

Minnesota DNR AIS Advisory Committee

December 5th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Online via Teams

Members Present: Shelly Binsfeld, Charlie Brandt, Beto Garcia, M. Mahmood Tajbakhsh, Spencer McGrew, Patrick Selter, Mike Sorensen, Amanda Weberg, Ryan Wersal

Members Absent: Will Bement, Nick Bluhm, Chris DuBose, Chris Magnotto, Christine Maxwell, Carrie Ohly-Cusack

Ex-officio Members Present: Maddie Hayden, Amy McGovern,

Ex-officio Members Absent: Nicole Lalum

DNR Staff Present: Rafael Contreras-Rangel, Angelique Dahlberg, Adam Doll, Kelly Pennington, April Rust, Staples Scott

M. Sorensen calls the meeting to order at 10:10am.

Motion to approve Agenda: **A. Weberg** motion, **C. Brandt**, seconded.

Motion to approve September and October Minutes: **C. Brandt** motion, **A. Weberg**, seconded.

Meeting Summary

- **A. Weberg** presented a draft letter created by the ad hoc Letter Writing Subcommittee. The committee mainly discussed whether to remain focused on recommending outreach assistance for the DNR or increasing the boat registration surcharge. Some members thought it'd be better to focus on the surcharge and recommend that increased funding is used for various priorities, including outreach. Finalizing the letter was tabled until the next meeting. Discussion led to identifying a need for a better process to write recommendations to the DNR.
- **A. Dahlberg** gave an update on the invasive aquatic plant grant program and asked for feedback on suggested changes to the program. Currently, the program offers around 100 grants based on a lower budget approach. She proposed various scenarios, including offering ~25 grants with \$16,500 budgets, or offering few larger grants, such as 5 grants with \$80,000 budgets.
- **K. Pennington** gave a DNR update. **R. Contreras-Rangel** filled Tina Fitzgerald's previous position as southern AIS Prevention Planner and **A. Doll** will be taking a temporary mobility assignment position with the legislative team beginning in the new year. New recruits for SAISAC should be ready for the start of 2025 at the January meeting.
- **A. Rust** introduced the DNR's Increasing Diversity in Environmental Career (IDEC) Program. The program was supposed to be a 3-year pilot and it is now close to reaching ten years. The has been a very successful program but it will be ending soon.
- **A. Doll** introduced Minnesota's invasive species rulemaking process.

Action Items

- **DNR** will provide information on SAISAC members recruiting trends over time after checking with the recruiting team.
- **S. Binsfeld** volunteered to work with the DNR to produce a process to write recommendation letters.

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.

SAISAC Letter Writing Subcommittee Update

Amanda Weberg, Chair of Subcommittee

Discussion

A. Weberg reviewed minutes for March minutes and came up with suggestions for the letter addressed to the DNR Commissioner. She discussed contents of the letter, emphasized the need to create four new regional AIS Outreach specialists to carry out public education and outreach and plan to be hired by 2026.

M. Sorenson: Anyone have any edits and feedback for the letter?

C. Brandt is wondering about the paragraph before #2, completely agree that outreach specialists need to be expanded. Need to elaborate on 2 and 3 and would like to make it broader and explain how to coordinate with external partners. **A. Weberg** explains that she is an outside partner, and it would be great to have someone to coordinate. **S. McGrew** suggests that hires need to be involved in-person with partners at public events - that should be part of their position. **M. Sorenson** adds Including working weekends. **S. Binsfeld** emphasizes that the committee wanted to keep in one page and to include SMART goals, it's good to be open ended, but we also wanted to be specific. The extra accountability on the letter will help to show progress. **C. Brandt** clarifies that he meant to be open ended to make it more concise. He adds that #3 should identifying coordinated with DNR's DEI office, the phrasing could be more seen as political, and we might want to leave it broader. **M. Sorenson** suggests that we do not need to make decisions right now. We can include changes and decide later. **S. Binsfeld** states that we did not intend aa vote during this meeting. But, if we wish to, let's vote at 2 o'clock. We've had a month to give feedback. You can send amendments to **A. Weberg**, but we should vote now because we are losing members and getting new members in January. **M. Sorenson** recommends sending any changes to **A. Weberg** before lunch is over and then we can vote on it later.

S. Binsfeld wants to go back to discussion to make sure everyone is heard. **M. Sorenson** responds that we've never done this in the time we've been on this committee, so it would be good to discuss further. **S. McGrew** thinks that if you consider this as too much let us know, this is what we've heard from the DNR and this is why we are making this letter. **S. Binsfeld** says this does not mean it is going to happen, but it will give them more backing to be able to make positions like these.

R. Wersal wants to weigh in on #2. We got the UMN, I see that #2 could be a partnership with UMN or MAISRC and help to rebuild the Extension efforts of land grant schools. Coming from on one of these schools, the first things to get cut are these extension roles. Could we help by helping these extension roles? **S. Binsfeld** answers that's a great comment. When we wrote this letter, we were focused on the needs of the DNR for communication, but it's good to hear there are other people doing this work.

K. Pennington explains that this is her first time working on a letter with a committee, doesn't want to overstep but also feels the need to provide context. She thanks everyone for all your work, we appreciate the message and recognize the steps that have been taken. The first recommendation is not clear to me at what scale, should it be at the invasive species program to develop this committee or at a division scale? Might be helpful to clarify.

S. McGrew clarifies that it needs to be made into the organization, especially after UMISC, we need to include all people into the conversation, so it needs to be macro, not micro.

S. Binsfeld adds that we need to make relationships with the community, we want you to interpret this. How big do you want to go? **K. Pennington** asks that what is suggested is more like plug in to what the organization is doing and not making a whole new committee? **S. Binsfeld** answers that these would be like ambassadors for the DNR, or the positions could at a smaller and focus on the AIS program, but the idea is that it's good to have an ambassador.

K. Pennington responds to #2 with regards to expanding communication with the DNR - it has been great having a CCMI communication specialist with Eric Kenney. I enjoy this concept of coordinating and leveraging other partners in the state such as Extension. Her question for #2 is that we are pursuing an AIS surcharge increase for boating registration? Right now, those proposals are undergoing review. She does not have an update right now, but a question for this piece of increasing capacity is asking how this will interface for early next year? If that proposal is successful through review, if this committee is interested in supporting that, we would like to increase coordination with underrepresented audiences. I just wanted to put that on the radar. We could use the surcharge increase to make these happen.

C. Brandt likes the idea of including in position descriptions that the hire needs to work with external partners. Can we include in the letter that a surcharge increase needs to be used to create a position such as this? **S. McGrew** likes the idea of having in the letter show that the surcharge can be used for these positions? so that we can show we've done our homework. **M. Sorenson** asks how much money will the surcharge increase? **K. Pennington** answers that she doesn't have that level of detail right now, but our hope is to increase the amount for the IPM grants. Right now, we are in a moment of uncertainty until early next year to see what the proposals will be.

M. Hayden agrees that these ideas are great, understanding how funding work for FTEs is important and the surcharge might be able to help with that. MAISRC is also included in that surcharge to increase capacity for research. She likes this letter but is worried about supporting two things that are so close together. Maybe we need to focus on the surcharge letter and emphasize that it could help with outreach positions. **S. Binsfeld** sees this letter as a catalyst to increase more support. She doesn't see this as going against or not being able to accompany another letter supporting the surcharge, we are only recommending, not saying that they need to happen.

R. Wersal says in regard to #2, we would wordsmith it to support the surcharge increase and provide a bulleted list on different ways the surcharge increase would support AIS work, such as outreach. The DNR doesn't have to support all the outreach, some of this money can also be sent to other partners under the umbrella of the DNR. **S. McGrew** responds that our committee got specific because we wanted to do SMART goals and it is an aspirational letter. We want to set a course with imperfect information. Someone needs to chart a course, and this committee is in a good place to do that.

A. Weberg adds that we also did not know about the surcharge increase when we wrote this letter either. **S. Binsfeld** asks if **A. Weberg** and **S. McGrew** to compile these comments and make changes to reflect the

discussion then bring it to the committee at 2:00 pm? Then let's do an up and down vote. It can then be sent off or be brought back for the new committee in 2025. **A. Weberg** mentions that she'd rather cut things than not send the letter.

Update Invasive Aquatic Plant Grant Program

Angelique Dahlberg, DNR Grants and Research Coordinator, PowerPoint attached.

Presentation title: Invasive Aquatic Plant Management Grant Planning 2025

- Have and distributed \$6 million in 1500 grants since 2012, mostly in pretreatment delineation surveys and treatment of those plants.
- Broad eligibility, e.g. lake associations, Local units of government, tribes.
- Can be used for curly-leaf pondweed, Eurasian watermilfoil, flowering rush, and starry stonewort.
- Funds are awarded randomly to the ones who applied.
- 2025 formula.
 - Less than 10 acres: \$1,500.
 - More than 10 acres: \$2,500 + \$200 per acre above 10 acres.
 - Grant maximum is \$12,500.
- Every year there are some small changes such as increasing grant amount.
- Question is, "are these grants doing what we want them to do?" She'd appreciate feedback from this group.
 - Would larger grants be better than smaller grants?
 - Currently we have many small grants, but we could switch to a model where we have few grants with a larger dollar amount or somewhere in the middle.
 - Currently we fund around 100 grants.
 - Could go to 25 grants, if grants were larger.
 - Many small grants
 - Strengths: Get money to a lot of people and lots of people get to do some work.
 - Weaknesses: Takes a lot of staff time to process, not enough work done to make a lasting impact.
 - Middle option (24 grants each worth \$16500)
 - Strengths: DNR staff would have more time to oversee projects.
 - Weaknesses: Many people unhappy because less people will get money
 - Few Large grants (5 grants each worth \$80000)
 - Weaknesses: Lots of administration needed from DNR, many people unhappy not getting any money.
 - Strengths: DNR staff can really focus on these projects and impact could be larger.

Discussion:

R. Wersal asks who do we serve and how do we serve them? The way he sees it is this grant program serves lake associations and small government entities to get some money to do some management. If we go with the fewer, larger grants route, how would there be prioritization? We are never going to score high like a Lake Koronis or Lake Minnetonka. Is this also more for management or research? He argues that we are never going to learn much if we need to do everything in one year. He likes the idea that the DNR is making money available to at least start something. There is little oversight for the county AIS Prevention aid fund, but we really don't

have an understanding on how funding? is being used. We have been able to leverage the county AIS prevention aid money with grants to be able to do some good work. **A. Dahlberg** emphasizes that she is not advocating for one way or the other, she just wants to share this to see what you all think. It's also possible we make no change, but we can say we discussed the possibility of changes.

P. Selter says that in 2024 we have many people who have curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil, and they rarely get enough money to cover enough treatment. Often, they are not treating all their issues or all their plants. There are groups that only treat small amounts and there are groups that do whole lake treatment. There is also a 3rd group where they do a whole ecological restoration which are large projects. I would like to see more projects being ecological beneficial rather than financially beneficial. He reached out to some clients and they would like to see the middle option, less lakes and more money. They would also like to see multiple year grants, but they want to see a shift towards ecologically beneficial projects rather than only treating smaller plots with less money.

M. Sorenson asks about reporting for the AIS Prevention County Aid? **K. Pennington** says that we do have some metrics, but it is voluntary, and they also report differently. **S. McGrew** speaks on the metrics for counties based on Otter Tail County. We are focused on new AIS because curly-leaf pondweed is everywhere. Also, there are a large variability on how these AIS prevention Aid money is spent county by county.

M. Sorenson asks if you have any sense on how many boat launches there are in the lakes in the people that are granted this money? **A. Dahlberg**: Almost all of them do. Also, these are specific for management. **S. McGrew** adds when talking about a lake that is covered with invasive plants that is deeply affected ecologically and recreationally, this falls into lake associations and volunteers. **A. Dahlberg** says when we talk about pristine lakes over those that are broken, these are definitely already broken lakes.

P. Selter adds more context on a species-by-species list. For curly-leaf pondweed, we don't have enough research to know how long it takes to remove from a lake. Curly-leaf pondweed is predictably unpredictable. We do not have a strategy long-term. We have been effective in some lakes, taking hundreds of acres of invasion to a few. In other lakes, we have not made an impact. For Eurasian watermilfoil, we are becoming very efficient at knocking them back to small populations. The start of management is expensive, but once knocked back, it is easy to keep the numbers low. For flowering rush, we are very good too and it is very inexpensive to manage. Starry stonewort is unknown, we are working on getting active research on the management area, but we don't have a good knowledge on how to control it long term.

M. Sorenson asks what suggestions do you have to improve the grants program for 2025? **A. Dahlberg** says it's important to have these conversations. If we can make small or large changes or no changes at all, it is important to have these conversations, because whatever decision we do, it will be informed. The best type of support is your continued thoughts and discussion on these. I want to give at least one update to this committee a year. If we have any bigger changes coming up, then we'd probably have more conversations.

K. Pennington mentions the increase in boat registration surcharge, but emphasized it is uncertain. We could possibly have an increase in funds for this program and then we'd be able to distribute more funds to more people. The support is having these discussions. **M. Sorenson** asks to please drop your contact info into the chat. **P. Selter** suggests another approach that control grants be split into "research funds" and "ongoing management funds"? **A. Dahlberg** answers yes, we have heard of that before and would like to hear more from this group about that. Some of those larger projects could include research on it.

A. Dahlberg provided the following on the chat:

Angelique Dahlberg

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DNR Updates

Kelly Pennington, Invasive Species Program Supervisor

- Staff updates – Rafa in new southern AIS Prevention Planner position. Adam Doll – taking temp mobility assignment with legislative team in the new year.
- Lock and Dam 5 Invasive Carp Deterrent project update – continuing to work with federal agency partners to scope criteria for deterrent. LSOHC funded, legislatively mandated, 5-year project. Only 2 other sound-based deterrents exist nationally, so this is fairly groundbreaking. Hiring project coordinator.
- Recruiting next iteration of SAISAC – will have new recruits ready to join 2025 meetings.
- UMISC in Duluth in November. Doug was conference co-chair. 210 presentations/posters, 6 concurrent sessions, 6 field trips, 7 workshops, art exhibit. 600+ attendees. Largest invasive conference in the world. Commissioner Strommen gave welcome address.
- Regional panel meetings – focus on ANS and informal federal ANS Task Force. Doug and Kelly attending Great Lakes panel’s next meeting. Valuable to learn what other jurisdictions are doing and what species might be on the horizon. Beneficial partnerships.

Discussion

- **M. Sorensen** asks about how SAISAC committee recruitment changed over time – what are the trends in recruitment. **K. Pennington** shared it has been successful based on anecdotal feedback but offered to follow up next meeting after checking with recruiting committee. Thanked members for helping get the word out. **Action Item:** DNR to provide information on SAISAC members recruiting trends over time after checking with the recruiting team.

Member and Ex-Officio Updates

- **R. Contreras-Rangel** reports that county AIS programs are currently submitting annual reports/metrics in compliance with state statute. A lot of variability between reports. Also working to support OIT goldfish awareness campaign from previous position. Planning two surrender events in partnership with non-profit J&R Aquatics Animal Rescue from WI in March and June. **M. Sorensen** asks if goldfish are a metro or rural issue – are they being dumped in storm drains in urban areas? **R. Contreras-Rangel** reports that most are around larger cities, but not sure if that’s accurate or just more eyes in higher population area.
- **S. McGrew** says local AIS messaging over winter at local high school sporting events. Have booth at upcoming event this weekend.
- **S. Binsfeld** has reviewed Sherburne County’s draft 5-year plan – not going to spend as much on CLP and will move more towards education and outreach. Possibly more billboards that go through high traffic area. Plan shared consensus from April survey and conversations – will help navigate changes over time. Also had more conversations about DNR’s grant program and amount. Will be impacted by new wage changes – applying

herbicides could fall under prevailing wage resulting in higher cost for same work. \$400,000 – want to have more conversation on cost of running program. Interesting to watch what happens with Sherburne County lake associations after switching away from CLP.

Introduction to Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers Program

April Rust, DNR AIS Training Coordinator, PowerPoint attached (inserted text from slides below)

- Project Background
 - Minnesota’s population continues to diversify, and STEM-based jobs continue to increase
 - No increase in diversity of the nation’s STEM workforce for more than a decade
 - State unable to attract representative numbers of ethnic minorities, individuals with disabilities, or women into professional and technical STEM positions that make up nearly half of the jobs at DNR, MPCA and BWSR
 - Between 2016-2026, a large percentage of positions at risk of retirement-related turnover
 - LCCMR Proposal submitted in 2016, approved in 2018
- What is IDEC?
 - Strategic partnership among many state agencies aimed to reduce the eliminate barriers that inhibit under-represented students, from completing STEM degrees and obtaining environmental careers after graduation.
 - Unique opportunities for under-represented STEM college students to develop career paths in environmental and natural resources fields.
 - One strategy to develop and tap into Minnesota’s diverse labor market
 - 9-year pilot project (2019 -2028)
 - 6 cohorts of 12-20 students, typically starts each fall semester, serve up to 78 students
 - Cohort 5A, summer rotational only
- Three Program Components
 - Fellowship – Yearly financial support, in-person cohort activities, and professional development
 - Internship – First-year summer rotational, second and third year summer agency internships
 - Mentorship – Employees from MPCA, DNR, BWSR
 - College success, encourage personal and professional development, and promote career advancement
- Program Benefits to Participants
 - Gain resources to support academic success.
 - Receive a yearly academic stipend.
 - Get hands-on experience through paid summer experiential learning and internships.
 - Learn more about environmental or natural resources careers.
 - Enhance personal and professional development.
 - Become a more competitive job applicant after graduation.
- Sample Program Timeline

<u>Year 1</u>	<u>School Year 1</u>	<u>Summer 1 (Freshman)</u>
	Stipend: \$2000 Fellowship and Mentorship	Paid experiential learning: rotating between DNR, PCA, BWSR
<u>Year 2</u>	<u>School Year 2</u>	<u>Summer 2</u>
	Stipend \$2,000 Fellowship and Mentorship	Paid agency: full summer at either DNR, PCA or BWSR
<u>Year 3</u>	<u>School Year 3</u>	<u>Summer 3</u>
	Stipend: \$2,000	Paid agency internship (as above)
<u>Year 4</u>	<u>School Year 4</u>	<u>Summer 4</u>

Stipend: \$2,000 Apply for agency employment or other environmental
Fellowship and Mentorship organization following graduation

- IDEC Program Status Update

Cohort	Starts	Withdrew	Alumni	Active
1	16	2	14	
2	16	3	13	
3	13	6	5	2
4	12	5	1	6
5A	15	5	10	
5B	6			6
Total	78	16	38	24

Discussion

M. Sorensen asks how these people get initially connected to the program? **A. Rust** replies that two key people to the program, May (DNR) and Monica (CCMI). They actively reach out to school and programs and do a lot of work with students before they come in.

S. Binsfeld thinks that this is a nice pilot long program and is nice to see. What have you seen and changed? **A. Rust** responds that it was originally a 3-year program, and they went back to get more money. It was not intended for it to be this long. One of the changes she has seen as a staff person is that it has been challenging to see a lot of turn over at CCMI. It has not been as well supported for the staff trying to do the work. There has also never been infrastructure to carry things over after the pilot is done. She has a lot of similar questions in how this will continue for the future but doesn't know what this will look like in the future. **S. Binsfeld** says that in many pilot programs, that is a difficult question because you are waiting to see how the project really works and then it's hard to get that funding for things to continue. It could be that we are impatient and excited.

A. Rust says that this is dream program as an educator, because it's a small program and trying to make very big changes. This also takes longer to see the results because if any of these students graduate with a STEM degree then it is a success, even if they don't end up in a natural resources program. She thinks LCCMR was hoping to see all these students end up in the agencies they have been working. We must show better that this is a slow process but a steady program, rather than immediate results.

M. Sorensen says that he is always looking for more people to apply for with us, so send them his way. **A. Rust** responds that we will do that, thank you. We've had good luck with students, and we've had great students join us for the program and apply to DNR jobs.

S. McGrew says that by making sure that it's a fellowship, that solves a big barrier, which is good to see.

S. Binsfeld says it seems this program is covering natural resources and personal development. To her, it sounds like you're building some leaders and models. It seems that with those four years you're interacting with them, you're really giving your time to make to changes with these students. It seems like you might have a good list of people who would like to mentor. **A. Rust** responds with yes, we get them for a week, and we see how we can match them up to do good work. We've changed from online, to hybrid of being in field and online. In this last cohort we are going to do all field sessions. We wait for their bios, and we try to match the work to their interests. **S. Binsfeld** concludes with there are programs with younger students, so we need to emphasize that there is a need to continue IDEC for college students. I was in a similar program, and this was very impactful.

Introduction to Minnesota's Invasive Species Rulemaking Process

Adam Doll, DNR AIS Prevention Consultant, PowerPoint attached.

- What is rulemaking?
 - Legislature delegates authority to state agencies to make rules necessary to carry out the purpose of statutorily assigned duties.
 - Rulemaking procedures outlined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 14.
- DNR rulemaking authority
 - Invasive Species Program can create new rules using State's expedited rulemaking process.
 - Minnesota Statutes, sections 84.027, subd. 13a (b), authorizes DNR to use expedited process in Minnesota Statutes, section 14.389, without a hearing, to adopt rules designating prohibited invasive species, regulated invasive species, and unregulated nonnative species.
 - DNR invasive species authorities in statute (e.g., Minnesota Statutes, chapter 84D) – laws passed by Minnesota Legislature.
- Expedited rulemaking
 - Legislature created expedited process for adopting rules, which can only be used when specifically authorized by state law.
 - Process is like standard rulemaking process.
 - Expedited rulemaking process removes the requirement for public hearing but allows at least 30 days for public comment.
- Expedited, permanent rulemaking process*
 - Idea>Classification Summary>Agency Approvals>Governor Approval>Proposed Rulemaking>Public Comment Period>Respond to Comments>Assemble Docket>Judicial Review>Publish Final Rule>Implement Rule
 - *See www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/rules/index.html for more information
- Invasive species classifications
 - "A person may not possess, import, purchase, sell, propagate, transport, or introduce a prohibited species..." (Minnesota Statutes, section 84D.05)
 - Commissioner shall classify nonnative species of aquatic plants and wild animals as:
 - prohibited
 - regulated (illegal to release into the wild)
 - unlisted nonnative species (illegal to release into the wild)
 - unregulated nonnative species (not subject to chapter 84D regulation)
- Creating a classification summary
 - Criteria for classification of invasive species in Minnesota Statute and Rule.
 - Summarize our evaluation in a "classification summary" document, considering:
 - introduction, survival, spread
 - ability to control
 - impacts on natural resources, human health
 - other factors – regulations in other jurisdictions, pathway regulations (e.g., aquatic plants)
- Propose rulemaking
 - Publish notice in Minnesota State Register.
 - This process serves as the official notice that there is a new proposed rule.
 - Provides introduction to proposed rule, contact information, proposed rule language, and comment period timeline.
- Public comment period and agency response
 - All comments are reviewed and responded to.

- Changes to proposed rule can happen due to comments received.
- Publish final rule
 - Final notice is published in State Register.
 - The rules proposed and published at State Register, Volume 47, Number 18, pages 405-409, October 31, 2022 (47 SR 405), are adopted...
- Recent new classification changes
 - Minnesota classified 13 species/species groups as prohibited.
 - Effective February 20, 2024: mitten crab, Nile perch, snakehead fish (family), walking catfish (family), yellow floating-heart, tench, golden mussel, marbled crayfish, (freshwater) golden clam (*Corbicula* spp.), tubenose gobies (*Proterorhinus* spp.), Eastern mosquitofish, nonnative Phragmites
 - Effective July 1, 2024: Jumping worms (*Amyntas* spp. and *Metaphire* spp.).
- Creating federal and regional consistency
 - Added species listed on Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers “least wanted” list: Yellow floating-heart, tench, golden mussel, marbled crayfish
 - Added species included on federal injurious wildlife species list: mitten crab, Nile perch, snakehead fish (family), walking catfish (family)
- Federal injurious species:
 - Mitten crab, Nile perch, snakehead, and walking catfish
 - A reinterpretation of federal law in 2017 meant that US Fish and Wildlife does not have the ability to prohibit the interstate transport of species on this list.
 - Adding them to the state prohibited list helps eliminate regulatory gaps
- Jumping worms
 - Delayed implementation date to allow for additional outreach.
 - Multiple species in *Amyntas* and *Metaphire* genera.
 - Limited current distribution within Minnesota.
 - Listing this species prohibits their sale as bait.
- Rulemaking is not magic
 - Regulations are not self-enforcing:
 - require capacity to implement and enforce.
 - Classification options in Minnesota were written for species people were not intentionally possessing, buying, and trading:
 - risks with “opening up” legislation
 - Regulating species and pathways
 - both important tools, with tradeoffs

Helpful links from chat:

- DNR [AIS classification summaries](#)
- Minnesota Statutes, [chapter 84D](#) (main statutory authorities for AIS)
- Minnesota Rules, [chapter 6216](#) (main invasive species rules, including lists of prohibited species)

Discussion

- **A. Weber** asks why spiny waterflea are regulated? **A. Doll** and **K. Pennington** – enforceability issue. Difficult to tell if in water – challenge of finding and removing them at the access when law was first created.
- **B. Garcia** asks how often does the public comment block a proposed rule? **K. Pennington** – haven’t seen that in the last 3 rule making processes.
- **R. Wersal** says theoretically could this process be used to designate cyanobacteria species? Specifically, something like *Microcystis aeruginosa*. **K. Pennington** thinks it would depend on how our authority relates to the biological classification of *Microcystis*. The DNR has authority to list nonnative species of aquatic plants

and wild animals (Minnesota Statutes, section 84D.04 subd. 1). Aquatic plants are defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 84D.01 subd. 2a to include algae. FYI, some species are specifically exempted from chapter 84D (Minnesota Statutes, section 84D.14). Prohibited listing not necessarily achieve goals. Also, regulatory challenges and questions and regulatory overlap with MPCA/MDH concerning algal blooms.

- **S. McGrew** asks if DNR could use rulemaking to change regulation around portable hydraulic lifts? **A. Doll** responds that MN rules aren't laws but have the rule of law. Don't have framework to list water-related equipment in rules. Changing a shallow water anchor or water-related equipment definition would need to happen in statute. Water related equipment is defined in [section 84D.01](#), subd. 18a.

SAISAC Letter Writing Discussion 2:30 pm

- **M. Hayden** asks if outreach funding is more important than all the other AIS work? Funding language isn't sufficient for MAISRC to sign. Can we wait until next month when have more information about surcharge proposal details?
- **S. McGrew/S. Binsfeld** say communication consistently came up throughout discussions over past year – letter is trying to take consistent theme and promote what advise we can share, SMART goals included.
- **B. Garcia** says good points. Letter could say SAISAC supports surcharge and work it supports.
- **C. Brandt** asks what was changed today in letter? **S. Binsfeld** responds that an updated letter is on screen and was emailed for review over lunch. Is there motion to approve letter draft 3? No motion so tabled until the next meeting. Discussed subcommittee meeting again to organize path of how to get from ideas to a final letter. Discussed possible members.
- **C. Brandt** supports the current letter but open to other new members weighing in.
- **B. Garcia** proposes to have our input on the AIS surcharge? **K. Pennington** responds that the DNR's proposal was shared with committee in August. Is currently being reviewed at a higher agency level. Will know more details in early 2025.
- **M. Sorensen** suggests waiting to see where surcharge discussion goes and then figure out what to advocate for as committee once we know.
- **B. Garcia** asks if it is possible to vote on this offline? **S. Binsfeld** responds, not ready for that.
- **S. Binsfeld** thanks **A. Weberg** and **S. McGrew** for working hard to represent we've heard from in the past year of committee meetings and figuring out how we can best help the DNR. Appreciate their efforts, leadership and time and flexibility to discuss in more detail. She will work with DNR to come up with process for this and give time to see how surcharge language is settled.
- **M. Sorensen** reminds us that this letter was result of discussion last winter about how do we move the committee past just listening to PowerPoints. This draft letter is the best effort so far.
- **C. Brandt** agrees that the letter is just that – don't need to solve all the logistics. It can be more open.
Action Item: Shelly will work with the DNR to produce a process to write recommendation letters.

Discussion Time for Committee

Celebrate members completing their terms

- Outgoing members: **W. Bement, S. Binsfeld, C. Brandt, B. Garcia, C. Magnotto, M. Sorensen, R. Wersal,**
- **B. Garcia** and **S. Binsfeld** are waiting to hear if accepted for next year.
- **B. Garcia, M. Sorensen, S. McGrew:** all shared thanks to **S. Binsfeld**. She did a great job. Facilitated great conversations this year.

B. Garcia motion to adjourn, and **S. McGrew** seconded.

Adjourned 2:55 pm

+++++

AIS Surcharge Increase Proposal

The DNR is considering a proposal to increase the aquatic invasive species (AIS) surcharge on watercraft registrations to \$20 for a three-year registration among its many proposals and significant list of funding needs.

Since 1993, watercraft users have supported the DNR’s AIS prevention and management efforts through this surcharge, which was last increased in 2019 from \$5 to \$10.60. The proposed AIS surcharge increase would address the structural deficit in the Invasive Species Account and make needed investments in AIS prevention and management. Specifically, we would propose increasing funds available each year for invasive aquatic plant management (IAPM) grants from \$400,000 to \$800,000. In addition, it would increase the DNR’s ability to respond to new and existing AIS populations, address pathways of AIS introduction in spread including recreation and trade, increase outreach and engagement of traditionally underrepresented and new audiences, and provide technical assistance to lake associations and other stakeholders on long-term lake vegetation management plans.

As we continue to consider and prioritize the potential legislative proposals, we wanted to share this with you as a key stakeholder group for the invasive species program. We will make time at the August AIS Advisory Committee meeting to discuss this further.



Invasive Aquatic Plant Management Grant Planning 2025

Angelique Dahlberg

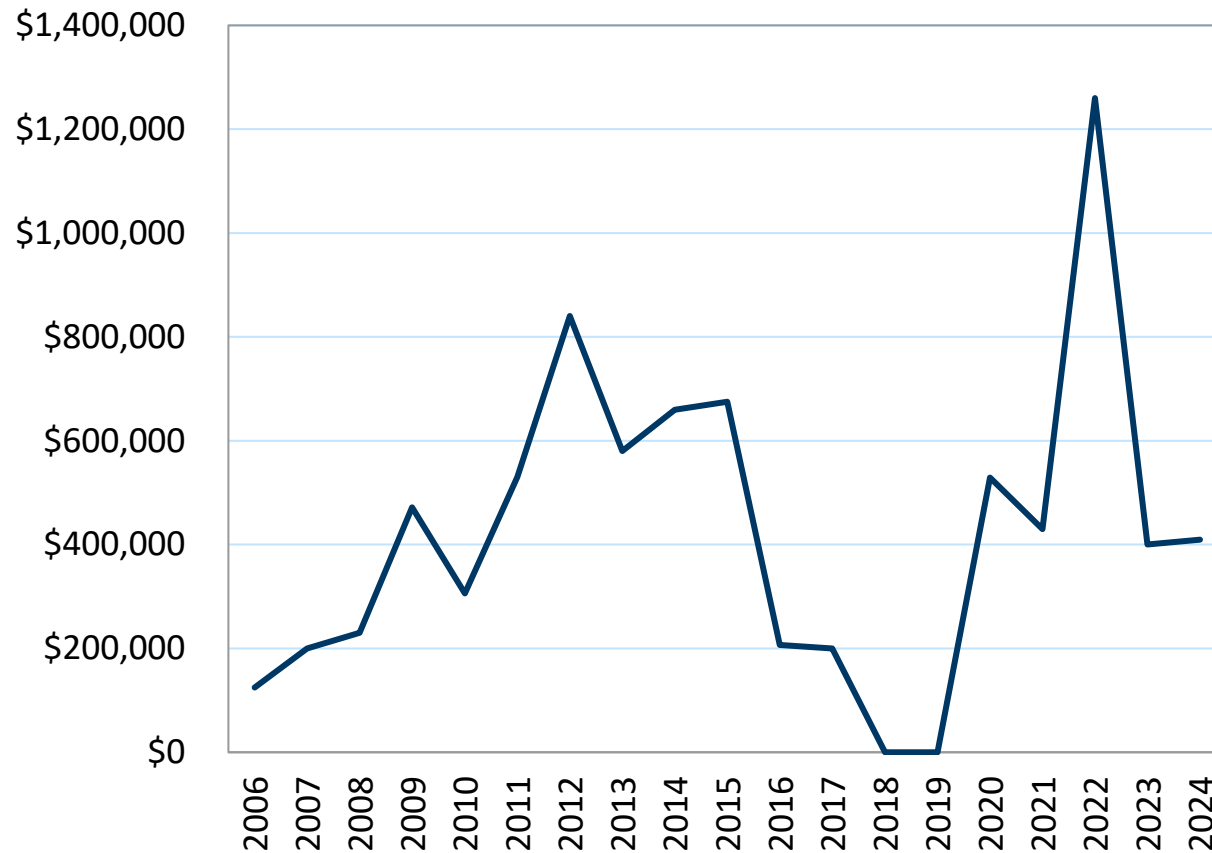
AIS Research and Grants Coordinator

Statewide AIS Advisory Committee Meeting

08/22/2024

Program background

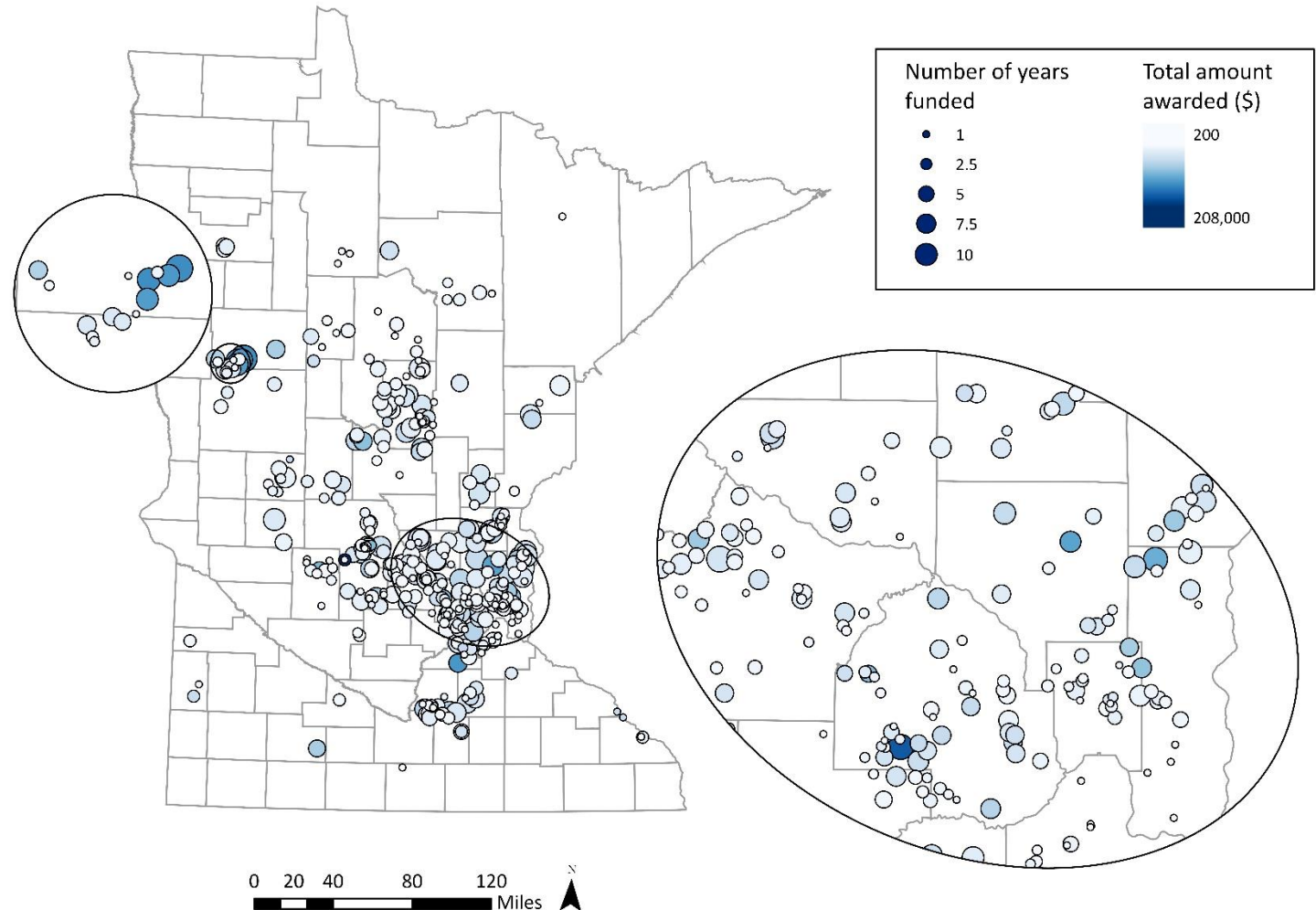
Total grant awards distributed annually



- ~\$6M in 1,500 grants since 2012
- Support invasive aquatic plant management (IAPM)
- Funds are used for reimbursement of expenses directly related to a control project
 - Pretreatment delineation survey
 - Treatment under an IAPM permit

Program background

- Broad eligibility for a large number and wide range of local entities
 - *E.g.*, lake associations, local units of government, tribes



Program background: species funded



Curly-leaf pondweed



Eurasian watermilfoil



Flowering rush



Starry stonewort

Funding support for traditional control grants

- \$400,000 in funds
- On-time and complete applications selected by a randomized order until funds are spent
- 2025 award formula:
 - < 10 acres: \$1,500
 - > 10 acres: \$2,500 + \$200 per acre above 10 acres
 - Grant maximum of \$12,500K



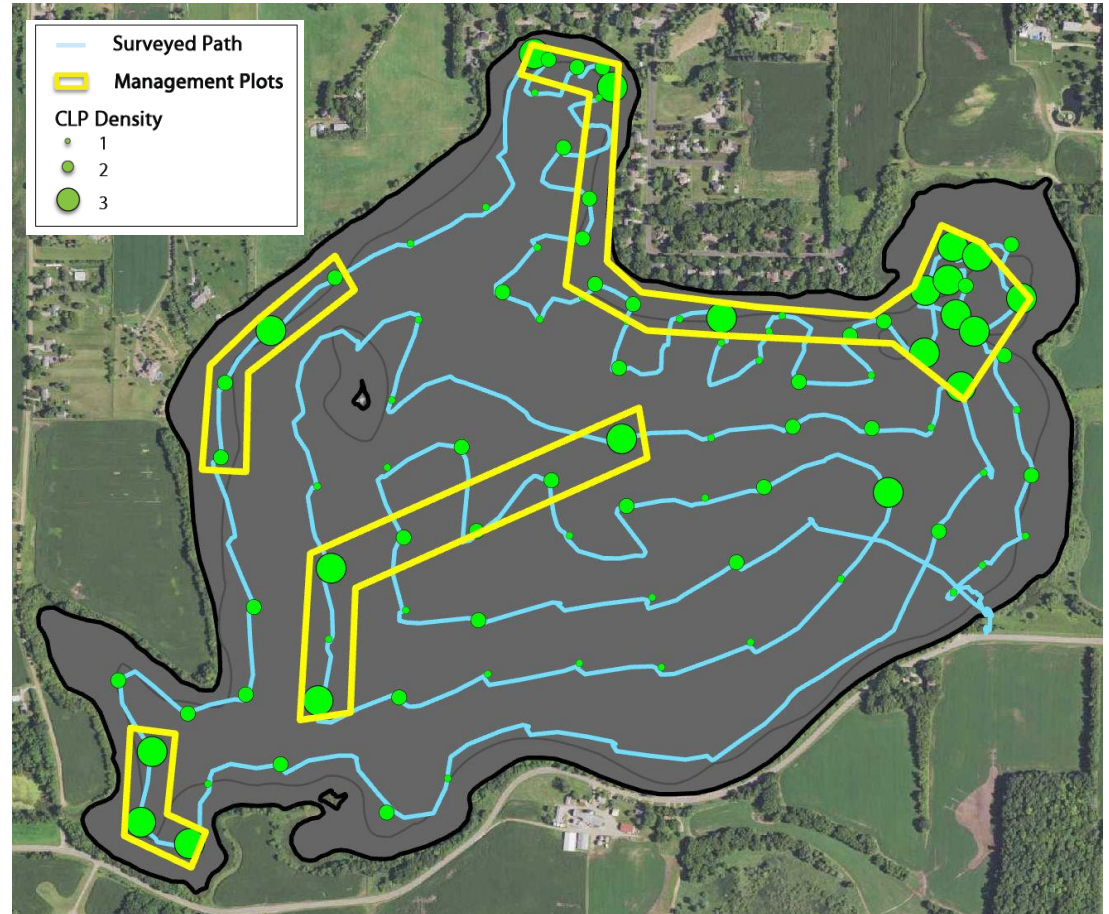
Grant project components



1. Pre-treatment delineation
2. IAPM permit
3. Treatment and/or harvest

Pre-treatment delineation survey

- Required for grant work plan, award supports survey expenses
- Must be conducted by qualified third party (i.e., not the treatment contractor)
- https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/invasives/surveyors_aq_plants.pdf
- <https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/invasives/guidance-delineating-iap.pdf>



Invasive Aquatic Plant Management (IAPM) permit

- Projects conducted under an Invasive Aquatic Plant Management permit
 - Selective treatments in offshore public waters that minimize negative impacts to aquatic habitat, including water quality
 - Legal limits on proportion of total littoral area treated
- <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/iapm.html>
- <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mpars/index.html>
- <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/shorelandmgmt/apg/value.html>



Treatment and/or harvest



- Herbicidal, mechanical (harvest, hand-pulling, DASH) or some combination of treatment methods
- Must be conducted under and according to an IAPM permit, which considers treatment selectivity and adverse nontarget effects
- https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/fish_wildlife/fisheries/apm/commercial_aquatic_pesticide_applicators.pdf
- https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/fish_wildlife/fisheries/apm/commercial_mechanical_control_companies.pdf

Grant program “purpose”

84D.02 INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AQUATIC PLANTS AND WILD ANIMALS.

Subd. 2. Purple loosestrife, curly-leaf pondweed, and Eurasian watermilfoil programs.

(a) The program required in subdivision 1 must include specific programs to curb the spread and manage the growth of purple loosestrife, curly-leaf pondweed, and Eurasian watermilfoil. These programs must include:

[...]

(4) managing the growth of Eurasian watermilfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, and purple loosestrife in coordination with appropriate local units of government, special purpose districts, and lakeshore associations, to include providing requested technical assistance.

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/84D/full#stat.84D.02>



A spectrum



- The more grants we award, the smaller the award and the more people served.
 - High staff time requirement, lower impact
 - Greater coverage of communities and species
- The fewer grants we award, the larger the award and the fewer people served.
 - Potentially high impact
 - Low coverage of communities and species
 - Mid-size grants have lower staff time requirement, high-end grants have high staff time requirement and more obligations for the grantee
- Who are we serving? How are we serving them?

With \$400,000:

- 100 grants worth ~\$4,000
- Delineation: ~ \$1300 ± \$2500 ($n = 72$ in 2024)
- Treatment: remaining \$2700
 - \$340-\$138,000 ($n = 71$ in 2024, mean = \$11,000)
 - < 1 acre to 245 acres (mean = 31 acres; excluding outlier: Koronis at 1712 acres)

Another option

With \$400,000:

- ~24 grants each worth \$16,500
- Delineation: \$1,500 (just above current mean cost)
- Treatment: \$15,000 (just above current mean cost)

And another option

With \$400,000:

- 5 grants each worth \$80,000
- Pre-treatment delineation: \$1,500+
 - Could make a point intercept survey for extra cost
- Treatment: \$75,000
- Post-treatment delineation: \$1,500+
 - Could make a point intercept survey for extra cost

Thoughts?

Who are we serving? How are we serving them?



Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) Program

May Yang-Lee | Career Pathways Program Coordinator

Project Background

- Minnesota's population continues to diversify, and STEM-based jobs continue to increase
- No increase in the diversity of the nation's STEM workforce for more than a decade
- State unable to attract representative numbers of ethnic minorities, individuals with disabilities, or women into the professional and technical STEM positions that make up nearly half of the jobs at DNR, MPCA, and BWSR
- Between 2016-2026, a large percentage of positions at risk of retirement-related turnover
- LCCMR Proposal submitted in 2016, approved in 2018

What is IDEC?

Through a strategic partnership between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, the Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) program aims to reduce and eliminate barriers that inhibit under-represented students, from completing STEM degrees and obtaining environmental careers after graduation.

This collaborative program provides a unique opportunity for underrepresented STEM college students to develop a career path in the environmental and natural resources field.

- One strategy to develop and tap into Minnesota's diverse labor market
- 9-year pilot project (2019 -2028)
- 6 cohorts of 12-20 students, typically starts each fall semester, serve up to 78 students
- Cohort 5A, summer rotational only

IDEC Program Overview

Three Program Components

Fellowship – Yearly financial support, in-person cohort activities, and professional development

Internship – First-year summer rotational, second and third-year summer agency internships

Mentorship – Employees from MPCA, DNR, BWSR

- College success, encourage personal and professional development, and promote the career advancement

Program Benefits

Through the program, participants:

- Gain resources to support academic success.
- Receive a yearly academic stipend.
- Get hands-on experience through paid summer experiential learning and internships.
- Learn more about environmental or natural resources careers.
- Enhance personal and professional development.
- Become a more competitive job applicant after graduation.

Sample Program Timeline - Freshman

Freshman Year 1	School Year 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stipend: \$2,000• Fellowship and Mentorship	Summer 1 <p>Paid experiential learning: rotating between DNR, PCA, BWSR (learn about the work and career pathways)</p>
Year 2	School Year 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stipend: \$2,000• Fellowship and Mentorship	Summer 2 <p>Paid agency internship: full summer at one of the three agencies (DNR, PCA or BWSR)</p>
Year 3	School year 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stipend: \$2,000• Fellowship and Mentorship	Summer 3 <p>Paid agency internship: full summer at one of the three agencies (DNR, PCA or BWSR)</p>
Year 4	School year 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stipend: \$2,000• Fellowship and Mentorship	Summer 4 <p>Apply for agency employment or other environmental organization, following graduation</p>

IDEC Program Status Update

Cohorts	Starts	Withdrew	Alumni	Active
Cohort 1	16	2	14	
Cohort 2	16	3	13	
Cohort 3	13	6	5	2
Cohort 4	12	5	1	6
Cohort 5A	15		5	10
Cohort 5B	6			6
Total	78	16	38	24

IDEC Video



Thank You!

May Yang-Lee

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