

Minnesota Statewide AIS Advisory Committee (SAISAC)

January 24, 2019 Meeting Minutes MN DNR Office, Sauk Rapids, MN

Members Present: Jim Boettcher, Norman Baer, Tera Guetter, Kelsey Wenner, Justine Dauphinais (via phone),

James Johnson, Paul Hamilton, Donovan Strong

Members Absent: Jaime Jost, Mary Alverson, Barb Halbakken Fischburg, John Deurr, Eric Johnson

Ex-officio Members Present: Doug Jensen

Ex-officio Members Absent: Norman Deschampe, Nick Phelps, Nicole Lalum

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

Vice-Chair J. Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:17 a.m. to allow people more time to arrive due to cold weather conditions and travel slowdowns

Agenda was amended due to low turnout. Elections of Chair and Vice-Chair will happen at the next meeting on February 28, 2019. Again, due to low turnout, conversations on 2019 priorities and speakers and topics will continue at the February meeting. Motion to approve amended agenda by J. Boettcher. Second by N. Baer. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of November 29, 2018 by N. Baer. Second by J. Boettcher. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting Summary:

- Committee decided who should receive copies of their 2018 Annual Report.
- Committee began discussing a process for choosing their priorities for 2019, and how to monitor their
 actions as well as actions by the DNR. They will create a matrix to track their progress as an officially
 recognized advisory committee to the DNR.
- Committee began discussing ideas for guest speakers in 2019. They will be closely related to Committee priority topics.

Motions & Actionable Items:

- T. Wolbers will share with the Committee their work priorities from 2013-2018.
- **J. Johnson** will draft a matrix/spreadsheet that the Committee can use to track actions associated with their 2019 priorities.

Handouts:

• Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Committee Priorities for 2018.

Committee Member Updates:

- J. Boettcher: Planning to attend the Carver County AIS Stakeholder's meeting. Looking at successes and challenges from last year. Focusing next year on cleaning vegetation growing or collecting close to access ramps. Especially milfoil that gathers at the ramps. Shared that Dr. McCartney says that one zebra mussel adult on a piece of plant that is transported is more dangerous than veligers transported via water. Trying to keep more inspectors on after school starts in the fall. Will look into hiring retired folks, who don't have to return to school.
- **K. Wenner:** Concentrating on AIS education. Taking kids ice fishing and talking about AIS. Involved in We Are Water event, which is a Dept. of Humanities traveling exhibit designed to engage conversations about the importance of clean water. Display will be set up at the Great Lakes Aquarium in Duluth from March 10th until April 22nd. Other events are associated with it. Finalizing Invasive Species Management Plan. Also doing site-specific plans. Using some Enbridge money and some Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) money to support AIS work.
- **D. Strong:** Preparing for spring. Reservation is becoming more active on natural resources issues with three conservation officers plus the chief. Only harvesting 5% of the wild rice crop due to humans not getting outdoors as much and not having strong connections to outdoors activities. Want to protect the resource so closing off ¼ of the lake to keep lily pads from taking over and outcompeting the wild rice. **K. Wenner** says that pickerel weed impacts wild rice.
- P. Hamilton: Update of Minnesota Education Standards. Emphasize analysis, design, and process over content. Draft responses are coming in. Encourages Committee members to review the draft and provide comment. Transition to new standards may be overwhelming for teachers. Once the committee finishes its work, they forward the proposed standards to the education commissioner. In the 2020 education guidelines for the LCCMR, water resources, environmental education and AIS are priorities. Update on use of weevils in lakes with Eurasian watermilfoil. Summer project will be done on Town Line Lake in Cass County. Based on success at Christmas Lake. Discussed possibly including Lake Independence as a trial project since they don't do a lot of chemical treatments on that lake, and the Three Rivers Park District owns a lot of the shoreline. Stresses importance of collaboration. Pine River wants to replace the dam downtown with a riffle dam that has the potential to move fish upstream. Funding could come from a Lessard-Sams proposal. Collaboration leads to better communication. Curly leaf pondweed was bad last year on Norway Lake in Cass County, but it seemed to only stick around for a short amount of time. Learned that the winds moved it across the lake. Harvester can scoop up the floating vegetation. Wonders if that movement will impact any additional distribution of the plant this spring. According to J. Johnson, it can depend on sediment types. In mucky soils, turions will do better.
- **N. Baer:** Planning for 2019 open water season. An AIS Detector will come to talk with the lake association in 2019 and possibly help them with aquatic plant identification. With regards to new education standards, recommends hands-on activities for students.

Committee member updates continued

- T. Guetter: Attended the DNR Roundtable. Good session. Heard from new DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen and Governor Tim Walz. Great energy. Somewhat surprised that we are still discussing the topic that never seems to get resolved: needed critical funding to adequately support the important work of the agency. We need to get other groups women, Hispanics, etc. buying fishing and hunting licenses because young white males don't seem interested anymore. We are also missing an opportunity to reach out to the faith communities. Loss of hunters is also related to poverty. Many people don't have enough extra income to pay for hunting and fishing licenses, as well as expensive gear. Also need to overcome bad feelings between hunters and non-hunters. Need to form more private-public partnerships for natural resources funding. Message from the Commissioner and the Governor was to make Minnesota even better. Didn't feel the tension between anglers and lake people at this Roundtable. Better communication. Working closely with Prior Lake Watershed District in Scott County on their AIS issues. Referring those with questions about flowering rush to Mississippi State, which has done great work in Minnesota.
- **D. Jensen:** Federal shutdown is affecting national level AIS panels and projects. Some websites are currently unavailable until after the shutdown is solved. Federal funding for AIS is on hold. 2020 budget proposal by Trump administration will probably not include funding for Sea Grant again. Looking for support letters once again, which greatly helped last time. Will be recruiting for 4 interns this summer. Working through funding issues. Will be able to cover 50 events if they can get 4 fully funded interns. Recently co-hosted a 2-day Habitattitude event. 365 people, which was not as big as in the past. On Saturday, there is a Habitattitude surrender event in the Twin Cities. Expecting 400 attendees. St. Louis County is funding 7 different AIS projects for 2019. Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC) is revising their risk assessment for terrestrial and aquatic invasives. Update on sea lamprey control: need more treatment in upstream tributaries when the lamprey spawn.
- J. Johnson: According to a recent CD3 update provided by Hennepin County, design standards matter at public accesses. Striping and signage help guide people to the cleaning stations to use tools at their disposal. Involved in a lake management plan and working with the City to support it. Generally, City supports costs associated with improving water quality because they want to meet water quality standards. Problem is they don't seem as supportive of costs associated with AIS work. T. Guetter says she and others suggested to the MPCA years ago to list AIS as a biological impairment. This suggestion fell on deaf ears.
- **J. Johnson** suggests the Committee should figure out a formal way to include former Committee members' opinions on things the current Committee is working on. Former members are included in Basecamp, but are there other ways to get them more involved?
- J. Dauphinais: Working with non-native phragmites. Working with Julia Bonan and Anoka County. For Ham Lake treatment (50 feet by 50 feet patch), did a September herbicide treatment followed up by a mechanical mowing and removal in winter. Will follow up with similar regimen in 2019. Big issue is private versus public lands. USDA has funding for treatment. Cost sharing with landowner. T. Guetter asks if phragmites was in original seed mix. Probably. For erosion control, there are rules set up for seed mixes, but some have non-natives included. J. Dauphinais suggests following BWSR's native seed recommendations. AIS is being considered in comprehensive water management plans in places like Andover, Coon Rapids and Blaine. There is an upcoming seminar by Barr Engineering on starry stonewort and zebra mussel rapid response. Says that it will include a DNR panel. H. Wolf isn't familiar with this seminar. She did some quick

research and found out it is February 6th from 2-4 at Barr Engineering's main office in Minneapolis with web transmissions to other Barr offices around the state. Includes MAISRC personnel, as well as Keegan Lund and Kylie Cattoor from the DNR.

DNR Updates

- **H. Wolf** says that Barb Naramore is staying on with the new DNR Commissioner, Sarah Strommen. This is good as she is brilliant and knows the EWR Division. Also, Jess Richards previously Division Director of Lands and Minerals (LAM) will now be an Assistant Commissioner overseeing EWR and LAM under the new Commissioner.
- An update on the public access discussion that includes members of the Advisory Committee: April Rust is coordinating with Brian Stenquist to facilitate the discussions between anglers and lakeshore property owners.
- J. Boettcher says he saw the new Commissioner at the Roundtable and she seems very approachable as she moved through the crowds. H. Wolf says the DNR will be hiring someone to do more stakeholder engagement, which is a priority for the new Commissioner. D. Jensen asks if the new Commissioner and the Governor support this AIS Advisory Committee. Not sure, but the new Commissioner and the Governor support stakeholder engagement, as evidenced by their desire to hire someone in the DNR to specifically address that. Plus, the Governor has stated that AIS work is important.
- **H. Wolf** says that 2 new county commissioners will be appointed by the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) to the Statewide AIS Advisory Committee.
- Wright County mandatory inspection discussions continue to take place. There will be another meeting on January 28th, and on February 8th the county commissioners will meet. They will continue to hear citizen input on February 12th at 2:00 p.m.
- H. Wolf says that federal grants to support AIS work with the DNR have continued to run. DNR can still keep spending federal grant money. We just can't get answers to questions as federal personnel are not in their offices.
- Interesting findings by MAISRC on correctly identifying the differences between native and non-native phragmites. The feeling was that you needed DNA testing to be sure, but recently discovered that in-field identification techniques are 95% accurate. Also finding that non-native phragmites is spreading from wastewater treatment plants. 17 specific treatment plants have been identified. Working closely with the MPCA, but funding is an issue. Funding from MPCA is typically for projects over one million dollars and requires lots of regulations. Looking for other funding opportunities. Currently, non-native phragmites is listed as a restricted noxious weed, so it can't be replanted. If it was listed as a prohibited noxious weed, it would require removal. J. Johnson asks if phragmites could be treated like reed canary grass. T. Wolbers says that Laura Van Riper (DNR Terrestrial Invasive Species expert) says that reed canary grass has high agricultural use, so it is not regulated. K. Wenner says if you have an alternative replacement for people, they will be more supportive. J. Johnson asks if MAISRC will come up with recommendations. Yes, according to H. Wolf. K. Wenner says to try tapping into the railroads for funding. Since passing trains help spread it, they might be willing to contribute funds towards its management. She mentioned this to N. Phelps. H. Wolf says something like this could use a coordinator since so many players are involved —

- counties, the State of Minnesota, other states, the federal government, etc. **K. Wenner** adds that phragmites can be problematic for wild rice. That's a perfect habitat for phragmites, too. Also, you can't use chemical treatments near wild rice beds. This could be a big motivator for action the fact that phragmites competes with wild rice.
- **H. Wolf** says that the new administration for the DNR will reach out to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to get a new representative appointed to this Advisory Committee to replace Mike Hoff who retired.
- **T. Wolbers** and **P. Hunsicker** filled the Committee in on upcoming regional workshops with counties and their partners. SAISAC members are welcome to attend. Good conversations about the successes and challenges counties are experiencing in their AIS prevention work. 4 workshops around the state beginning with St. Peter on the 29th and Brainerd on the 31st. Others are in Fergus Falls on Feb. 7th and Andover on Feb. 21st. These meetings are organized in conjunction with Adam Doll's off-season meetings with local governments that have delegation agreements with the DNR to do watercraft inspection. Those meetings are in the morning and the regional meetings are in the afternoon.

Update on Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM)

- T. Wolbers gave an update on the Community-Based Social Marketing work with our contractor.
- We have the preliminary report of the expert panel results for the CBSM project. Behaviors associated with the following pathways were assessed: watercraft, live bait, aquarium trade, live plant trade, and gear and equipment. They were ranked based on impact (how likely the action would prevent the spread of AIS in MN), uptake (how likely the audience would be to adopt the behavior), and market potential (how many people are doing it now). The contractor will likely recommend we do some sort of research on most of the pathways, so we will still have some prioritization to do, based on the time/funding we have for the project. With a multitude of potential areas of focus, this CBSM ranking process is one method to identify areas where we can affect the most significant change. The top ranked behaviors were:

Pathway	Source	Behaviors
Retail Plant Trade	Planting of high-risk plants (intentional or unintentional)	Accurately identify and only sell non/low-risk species (retailers)
Aquarium Trade	Release of unwanted aquatic and terrestrial species (enthusiasts, school science programs, classroom aquariums)	Dispose of unwanted plants in the garbage
Gear and Equipment	Attachment to and movement of docks, lifts, rafts, anchors, and associated equipment	Air dry for at least 21 days

• General assessment by pathways: Watercraft pathway ranked medium, because it had very low market potential, that is, most people are already taking those actions. But watercraft still ranked highest for impact – they are high risk. Therefore, barrier/benefit research might not need to be done for watercraft, but could add a layer of CBSM to current programs. Aquarium trade and live plant trade pathway behaviors ranked high overall. The process shows some behaviors are more beneficial to target than others – e.g. euthanizing unwanted aquatic pets, while high impact, has very low uptake and market potential. Live bait pathway behaviors ranked high overall as well. The gear and equipment pathway was assessed for multiple audiences including: waterfowl hunters, researchers, scuba divers, anglers, shoreland owners, and lake service providers. Drying docks and lifts for 21 days was one of the highest ranked behaviors overall. There are behaviors that cross multiple audiences (e.g. remove visible debris) and audiences that cross multiple

pathways (e.g. anglers with live bait have watercraft, gear, and bait), which provides additional opportunities for investigation as well. We will share reports when they are final and continue to update the Committee on this project.

Distribution of Committee's Annual Report Discussion

- Members discussed groups and individuals that should receive their report and member(s) responsible for sending it to them.
- **D. Jensen** will send to the Great Lakes Panel, Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC), and the Lake Superior group, as well as have printed copies available at various outreach events.
- T. Wolbers and P. Hunsicker have already shared it with the list of county AIS contacts.
- K. Wenner will share with the Duluth CISMA and the Minnesota Tribal Executive Committee.
- **P. Hamilton** sent a request to Jeff Forester with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates requesting he share it with his list of lake associations/lakeshore property owners.
- **T. Guetter** requests it be sent to the DNR Commissioner's office with an invitation to attend a future Committee meeting. **J. Johnson** will draft something for review and then send it.
- Members requested it be sent to the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and municipalities
 (cities/townships) perhaps through the Minnesota Association of Townships. This could be done by J.
 Johnson as well.
- T. Guetter asks if Bob Meier (DNR Assistant Commissioner for Legislative Affairs) could send it to the
 Minnesota Legislature. H. Wolf responds, no it is not a DNR report, it is your Committee's report. The
 Committee can send it directly to the legislature. Someone suggested attaching it to the legislative
 recommendations that will be shared with the legislature. It could be sent to the Chairs of the various
 environmental committees their contact information is online.
- Members will share as needed with various organizations and individuals, to increase awareness about the Committee.
- T. Guetter will have it sent out by the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts.

Discussion of Committee's Priorities for 2019 and Potential Guest Speakers

Since there were only a handful of Committee members present, they decided to hold off on setting priorities until the next meeting. Discussions were focused on historical Committee priorities and how those were set, role of the Committee today, a brief review of their 2018 priorities, a proposed matrix to track their actions with regards to priorities, logistics for future meetings, and suggestions for speakers.

• **T. Guetter** suggests that the Committee draft a matrix to follow priorities and any advice given to the DNR. Was a specific recommendation made? What was it? Did the DNR use our advice? What were the results? She would also like the new Commissioner to meet with the Committee as it has been years since that last happened.

Priorities and Guest Speakers Discussion continued

- **H. Wolf** suggests that the Committee's goals be attainable, clear and direct. This Committee was formed, in part, to discuss relevant issues pertaining to AIS, and through robust discussion, to ultimately reach consensus on recommendations/advice to the DNR.
- **J. Johnson** suggests to make a list of the issues and then all members can populate the matrix/spreadsheet together. For example, one column might look at "impediments."
- **H. Wolf** suggests that the Committee create a working document that they could edit and share with everyone on the Committee. A Google Doc can work, but some organizations have trouble accessing Google Docs. Perhaps a Drop Box would work.
- **D. Strong** suggests sending out and reviewing the 2015, 2016 and 2017 Committee priorities. The top four priorities from the previous version are the same today.
- J. Johnson says if we don't have the ability to affect things as a Committee, we shouldn't deal with those. We should focus on issues where we can be most productive. The process should be iterative. Goals need to be super clear. Also need to know if they are on-going efforts. He thought it strange when he first started on the Committee that he was asked to come up with priorities right away instead of hearing from the DNR on their needs. He would like priority subjects to be discussed with expert speakers so the Committee could ask them what they need from the Committee. For example, the idea of adding the term "dry" to the current Clean, Drain, Dispose slogan could be discussed by MAISRC, the DNR, and the Committee. H. Wolf says dry is always included as a recommended prevention action, but it is not enforceable. This would require a change in statute. J. Johnson and P. Hamilton supported taking this off the list another member suggested moving it to the Communications category instead of the Legislative category and changing it to read something about how DNR communications efforts should continue to include "dry" as a recommended practice and should try to emphasize it more.
- **T. Guetter** asks what the DNR's legislative priorities are. **H. Wolf** says they aren't public yet. They have to first be approved by the Governor before they can be made public. That said, it is still helpful for the Committee to say "we have a need," for example funding. DNR can always address those recommendations internally and determine if they are feasible. **T. Guetter** asks, what is tentative legislative plan? Are invasive aquatic plant management grants on the table? **H. Wolf** says that's all linked, if we get a surcharge increase to take care of the structural deficit, if money remains available, then we could fund grants again.
- **T. Guetter** suggests to write a letter now to the legislature. **H. Wolf** says we can send the budget once it is public, then the Committee could send a letter of support.
- **P. Hamilton** says our advice is on what priorities should be, as well as action items related to those issues. Difficult territory.
- K. Wenner says that the current committee doesn't do much with legislative activities.
- D. Strong says on past Committees we had a wide variety of representation. Jeff Forester and Gabe Jabbour did a lot of lobbying at the capitol for this group and were very vocal on how any decisions impacted them.
 P. Hunsicker says in the recruitment process DNR tries to represent the state diversity, geographically, and stakeholder background. H. Wolf adds that having legislative connections was not a characteristic we necessarily looked for in membership specifically. P. Hunsicker reminds the group that past members like Jeff and Gabe are available to consult with.

Priorities and Guest Speakers Discussion continued

- J. Johnson tries to get clarification on the processes it should be that DNR tells us what their policies are, we review/suggest, and then DNR goes to the legislature as needed with those recommendations. T.
 Guetter asks, where do you see us fitting in? H. Wolf says where you see a need is important. We should check in with Ann Pierce, Ecological and Water Resources Deputy Director.
- **T. Guetter** says we come here and tell our stories, but we don't know where it goes. **K. Wenner** adds her area of comfort would be making recommendations to DNR, not directly to the legislature. It is hard for a group of "doers" to just give advice. But she feels they are fulfilling their role.
- **D. Strong** says the original spreadsheet of priorities had roles and responsibilities. Could also review the past annual reports to see what has been done. What can we handle right now during the legislative session? In his past experience as Vice Chair, when they get letters from the Committee, they do listen.
- **K. Wenner** says it would be helpful to have deadlines for next year to have legislative priorities submitted to the DNR. Or deadlines for MASIRC or other partners? **H. Wolf** says it is always circular. **D. Jensen** asks, when does it ramp up? **H. Wolf** says it is complicated and it depends. But if you want a statute change, you could tell her at any time.
- **J. Boettcher** suggests to get our priorities listed and by the end of April meeting, we have the legislative priorities set for next year.
- **J. Johnson** volunteers to populate the new matrix of priorities. He will include only the priorities from 2018, and we will discuss 2019 priorities next time.
- **K. Wenner** says that promoting higher AIS fines should be a priority of this Committee.
- **P. Hamilton** says that learning perspectives are just as important as coming to solutions.
- **T. Guetter** asks about APM and IAPM discussions to deal with conflicts involving the determination of no more than 15% of the littoral area can receive treatment. **H. Wolf** says that the two representatives Wendy Crowell and Jon Hanson will be hosting a joint meeting with their staff on February 14th. We should have more news to share after that. This is a long process of improving internal communication and best practices. The two program coordinators are both new, and strong relationships between them continue to be built. **J. Johnson** reminds everyone that LVMPs help lake groups get beyond the 15% littoral rule
- **D. Jensen** would like to see marbled crayfish, which self-clone, listed as a prohibited invasive species. **H. Wolf** says that the DNR will have two new positions that will address organisms in trade (OIT) and risk assessments.
- **J. Johnson** would prefer to have guest speakers that align with the priorities that we all want to discuss so we can make more informed decisions and give good advice to the DNR.
- **D. Jensen** suggests inviting Ken Donnelly as a speaker on Community-Based Social Marketing. He is the contractor working with the DNR. Also, Jeff Gunderson was contracted by the DNR for a bait study. Let's hear from him.
- **K. Wenner** suggests pairing up speakers with priorities, while also leaving room for "emerging topics." **J. Johnson** says that getting the DNR perspective is important, too.
- **D. Jensen** suggests a speaker to talk about AIS successes at the county level. An example was the dock and lift ordinance created by Otter Tail County.

Priorities and Guest Speakers Discussion continued

- **J. Johnson** suggests using **N. Phelps** and his position at MAISRC to get AIS researchers to present in person or via Skype.
- **P. Hamilton** suggests inviting one or two of the bigger lake service providers so we can understand the problem from their perspective.
- J. Johnson says it would be helpful to hear from applicators on what limits them from being successful.
- P. Hamilton says he took the lake service provider (LSP) class as a harvester it was sufficient. Would be helpful to hear about their business and employees. A few committee members are LSPs. We could ask April Rust (DNR AIS Training Coordinator) for contact ideas and she might also be able to present from the DNR perspective. J. Johnson asks, for what purpose? P. Hamilton says to address the issue of sale and movement of used equipment. D. Strong says the real issue is people using private equipment to haul. J. Johnson adds it also comes back to the need for lake groups to advocate that people only hire trained and certified LSPs.
- N. Baer says that for their association's Diquat treatment for CLP, the company gave them a quote for much
 more than is allowed per acre, according to the label. H. Wolf emphasizes that issues like that should be
 sent to DNR immediately.
- How about a discussion about the concerns with sea legs? Jackie Glaser with DNR enforcement could talk
 about the issues of enforcing any new laws related to sea legs and viewing them as a dock rather than as
 part of a watercraft.
- **T. Guetter** asks if there is anything specific DNR staff wrestle with and would like more advice on? **H. Wolf** says everything is on the table. Your diversity of perspectives is helpful. That's why information sharing is helpful here.
- **N. Baer** says DNR needs to avoid reduction in permitted treatment area without any communications on why it was reduced.
- J. Johnson asks if we are still having speakers on carp at an upcoming meeting. P. Hunsicker says we are still working to get a DNR Fisheries staff person, but yes that is still the plan. We have already confirmed with a representative from Carp Solutions to participate, too. T. Guetter says we thought there was already a group that addresses carp. H. Wolf says that was invasive carp. J. Johnson says that a conversation at the last SAISAC meeting involved conflicts between carp managers/harvesters and those with commercial fishing rights on the water body where common carp would be harvested. The commercial fisherman would have to first grant permission for carp to be harvested in their jurisdiction. J. Dauphinais says that as a past researcher on carp, they are managed as rough fish. One solution could be reclassifying carp. Issues with harvesters is that they are out of town, are too busy, want a certain size, and personality conflicts. Daryl Ellison with the west metro fisheries DNR helped her navigate this issue. H. Wolf says John Waters would be the DNR person to come speak on carp.
- The group would like Adam Doll as a guest speaker to talk about his residual water study.

Adjournment at 2:59 p.m.

Next meeting to be held at the MN DNR Sauk Rapids Office, 10:00AM-3:00PM, February 28, 2019. Tentatively scheduled to be part of the agenda is to conduct elections of Chair and Vice-Chair, to determine 2019 priorities, and to have a presentation on common carp management and challenges.