is helpful for their SWCD to have an email provided to them, especially since these emails can sometimes be used to send unsolicited emails. **D Jensen** mentions that when emails and meeting invites are only sent to committee members and speakers. **A Weberg** asks if these DNR emails could be given without their names so they can be passed on to new members once our term is done. **S Binsfeld** adds that these emails would have to be sent to her personal email as well, because she would not want to check that separate email. **N Bluhm** mentions that if it's possible to get these emails and get them forwarded to their personal email that

would be great but know that it could be technologically challenging for some members. A Weberg mentions that Google is also a good option although I have not heard the DNR using Google services. **A Dickhart** mentions that email is working fine for him

B Garcia motions to confer with the State MNIT department to see if it is possible find a way to share information other than using personal emails. **C Ohly-Cusack** seconds and the motion passes. **Action Item: DNR will check with MNIT to explore other ways to share information other than personal emails.**

Review SAISAC webpage

D Jensen mentioned Eric Kenney will be working on updating the SAISAC webpages and it was decided to have Eric Kenney present at a future meeting. **Action Item: DNR will invite Eric Kenney to present at a future meeting.**

March Meeting Topics

D Jensen mentions Adam Doll couldn't join us, but he can provide a legislative update for our March meeting. **A Weberg** points out that many members are new, so it is understandable if it is hard to suggest topics. She encourages new members to share whatever they'd think would be useful. **D Jensen** suggests the committee could review the 2024 Annual report for ideas. **N Bluhm** motions for the committee to review the 2024 annual report to come up with future discussion topics. **B Garcia** seconds and the motion passes. **Action Item: DNR will invite Adam Doll to present at the March meeting.**

D Jensen suggest splitting up reviewing the information in the report because it's lot of information. He suggests it be split in the March and April meeting. **S McGrew** and **A Weberg** amended motion to splitting work with the DNR to select topics to review on the annual report 2024 for the March and April meeting. **Action Item: The committee will review sections of the 2024 Annual Report as identified by the DNR and the chair and cochair of the committee.**

B Garcia suggest bringing diversity equity and inclusion into the signs of AIS. He knows they have been working on translating into different languages. It would be great to bring someone in to talk about that, especially in March, when we are busy. **D Jensen** mentions through chat that DNR's Mimi Daniel last spoke to this committee in October 2023: "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Current and Future"

B Garcia motions to have a report back from the DNR or have a DNR representative who works on this present for March meeting. **R White** seconds and the motion passes. **Action Item: DNR will invite Mimi Daniel to present for the March meeting.**

Discuss Governor's Budget Proposals

B Garcia ask if there are Any updates on the AIS Prevention Aid letter that was sent out to the governor. **A Weberg** responds that the governor has received a lot of pushback and he has mentioned that it is just a proposal so far. **S McGrew** mentions there isn't a bill number yet and it needs to go to the Dept of Revenue. The counties are mobilizing. Commissioners are down in St Paul doing lobbying. There is a large amount of noise being created by the LGU's/counties. We have not heard back from the Governor from the letter. **S McGrew** asks if we the letter can be put on the DNR website. **D Jensen** mentions the DNR has not shared letters on their website. **S McGrew** mentions there are letters on the website to Governor Dayton. **D Jensen** says he must have missed that.

DNR Updates

Kelly Pennington, DNR Invasive Species Program Supervisor

Doug Jensen and Raphael Contreras-Rangle, AIS Prevention Planners

- DNR Budget: Today, the Environment, Climate and Legacy Committee will hear the Governor's budget proposal for DNR from Commissioner Strommen, which includes proposed DNR watercraft surcharge. Bill has not been introduced yet but should be coming soon.
- Legislative: 1) DNR related bill which would make it legal to possess, transport, purchase and sell dead and eviscerated invasive carp, bighead, silver and grass, without a permit. Reason black carp are not included is because they are not yet present in the state. Proposal was modeled on neighboring states including Wisconsin and Michigan which have similar policies that allow use of dead/eviscerated invasive carp. Purpose is to focus prevention and permitting effort on pathways that are real threats to natural resources. It will also make it easier for us and contracted commercial fishers to dispose of captured carp which we are catching more of over time and find new purposes for those fish. Last year, a portion of a catch was donated to the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota. To do that, a permit was needed, so this change would benefit and enable other organizations to use without adding that permitting requirement. 2) Another proposed bill would regulate scuba diving for aquatic plant control.
- MS River Lock and Dam 5 Project: Last year, DNR received funding from the Legislature through the Outdoor Sams Heritage Council to install an invasive carp deterrent. DNR continues to work with federal partners to scope the design.
- Local AIS County Workshops: Co-hosted by **D. Jensen** and **R. Contreras-Rangel**, three on-line workshops held on: 1) Early Detection, Response and Management, 2) Partnerships and 3) Engagement. All were very well received and attended by 89, 80 and 72, respectively. Workshops were recorded and will be available after they are transcribed. Two in-person workshops are planned in the north and south.

Discussion: **C. Ohly Cusack** asks when there will be a decision on the proposed decrease on AIS Prevention Aid funding, how DNR is preparing for the potential cut?, not necessarily monetarily but for all of the program that DNR supports. Is DNR putting together a plan? **K. Pennington** responds that has also not been introduced in the Legislature as a bill. Like that bill, there are a number of steps needed for the DNR surcharge increase. Bills need to be written, then heard on the floor, heard in committees, amended, etc. DNR expects that there will be lot more conversations and discussions with committees and stakeholders as the Legislative session moves forward. Like other state agencies, DNR is on a two-year cycle of appropriations. DNR always tries to be flexible and wait for our appropriations based on policies and budget for the next biennium. Planning can only go so far. It is also a very busy time of year, our seasonal trainers are just being brought back, watercraft inspection hiring, AIS specialists are getting ready for the field season, etc. DNR can only go so far to plan for contingencies. There are always changing budgets and policies. A DNR legislative team is watching progress in the legislature. **A. Weberg** asks about posting the SAISAC letter opposing AIS Prevent Aid cuts on the SAISAC website? Other letters have been posted in the past. **Action Item: K. Pennington will check.**

A. Dickhart from the chat: With the change in policy regarding invasive carp will they be treated commercially like common carp? **K. Pennington:** No, there are differences, common carp are a regulated invasive species, so they are already legal to transport and possess, which is not the case for these prohibited invasive carp.

Introduction to DNR Invasive Species Program

Kelly Pennington, DNR Invasive Species Program Supervisor

Mission: Work with Minnesotans to conserve and manage the state’s natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life

Purpose: Curb the spread and minimize harmful effects of non-native species that can:

- Cause displacement of or otherwise threaten, native species in their natural communities or
- Threaten natural resources or their use in the state (recreation and economy too)

Goals:

1. Prevent introductions of new invasive species into Minnesota
2. Prevent the spread of invasive species within the state
3. Reduce the impacts caused by invasive species to Minnesota’s ecology, society, and economy

Laws (MN Statutes 84D, 86B, 97C, 103G, #1-3) and Rules (MN Rule 6216, (#4-5):

Everything DNR does is related to statutes and rules, with many things that tell DNR what to do, and defines what people can do in MN concerning prevention management (e.g., drain plug law). These define what DNR can do as a program.

1. Proposed and passed by legislators
2. Sometimes ideas come from stakeholders, industry or people (requires a legislative sponsor)
3. Governor also proposes new laws
4. Agencies follow the MN Administration Procedures Act and other authority for making rules
5. DNR makes invasive species rules to classify invasive species (listing species is in rule, delegates to DNR)

Definition from Minnesota Statute 84D:

“Invasive species” means a non-native species:

- Causes or may cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health, or
- Threatens or may threaten natural resources or the use of natural resources in the state
- A person may not possess, import, purchase, sell, propagate, transport, or introduce a prohibited species
- A person may not introduce a regulated species (less stringent use)

MN Rules Chapter 6216 lists specific species (plants, invertebrates, diseases) as regulated or prohibited

DNR Statutory authority for:

- Invasive species program (84D.02)
- Infested waters (84D.03)
- Classify and regulate invasive species (84D.04-.08)
- Regulate transport of invasive species (84D.09)
- Inspections, service provider, and drain plug requirements (84D.10-.108)
- Permits to harvest or destroy aquatic plants ((103G.615)
- Issue permits (84D.11, 103G.615)
- Make rules (84D.12)
- Enforce regulations (84D.13)

Discussion:

B. Garcia via chat: Should permits to harvest include invasive carp and other things aside from plants? **K. Pennington** responds that DNR has authority to regulate plants through IPM. Authority is provided in different places. APM and IAMP are really the heavy hitters, but regarding harvesting invasive carp or crayfish, which is a little different because those are regulated through fisheries. If invasive crayfish, DNR would issue permits for possession and transport. Hence, they are administered differently.

N. Bluhm read the annual report and discovered a reference to use of rules and the finding of a non-native crayfish, which has not been listed. How do you take this to make it an issue via rules? How is the determination made? **K. Pennington** responds that those were signal crayfish found in 2023. DNR is responding with help from a federal grant to rapidly respond. When a news species shows up in the state (e.g., starry stonewort), there is regulatory analysis, a process that is spelled out in statute, what are the criteria, what are the things to look for, to list it a prohibited species. Rulemaking is not fast. Last year, DNR listed an additional 13 species, which took more than a year. Process involves asking if there are already regulations that apply to that species. For starry stonewort, DNR requested a legislative change to ensure that it would be covered by transport laws. DNR conducted emergency rulemaking on starry stonewort, which are not permanent, so then DNR worked to make them permanent with expedited rulemaking. A link to the classification was shared via chat. Process includes a literature search, discuss with colleagues and experts. For the example of crayfish, they are illegal to import into the state without a permit from fisheries. Listing can vary depending if it is from statute to rule to DNR programs.

N. Bluhm asks are DNR priorities are driven more on the impact on the environment or the threat for spread? Ex: Zebra mussel can have huge impacts on the environment, but Eurasian watermilfoil is easily spread. What is the priority? **K. Pennington** responds, both are high priority species. If there is a threat to the environment or spread, both factors would need to be weighed individually in total.

R. White asks if you have any insights on rules and laws regarding wild rice harvest? APM or IAPM? It is confusing because they are a part of both programs. **K. Pennington** does not know but can inquire. **Action item: K. Pennington will inquire about this question.**

J. Langer adds that he has worked as a pesticide applicator and does not recall protection of wild rice, but for other species like lily pads. they are protected from herbicide application. In the Twin Cities area, there were many restrictions for applications.

Via chat **B. Garcia** asks if starry stonewort legislation change also address the issue of invasive parasites, microbes and viruses? Was not answered.

DNR Invasive Species Program Highlights were shown beginning in 1987 (see attached presentation) and formally recognized as a program by the Legislature in 1991.

DNR Organizational Structure: Commissioner --> Division Directors & Regional Directors --> Section Managers & Regional Managers --> Unit Supervisors and District Managers

DNR Divisions with Four Administrative Regions (NW, NE, SW, Metro-SE):

1. Ecological & Water Resources (EWR) – Invasive Species Unit
2. Enforcement
3. Fish and Wildlife

4. Forestry
5. Lands and Minerals
6. Parks and Trails
7. Operation Services

EWR Structure: Director --> Deputy Director --> Ecosystem Management and Protection Services Section (Invasive Species Unit), Strategic Information Services Section Conservation Assistance and Regulations Section, Inventory, Monitoring, and Analysis Section

Regional Directors --> EWR Regional Managers (4) --> EWR District Managers (4) --> Watercraft Inspection Supervisors (4) and Assistants (4) --> Invasive Species Specialists (8) and Natural Resource Specialists (30)

What Invasive Species Program Does:

- Watercraft Inspection Coordinator with Regional Supervisors and Seasonal Inspectors
- Regional Invasive Species Specialists (assist control, permits)
- Training Coordinator with Training Specialist and Regional Trainers
- Prevention Consultant (prevention permits)
- Management Consultant
- Invasive Fish Coordinator
- AIS in Commerce Prevention Planner
- AIS Prevention Planners
- Grants and Research Coordinator
- Terrestrial Invasive Specie Coordinator

State Funds:

- \$4,222,000 from invasive species account
- \$2,778,196 from a \$10.60 surcharge on watercraft registration (valid for three years) in MN
- \$1,107, 960 from a \$5 fee on non-resident fishing licenses

Federal Funds:

- \$1,319,590 (USFWS) – GLRI, ANS Plan, Rapid Response (R2 watercraft inspection, phragmites program, AIS in Commerce position, rapid response)

N. Bluhm asks if there is a listing of programs by funding (cost accounting)? What are the AIS programs and how much funding is being spent on those? Are there 10 programs? **K. Pennington** responds that those costs are reflected in the pie chart. Watercraft Inspection Program expenditures are lumped into Enforcement. Management includes permits. No because there is a lot of cross-over of efforts. Staff effort spans across efforts. **N. Bluhm** suggests cost accounting across programs? **K. Pennington** says much of what DNR does is based on its authority based on statute, there are metrics that are tracked internally, strategic plan goals, etc. **N. Bluhm** states that if federal funds are reduced then the state and DNR will have to make tough choices. His advice is to have goals that defend the budget. **S. McGrew** says that tracking budgets are tricky for example how do you measure prevention? If the surcharge passes, will the budget increase from \$2.7 to \$6M? **K. Pennington** says the surcharge will go into that fund, but the Legislator will need to appropriate a subset to DNR. Another aspect is that the Invasive Species account is in a structural deficit in the future. So, a part of the budget is to

keep the watercraft program going. Also, some of the funding will also go to MAISRC, increase invasive aquatic plant management grants, so management piece of the pie would increase.

B. Garcia via chat: Is that federal fund/grant item expected to remain give the current situation? **K. Pennington** says there is a lot of uncertainty, but we are continuing to assume that those funds will continue to be available. **D. Jensen** says he read about the current status of GLRI. There are bi-partisan supported bills in both houses that support, an increase of GLRI funding to \$400M over 5 years, but does not know their exact status. **B. Garcia** views the surcharge increase as getting us back to the past increases based on inflation. Though if the increases are not increased incrementally. Support by fishing groups has changed their attitude from years ago when they did not support increases to many supporting today. Those people need to be part of the solution.

Member and Ex-Officio Updates

- **M. Hayden** says the MAISRC annual report is available (add link), cycle is have another RFP out as outlined by their technical and advisory boards and is currently open to pre-proposals related to their projects, researchers are modeling impact of county aid as it has slowed the spread of AIS, a packet of information is being prepared, prevention aid is very beneficial, research teams getting ready for field season, and been involved in strategic planning.
- **R. White** reports that they are working on grant submissions, hiring two watercraft inspectors, working with Hubbard, Cass Counties and DNR to coordinate inspectors, hiring two DASH certified divers for starry stonewort and Eurasian watermilfoil, monitoring locations from MAISRC project, working with **M. Hayden** to report sightings (e.g., Survey 1-2-3), so they can respond quickly, looking for suggestions on how to get people to report something suspicious, looking forward to working with the new DNR AIS specialist, they also have an open tech job and federal funding cuts probably will not impact them much.
- **A. Weberg** will have four inspectors, same four for the last nine years, getting ready for all the school visits in April and May, Sea Change from Two Harbors will visit, hands on experience on-board, and partnership with local brewery regarding a new beer with an emerald ash borer theme.
- **N. Bluhm** is working to complete rest of the tool sign installations and reaching out to **R. White** regarding purchase of DASH equipment.
- **C. Ohly Cusack** says that the America The Beautiful Coalition met yesterday; ABC serves not only the three counties, but the DNR, Forest Service, 1854 Treaty Authority, MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates, others, to share information with other organizations to broaden partnerships, working to install CD3s potentially across the three counties, but running into a few issues; members shared updates.
- **B. Garcia** says he is looking forward to boating on the St. Croix, doing some mapping, saw an image of a pile of zebra mussels eaten on the shoreline and wondered what eats them.
- **D. Jensen** been working on this meeting, past three off-season online workshops, planning a Great Lakes Panel on ANS meeting in Buffalo, NY, in June, helping to plan River Quest which is a shipboard education program for 6th graders aboard the Vista Star in mid-May, over 30,000 6th graders have been educated about the recovery of the St. Louis River.
- **R. Contreras-Rangel** working with **D. Jensen**, continuing to work on AIS in Commerce projects, applying for a grant to GLRI for a regional OIT coordinator, goldfish awareness campaign working with **A. Dickhart**, and hopefully hosting a Surrender event in June.
- **J. Langen** is conducting a project for MAISRC with **S. McGrew** on how people visit lakes and when are the busiest? How can predict the future? Adding 20 new lakes for a total of 50.
- **S. Binsfeld** will be surveying once ice goes out.

- **A. Dickhart** says this year will be a continuation of last year, hiring watercraft inspector and technicians, watercraft inspection has decrease a bit for priority, hard to fill the seasonal positions, incorporating more education and outreach into programming with watercraft inspection program, need to be trained to teach youth, common carp control program since 2017, goldfish management program, infested 10 years ago, 3-4 years ago saw big schools of fish, conducting feasibility study, getting together fisheries managers, interested in conducting a larger study on goldfish management, interested in getting a working group together, and involved with a lake county park working to conduct a whole lake alum treatment then long term management of curlyleaf pondweed.
- **S. McGrew** says he wrote a newsletter article about the cold, but the AIS world is heating up, posted positions for season watercraft inspectors, 30 people will apply, 20 returning, and coordinating with the City to place their third self-service cold water watercraft cleaning station in the county.

Discussion Time for Committee

- Recordings of meetings: **D. Jensen** says we do not need to get permission. Teams has the feature that we need to record. The committee needs to approve with the stipulation that the recording would only be used internally to prepare past committee minutes. Discussion turned to the preference of having shorter minutes, more general, too much to comprehend and not necessary. Points could be broken down into bullets for each topic. Sometimes the devil is in the details. Once minutes are completed videos will be deleted. These meetings are open to the public. Because our committee does not establish policy, we are not subject to open meeting laws. It is still the status quo, just a tool for internal use. Final minutes are shared with the committee then posted on the SAISAC website. **B. Garcia** revised motion to record the purpose of internal use on a two-month trial period, **N. Bluhm** second. Motion passed, **S. Binsfeld** and **A. Dickhart** oppose.
- Discuss December meeting suggestion concerning tracking of AIS Prevention Aid funding spent each year on invasive aquatic plant management. Anyone recall this? Perhaps based on **A. Dahlberg's** presentation. Quantify local non-government aquatic plant management? **D. Jensen** shared what we have compiled for 2023 for control, monitoring and how much is leveraged, which is a huge amount, almost 1:1. We do not track how much is spent on monitoring. The question may have been about how much is spent on management compared to prevention. How much is spent by AIS Prevention Aid, DNR grants, versus how much lake associations spend? Suggest dollars spent to reduce nuisance plants versus eradication. How much AIS Prevention funding being used for APM. Suggestion to revise metrics concerning IAPM, we have those numbers. **D. Jensen** stress that he and **R. Contreras-Rangel** are always looking to improve the metrics. We annually ask the counties for any revisions or additions that they would like. **S. McGrew** suggested have an off-line discussion meeting on the metrics. **Action item: D. Jensen will share the metrics 2024 template for the committee to review.**
- **B. Garcia** mentions that the meetings have not been scheduled on the website. **D. Jensen** says that before he started there was a time when the schedule was posted along with meeting agendas, but there was little visitation to the site so that was discontinued. **B. Garcia** says having the agenda and minutes would be helpful, maybe people could be made more away. **D. Jensen** asks if it would be useful to post the meetings on a calendar? **Action item: D. Jensen and R. Contreras-Rangel can look into having a calendar added.** **S. McGrew** offered to meet with prevention aid planners and **E. Kenney** to determine what changes can be made to the website before the March meeting. **E. Kenney** only has access to the

Prevention Aid website and not the SAISAC website. We are look to find out who owns the site. **N. Bluhm** volunteered to help.

- Motion to adjourn, **B. Garcia**, second **N. Bluhm**

Adjourned 2:45 pm

Next meeting is March 27th online. April 23rd or May 1st 10 am - 3 pm (in-person with online option)