

Minnesota Statewide AIS Advisory Committee (SAISAC)

December 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes

MN DNR Sauk Rapids Office, Sauk Rapids, MN

Members Present: Norman Baer, Justine Dauphinais, James Johnson, Kelsey Taylor, Tera Guetter, Eric Johnson, Chris DuBose, Mary Alverson, Jim Boettcher, Paul Hamilton, Donovan Strong, John Deurr, Roger Imdieke

Members Absent: Eric Johnson, Jaime Jost, Barb Halbakken Fischburg

Ex-officio Members Present: Doug Jensen, Nicole Lalum, Nick Phelps

Ex-officio Members Absent: Amy McGovern

DNR Staff Present: Heidi Wolf, Phil Hunsicker, Tina Fitzgerald

Chair J. Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Motion to approve agenda. Suggestion by T. Guetter to add to the agenda a brief discussion before lunch of paper critical of DNR's Invasive Species Program. Motion to approve amended agenda by J. Dauphinais and second by J. Boettcher. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2019 by J. Dauphinais and second by J. Boettcher. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting Summary:

- Committee discussed a published paper that is critical of Minnesota DNR's aquatic invasive species program.
- Committee made changes to their charter concerning election of the Chair and Vice Chair, absences, having a stand-by list of potential candidates, and defining what a simple majority is. Changes are subject to the approval of the DNR Commissioner.
- Committee started the process to create an annual report of accomplishments for 2019.
- Committee elected a Chair and Vice Chair for 2020. **J. Johnson** will continue as Chair. **J. Dauphinais** will serve as Vice Chair.
- Committee collected priorities from departing Committee members. The Committee will consider these priorities as it moves forward.
- Committee celebrated the contributions of five Committee members whose terms end in 2019: **J. Deurr, T. Guetter, B. Halbakken Fischburg, P. Hamilton, and D. Strong.**

Motions & Actionable Items:

- **T. Fitzgerald** will post on Basecamp DNR monitoring protocols.

- **P. Hamilton** will post on Basecamp information on how lake associations can partner with local governments to purchase equipment through State Surplus Property Division.
- **P. Hamilton** will post on Basecamp the website link to see “State of Science” survey, and he will share his notes.
- Committee Charter Revision: Motion to move the vote for Chair and Vice Chair from January to December. Motion passed unanimously.
- Committee Charter Revision: Motion to ask a member who has missed four meetings to give up their seat. Motion passed, but an official change to the Charter depends on approval of the DNR Commissioner.
- **J. Johnson** will begin a bulleted list of Committee accomplishments and share the list with Committee members so they can add detail to it. **J. Dauphinais** will put together a section on the Committee’s accomplishments with regards to non-native phragmites.

Committee Member Updates

Members are asked to only share updates directly relevant to the Committee’s roles and responsibilities.

- **M. Alverson:** Nothing to report.
- **T. Guetter:** Finishing up readiness response plan. Getting comments from Clemson University before finalization. Working with lake associations and county AIS coordinator and looking at properties to enter lake, if needed for an emergency response action. New staff person to help with treatment program this coming year. Also has interns who monitor 18 lakes. Each month, they go out looking for invasive species. **J. Johnson** says Wisconsin DNR has a good program set up for monitoring protocols. DNR has similar protocols and **T. Fitzgerald** will post them on Basecamp. **J. Johnson** says it is a good program and scalable. High degree of accuracy, according to **D. Jensen**.
- **R. Imdieke:** Reevaluating money spent on I-lids. Seeing few violations. Group is split. Deterrent effect, but can’t use it to prove violations. Maintenance costs and viewing of videos take up time.
- **N. Baer:** Not much going on with his lake association right now.
- **C. DuBose:** Battling phragmites. Did treatments last winter. Removed plant mass. Sprayed this summer, and achieved good results. Involved with One Watershed One Plan process. Struggling with organizational aspect. Fifteen partners. Half are metro and half are non-metro, so two different pools of money. **J. Johnson** asks how much of the phragmites is new and how much is ongoing management. Pretty much all is under new management. Using Imazapyr. Hired an applicator (Lake Management).
- **P. Hamilton:** Vegetation survey for better understanding of impact of curly leaf treatments. Lake associations should know that they can purchase equipment through State Surplus Property Division if they form a relationship with an LGU. Norway Lake partnered with Cass County. **P. Hamilton** will post info on Basecamp on how to work with them. Cost for a piece of equipment would have only been \$5,000 instead of \$150,000. STEM survey entitled, “State of Science.” Looking at other countries in addition to U.S. Shocking that 45% in U.S. said they only believe science that aligns with their personal beliefs. 80% said they trust scientists. 88% trust science. Many don’t pursue careers in science due to math requirements. Scientists need to share their research in easy to understand language. **P. Hamilton** will post on Basecamp the website link to see the results of the survey, and he will share his notes. Science for Scientists Conference. They pair science grad students with classrooms. Grad student comes 18 times in a year to a class to teach lessons. Establishes aspirational role models. **D. Jensen** asks if there is a difference in gender responses on the survey. Females

have more interest in global benefits than individual benefits. Females respond to content when it is in context.

Member updates continued

- **D. Strong:** Working with tribal communities. Tribal members are not knowledgeable on AIS. Working with wild rice project at the University of Minnesota.
- **K. Taylor:** Chinese mystery snails. Opened up ice to show that snails migrate from shallow water in summer to deeper water in winter. Looking at possible study that may model a Judas carp technique to harvest snails. 1854 Treaty Authority has cameras that will look in 10-foot-deep water to find them. If found, will use a sediment scoop to remove them. Will keep committee apprised. **H. Wolf** says DASH (Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting) system may be applicable. **K. Taylor** will look at migration in January. Also looking for rusty crayfish in wild rice waters. Partnering with community college to get youth involved. Doing RFP. Will happen next summer if funded. Did career panel – Women in Science. Discouraging that most a master's degree is required. **H. Wolf** says that's not true. B.S. is fine in many cases. Get your foot in the door and work your way up. **P. Hamilton** says Seagate Technologies is expanding internship opportunities for high school students. **D. Jensen** says he has seen change in gender representation. 60% women at a recent AIS gathering.
- **J. Deurr:** AIS technical committee for new ABYC standards will meet. Try to understand what happens next. He encourages everyone to attend boat shows and ask vendors if they are aware of the ABYC recommendations. Also, ask vendors what they are doing to incorporate the ABYC recommendations into their designs. They need to hear from the public that this is something boat manufacturers need to do to stay competitive.
- **J. Boettcher:** Carver County Water Management meeting held on Monday. Issue of raking weeds out of accesses had been proposed. Reminded Committee that a letter of recommendation had gone out from this Committee to LGUs doing inspections to have inspectors rake washed up vegetation at accesses. Results, according to **J. Johnson**, were a range of responses. We're already doing it. We have no interest. Lawyers won't approve. Most said they were already doing it. Carver County did raking and wanted to observe what the results were the next year. Are plants at the access still a problem? **J. Boettcher** says if there are still plants at the access, they should be raked. Don't just observe. Looking at corralling goldfish for removal. Benton Lake carp removal. Removed 5,000 more carp this year. Third harvest on a 29-acre lake. Found zebra mussels in Lotus Lake, and people are upset. Where did they come from? That is not a question that can be easily answered. Maybe if genetic testing was done, you could connect it with an area of the state that has genetic similarities. Phragmites tour with the Committee was great. Not long afterwards, he left on vacation and saw phragmites all over the Mediterranean (Italy, France, Spain, etc.). **J. Dauphinais** asks if he has found phragmites in Carver County. He hasn't looked. Hears about people asking about the process for delisting a lake for zebra mussels. Reason is they want to sell their house and feel that they can get a better price if the lake isn't listed as zebra mussel-infested.
- **J. Dauphinais:** Carp management in Fish Lake area. Under ice winter seining planned for this winter. Inspector report from Three Rivers Park District. Turned away 3 boats with zebra mussels. Seeing a lot of boat traffic from Medicine Lake, which has starry stonewort. Coon Creek phragmites battle continues. Treated all 14 sites. DNR has post-treatment monitoring protocols. Big range of damage - 90% to just 10%. Used Imazapyr, which works on the roots. Metro counties have been organizing after the MAISRC Showcase to deal with phragmites. Keegan Lund of the DNR is involved. Kerry Taylor of Anoka Conservation will write a grant for \$50,000 for Metro-wide phragmites treatments. Will find out next year. First, need to make a list of

locations and get property owner permissions. Anoka County AIS program meeting. Well represented by lake associations and optimistic attitudes. Paying for overtime for law enforcement to enforce AIS laws. Educating businesses and elementary schools. **N. Baer** asks if Washington County is part of grant proposal. Yes, they have been cooperating. Hennepin County is spending their own money, so they are doing it independently, but they support the effort by other neighboring counties by writing a letter of support for the grant application.

Member updates continued

- **J. Johnson:** City of Maple Grove is going to be connected to Justine's phragmites management efforts. Lake Minnetonka Conservation District and the Lake Minnetonka Association is moving forward on data analysis. Conservation District put data on their website. Conservation District is interested in looking at milfoil management and follow-up.
- **N. Phelps:** Busy on campus. Presentation on spiny waterflea economic impacts via a Webinar. Live on December 19th at noon. Opportunity to ask questions. Will be recorded. January 24th on St. Paul campus at 11:30, there will be a panel discussion with managers about invasive species and their connection with water quality and water quantity. Finalized research needs for upcoming year. RFP in first week of January. Some ideas came out of SAISAC suggestions. Projects would begin in Jan. 2021. **N. Baer** asks about study on economic impacts of Eurasian watermilfoil on property values. No data to share yet.
- **D. Jensen:** Participated remotely in the federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force meeting in Virginia. Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! Web site portal is nearly complete. Participated in Invasive Crayfish Collaborative meeting in Ann Arbor. A lot of work happening with rusty and red swamp crayfish and their prevention, control and management. Use of pesticides and CO2. Gave presentation on Mississippi River Basin bait fish study conducted by Jeff Gunderson (former MN Sea Grant director). Involved in Organisms in Trade (OIT) ad hoc committee meeting to identify priorities. MISAC met to discuss MN state plan for invasive species and possible revisions. Should have it drafted in January. Sea Grant will get grant dollars to work with tribes on AIS. Will also fund a tribal member undergraduate student intern. Goldfish infestation in Duluth. Getting permits, but came through too late to do anything this fall. Will try next year. Site review team process went well for Minnesota Sea Grant. Thank you for your support.

DNR Updates

- **T. Fitzgerald:** Brought a one-page Community-Based Social Marketing handout to summarize the work DNR has done with consultants. You can go to the DNR's new webpage to view all the reports in detail. Just type "behavior change" in the search box on the DNR's website and it will take you to the page. Now we're working on a grants program to help LGUs implement CBSM strategies. Grants will be available for the 2020 season.
- **H. Wolf:** 61 applications for advisory committee openings. Will be reviewing those and making recommendations to the Commissioner. Emphasis is always on maintaining diversity on the Committee.
- **N. Phelps** asks about noxious weed advisory status on non-native phragmites. Voted unanimously to move it up to "regulated control." Goes to MDA Commissioner to finalize. As far as DNR is concerned, it would become a prohibited aquatic invasive species instead of its current unlisted status. This is similar to purple loosestrife. **J. Johnson** asked about funding for Julie Bohnen, MAISRC non-native phragmites researcher. DNR plans to give her GLRI grant money for non-native phragmites work. Matchmaking and collaboration needs to be coordinated. Julia would be perfect. **C. DuBose** asks about grant for replacing non-native phragmites with

something else. MPCA grant. Active. Up to \$1 million. Unsure as to whether or not this is a possibility. Looking for less expensive options that won't cost \$1 million dollars per facility. Monitor and pull any new growth. Will get BMPs to the Committee. **T. Guetter** wants to know if it is possible to change Chinese mystery snail from regulated to prohibited. **H. Wolf** says they would need to first do a risk assessment. Look at how wide spread it is. Like curly leaf pondweed, is it so wide spread, it is not worth reclassifying it? **D. Jensen** says there isn't a lot of research on the impacts of Chinese mystery snail. A lot is unknown. For example, why are there die-offs every 3 years or so. **K. Taylor** has seen them attached to her boat. Very small. She thinks they are being moved via boats. They are live-bearers according to **D. Jensen**. They also have an operculum to close up and can live for several days that way.

- **P. Hunsicker:** Reminds the Committee that the four regional AIS workshops start next week (December 11 in Park Rapids), and Committee members are welcome to attend. Can listen in on good conversations about AIS prevention successes and challenges happening around the State.

Discussion of Paper Critical of DNR's Invasive Species Program

T. Guetter: Received a link to a paper distributed by MNCOLA that is very critical of DNR's Aquatic Invasive Species Program, and is also very critical of lakeshore property owners and their attitudes towards aquatic vegetation of any kind. She took offense at jabs, many of which weren't true. Paper contained good provocative thoughts ecologically, and the researchers who wrote the paper are very well respected, but felt their paper went too far. Was it an official DNR paper or not? Included a DNR address, so it was hard to tell. **H. Wolf** says the Invasive Species Program was displeased when the article came out about a year or so ago. Authors were supposed to change DNR address, but they didn't, so it is out there. We're trying to repair those relationships that were damaged when the paper came out. It does not reflect the views of DNR. **D. Jensen** says that Mark Davis is a University researcher in MN who also supports the concept (exotic versus invasive) promoted in this paper that invasive species are not all "bad;" they are here and we should embrace their biodiversity instead of spending millions of dollars to rid them from our state. Much of the information in the paper is based on things that were done in MN and other states in the 1990's, and many things have changed. We've learned a lot since then. **K. Taylor** recommends that Committee members read a book entitled, *The War on Invasive Species*. **H. Wolf** says members can express their concerns to Ann Pierce, DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division Deputy Director. **T. Guetter** will reply to MNCOLA's president and copy Ann.

Many Committee members felt uncomfortable with the concept that AIS is just another part of the environment, and doesn't deserve special attention. Look at what starry stonewort has done to Lake Koronis or what zebra mussels and spiny water flea have done to Lake Mille Lacs. These invasive species, and others, deserve our attention and our action.

Review and Discuss Committee Charter and Suggest Recommended Language Changes

- What is a quorum, according to this Committee? A "simple majority" of the voting members present/on the phone/on-line.
- Committee can make recommendations for changes, but the DNR Commissioner would need to sign off on them.
- Concept of having a stand-by list of approved candidates to fill in for any member who leaves their term early. This would need the approval of the DNR Commissioner.

- Discussion of when to vote for Chair and Vice Chair. In December or January. Issue is that if it is done in December, the new members will not have a vote since they don't arrive until January or February. Some Committee members felt uncomfortable voting for a stranger they just met earlier in the meeting. **T. Guetter** thinks you want someone with experience as the Chair. **P. Hamilton** suggests extending the terms of the Chair and Vice Chair until April, so new people who come on in January would have some knowledge of candidates. **J. Boettcher** says on one of his other committees, the Chair and Vice Chair can't be new. You have to have experience with the committee before you can lead it. Motion by **J. Boettcher** to move the vote to December, so Chair and Vice Chair are seated by the time the new Committee members join in January or February. New Chair and Vice Chair would start their offices in January. Motion seconded by **R. Imdieke**. Motion passed unanimously.
- Four or more absences (not present either in-person or via phone/online) in a year and the member would be asked to relinquish their seat. There is obviously wiggle room for someone going through health or other issues. Motion by **T. Guetter**. Second by **C. DuBose**. Motion is passed upon approval by the DNR Commissioner. Anyone who is asked to give up their seat would be replaced with an approved name on the stand-by list.

2019 Committee Annual Report

- See handout done by **J. Johnson**.
- Wrote letter of support.
- DNR's Angling, AIS and Access meetings.
- No more than 4-5 pages. Is a two-sided document enough? The shorter the better. First report in 2013 was 14 pages. Who is going to read 14 pages? Some years were consolidated to 4 pages. Last report (2018) was 7 pages.
- Who can help put it together? Often have it ready for Roundtable in January, but is that necessary? Include photos from the phragmites field trip. Use our meeting notes. **J. Dauphinais** volunteered to do phragmites write up with pictures. **J. Johnson** will start putting together a bulleted list of accomplishments and other Committee members can add detail to it. Important to include legislative work to change status of phragmites. Calls for AIS surcharge increase, which happened. **N. Phelps** suggests that the Committee think of outcomes and not just what we learned or what we heard. For example, the Committee made recommendations to MAISRC on research priorities and MAISRC used them, and research on those topics is currently happening.
- Recipients of annual report: Roundtable – report can be on table. Environmental Committee chairs at the Legislature. MNCOLA, MISAC, Great lakes Panel. AMC reps can make sure AMC (Julie Ring) dispenses it. Who are legislative committee chairs? **C. Dubose** can put together a list of legislators to send report to. Emily Javens with MAWD can send it out to all the watershed districts. Leeann Buck with SWCDs. MNCOLA or Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates for distribution to lake associations. **N. Baer** will contact Jeff Forester. MAISRC will send it as part of one of their e-newsletters. **P. Hunsicker** and **T. Fitzgerald** can send it out to counties. DNR will look at using general GovDelivery service to distribute it. **N. Lalum** with Explore Minnesota can put it in an article and link to it in their bi-weekly newsletter. **J. Deurr** can send it to the list of boat manufacturers in the state. Presidents on Bass, Walleye, Muskie federations? **K. Taylor** will send it to inter-tribal invasive species group. MN Chippewa tribe and MN Indian Affairs. **P. Hamilton** will send it to Dave Carlson with MOHAW and think about other education circles it could be sent to. Minnesota Traditions.

Collection of Committee Priorities from Departing Members

- **T. Guetter:** The 21-day-dry law for docks and lifts. Addressing sea legs. Continue research and science – take a methodical approach to assessing phenology, ecology and management. Adaptive management. Back in the day all chemical applicators and lake managers met once a year or biannually to talk about what’s working and what hasn’t as well as new technologies. It was hosted by DNR and open to anyone who did aquatic plant management. **H. Wolf** says DNR could start those again.
- **P. Hamilton:** He heard a 3M science advocate say “our goals need to relate to what is strategic in the short term and significant in the long term.” This Committee does that. He is involved in something for the long term – changing science standards. The challenge is to reach out and open the doors. Building partnerships is necessary. He is encouraged that the DNR is reaching out to new constituencies – hunting and fishing. Build new groups. No Child Left Inside program. He reminds the Committee that \$30,000 to the University of Boulder could create interactive simulation for AIS for educators. Suggests to use communication dollars to use social media demographics to appeal to target audiences with targeted messages. He came on as funding was dropping and had no resources as a lake association. A past meeting he suggested tongue and cheek – if there is no money, should we disband this group? The Committee has been engaging and has good synergy.
- **D. Strong:** Cash of ideas. What happened to the uniform signs for boat washes/decontamination stations? Listing of people to contact. So people are not re-creating a wheel. Sees it a lot in lake associations. Water patrol or rescue squads could do AIS checks and be educated on AIS. **N. Baer** adds that Stearns County Sheriff talked to his association and it was very helpful. Majority of water patrol are Sheriff Dept. because they have to be peace officers. **T. Guetter** asks about the standard symbol for the decontamination stations. **H. Wolf** says DOT had issues with the icon – it needs to be tested and that takes time and money. **T. Fitzgerald** adds it is also challenging because most units are mobile, therefore a permanent roadside sign would only work for stationary units. **D. Strong** says he uses temporary signs for other work near roadsides. Could the top 10 fund this? It could be easier on county or city roads; state highway is a different issue. Could ask DOT about temporary signage. What about a QR code for decon sites on signs?
- **J. Deurr:** He was focused on one thing – boat industry. “I’ve learned so damn much here.” He encourages everyone to go to the boat shows and pick on the guys that aren’t following the rules. Tech report has been out for 2 years. He doesn’t see traction in the industry yet. Apply peer pressure any way you can. Ask the sales people “what has you company done to manufacture boats so they don’t transport water or AIS?” Then refer them to the ABYC technical report. For instance, build the drain plugs so it drains everything, fast draining, close up strikes, easy access to drain plugs, etc. **N. Lalum** asks if there is a sticker that could show they are “AIS compliant.” Not yet. Research by MAISRC has been invaluable. Any support you can give them is great. Behavior change thing. Do more in this group. Changing people’s attitudes and awareness, too much negative out there right now. **R. Imdieke** says ticketing is a motivator. **T. Guetter** is there a black light for Muskie fishermen to see in the dark – would the plants glow? **J. Dauphinais** suggests a regular light would work just as well.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2020

- **N. Baer** nominated **J. Johnson** to continue to serve as Chair. No other candidates were nominated. **J. Johnson** accepted the nomination and was re-elected Chair of the Committee.
- Two candidates were nominated to serve as Vice Chair: **N. Baer** and **J. Dauphinais**. **J. Dauphinais** received 8 votes. **N. Baer** received 2 votes. **J. Dauphinais** was elected as Vice Chair.

Wrap-Up

- Committee celebrated the contributions of five Committee members whose terms end in 2019: **J. Deurr, T. Guetter, B. Halbakken Fischburg, P. Hamilton, and D. Strong.**
- Next meeting of the Committee is Thursday, January 23, 2020. Wendy Crowell, DNR AIS Management Consultant will be invited to discuss invasive aquatic plant management permitting, renewed grants, new directions, etc.
- New members to the Committee should be in place at the January meeting and they will be brought up to date with an overview of DNR's Invasive Species Program. They should also receive a welcome packet, and the Committee will review the Charter with them. Sub-committees should be mentioned as an option even though they aren't too active at the moment.
- Future meetings could include Gretchen Hansen with MAISRC to talk about invasive crayfish and her research on the impact of AIS on MN game fish, invasive snails from DNR Heidi Rantala, spiny waterfleas from UMN-Duluth Don Branstrator (**D. Jensen** suggested the April meeting would be best for this), Organisms in Trade (OIT) from Chelsey Blanke DNR Invasive Organisms in Trade Specialist.

Adjournment at 3:00 p.m.

Next meeting will be Thursday January 23, 2020 at the DNR Sauk Rapids office. This will be the first meeting with new members. On the draft agenda is Wendy Crowell, DNR AIS Management Consultant.

Members in the front row (left to right **D. Strong, P. Hamilton, J. Deurr, and T. Guetter**) and **B. Halbakken Fischburg** (not pictured) terms of service came to an end in December 2019. The DNR is beyond grateful for their years of service on the Committee. A sincere **THANK YOU** to each member for the dedication, time, ingenuity and enthusiasm you contributed to this Committee. Your enthusiastic contributions reflects the passion of Minnesotans and the importance of protecting the state's legacy of water.

