

Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Committee

2019 Annual Report

The Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Advisory Committee advises the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on its Aquatic Invasive Species Program. Its 15 members and four ex-officio members have a range of personal and professional experiences with AIS issues, represent different parts of the state, are demographically diverse with various recreational interests, have diverse educational backgrounds, and represent a range of private, nonprofit and public sector organizations actively engaged in AIS issues.

More information about the Committee can be found on their webpage: www.dnr.state.mn.us/aisadvisory

Actions and Accomplishments

The Committee took action in the following ways in 2019:

In a letter to the DNR Commissioner, State Legislators, and Governor Walz:

Supported

- (1) increasing the 3-year watercraft surcharge to \$20,
- (2) ensuring funding for the DNR for AIS programs and to reinstate the invasive aquatic plant management grants, and
- (3) funding the vital work being conducted by the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) at the University of Minnesota.

Results: The surcharge was increased from \$5 to \$10.60, \$580,000 in grants to local partners will be available from DNR in 2020 for invasive aquatic plant management, and MAISRC received \$4 million over four years from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and \$510,000/year for two years through the Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources Finance Bill.

In a letter sent to local governments with watercraft inspection programs: recommended raking of boat ramps by watercraft inspectors to remove plant fragments at public water accesses in order to reduce the likelihood of vegetation being caught on trailers leaving the access.

Supported making the eradication of non-native Phragmites a DNR priority. In a letter to the DNR Commissioner and Minnesota Noxious Weed Advisory Committee, the AIS Advisory Committee supported (1) DNR classifying non-native Phragmites as a prohibited aquatic invasive species, (2) Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) reclassifying it from a restricted noxious weed to a prohibited-control noxious weed, and (3) providing financial support to landowners and managers conducting control work. **Result:** The MDA and DNR are in the process of reviewing nonnative Phragmites classifications.

In a letter to Minnesota boat manufactures: advocated for adoption of boat design standards developed by the American Boat & Yacht Council to minimize transport of AIS.

Expressed support of legislative change to simplify the permitting process for invasive common carp removal. Result: Statute changed to clarify that area assignments for inland commercial fishing operators must not restrict permits or contracts that the commissioner issues to governmental subdivisions and their subcontractors for invasive common carp control.

Toured native and non-native Phragmites sites in the northern Twin Cities Metro and met with the President of Weaver Lake for **a guided tour of their CD3 station.**

Provided review and feedback on the DNR's **invasive aquatic plant management program** and **watercraft inspection program**.

Participated in discussions at the **2019 DNR Roundtable**, which led to **co-hosting three Angling, AIS and Access to Minnesota Lakes and Rivers: Open Space Meetings** around the theme *"What can we do to more effectively address the issues of promoting access to Minnesota's Lakes and Rivers, providing excellent recreational fishing, and stopping the spread of aquatic invasive species?"* **Result:** 186 attendees led discussions on topics of concern and explored how communities can work together better to address shared concerns. The Committee is reviewing the notes and identifying next steps based on these conversations.

Members leveraged these efforts within their own organizations as well leading to: professional development opportunities at the MAISRC Showcase, county workshops, community-based social marketing workshops as well as learning about new tools, pursuing local grant opportunities, and coordinating efforts at larger scales with more partners.

Summary of Invited Speakers and Discussion Topics

The Committee learned about the following topics from experts, and provided feedback on the programs and initiatives with a focus on DNR roles and responsibilities.

- Met with **DNR Commissioner Strommen** to discuss current and future DNR AIS efforts.
- The DNR's **Watercraft Inspection Program** by Adam Doll, DNR.
- The DNR's **Invasive Aquatic Plant Management** and **Aquatic Plant Management** permit programs by Wendy Crowell and Jon Hansen, DNR.
- Research results on the potential for **zebra mussel veliger transport** in residual water by Adam Doll, DNR/University of Minnesota.

- Current and future state of **non-native Phragmites** in Minnesota by Dr. Dan Larkin and Julia Bohnen, University of Minnesota.
- Current and future state of **starry stonewort** in Minnesota by Dr. Dan Larkin, University of Minnesota and Dr. Ryan Wersal, Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- History of **flowering rush management** in Detroit Lakes by Tera Guetter, Pelican River Watershed District and Dr. Ryan Wersal, Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- **Invasive carp management** strategies and proposed changes to state statute by Charles Anderson, DNR Fisheries and Przemek Bajer and Jordon Wein, Carp Solutions.
- **Community-based social marketing for AIS prevention project** by Tina Fitzgerald, DNR.



Highlight: Non-Native Phragmites

- Hosted a guest presentation by MAISRC Phragmites researchers.
- Learned to identify native versus non-native Phragmites.
- Toured one native and three invasive populations of Phragmites in Anoka County (pictured above) led by Committee member Justine Dauphinais.
- Learned how to file reports of new AIS infestations using EDDMapS.
- Wrote a letter to DNR and the Minnesota Noxious Weed Advisory Committee about reclassifying non-native Phragmites and supporting funding for control (as specified above).
- **Results:** Members have a better understanding of the distribution, identification, and control of non-native Phragmites in Minnesota.

Moving Forward in 2020

Beyond reviewing and providing feedback on DNR programs and policies, the Committee looks forward to tackling the following issues in 2020:

- Stay up to date on and gain understanding of prevention and management approaches for specific species (e.g. starry stonewort, non-native Phragmites, hybrid milfoil, spiny waterflea, invasive crayfishes, and zebra mussels).
- Explore the connections between AIS and water quality.
- Follow up on the Angling, AIS and Access Open Space Meetings by continuing to address misconceptions and exploring how communities can work together better to address shared concerns.
- Stay up to date on and continue promoting research that aims to identify the economic impacts of AIS on Minnesota waters.
- Continue to promote the adoption of the American Boat and Yacht Council's Technical Report "T-32 Design and Construction in Consideration Of Aquatic Invasive Species" by boat manufacturers.

Committee Members and Ex-Officios

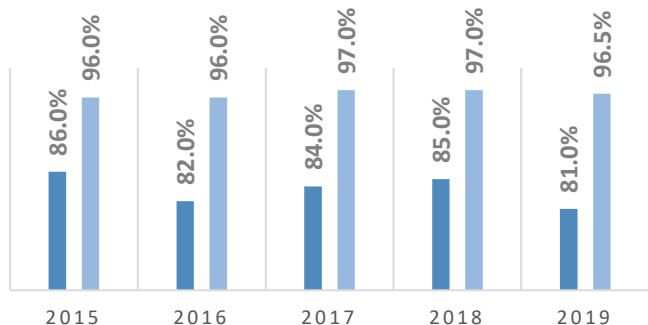
Members: Mary Alverson, Norman Baer – Vice Chair, Jim Boettcher, Justine Dauphinais, John Deurr, Chris DuBose, Tera Guetter, Paul Hamilton, Barb Halbakken Fischburg, Roger Imdieke, Eric Johnson, James Johnson – Chair, Jaime Jost, Donovan Strong, and Kelsey (Wenner) Taylor.

Ex-Officios: Nick Phelps –Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center at the University of Minnesota, Nicole Lalum – Explore Minnesota, Amy McGovern – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Doug Jensen – University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program.



COMPLIANCE WITH AIS LAWS

- Compliance at DNR Enforcement Check Stations (averaging statewide 11 stations and 440 inspections per year)
- Drain Plug Compliance (for all incoming inspections)



Highlight: Consistent Compliance with AIS Laws

The DNR and partners' enforcement and education efforts have led to consistent high compliance with AIS laws in Minnesota. In 2019, there were over 300,000 incoming watercraft inspected at water accesses and 96.5% arrived in compliance with the drain plug law.

Minnesota law requires boaters and anglers to:

- **Clean** aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species from watercraft.
- **Drain** lake or river water from all equipment and keep drain plugs out during transport.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.