



# Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet



## 2016-2017 BIENNIAL BUDGET FACT SHEET

### Water Recreation Account Increase

**\$1,900,000 FY16/\$3,100,000 FY17**

### Natural Resources Fund

#### **It Is Needed Because**

With over 2.5 million acres of rivers and lakes, Minnesota is renowned for its abundant water recreation opportunities. The state leads the nation in the number of registered boats per capita, with 809,000 registered boats in 2014. Boat registration rates have remained strong for a decade, but costs of managing water recreation programs now exceed revenue due to inflation and changing program demands.

The Division of Parks and Trails manages over 1,500 public water access sites on Minnesota's lakes and rivers. Boating studies consistently show both watercraft length and motor sizes have increased and that demand for improved facilities, including longer launch ramps, boarding docks, restrooms and more parking are desired. The division also maintains 4,500 miles of state water trails on 32 designated rivers and Lake Superior; the largest state water trail system in the nation. Channel maintenance and basic maintenance of rest areas, campsites, and portages has been limited while interest and demand in paddling has increased.

This proposal provides for an increased appropriation from the Water Recreation Account in the Natural Resources Fund to support Minnesota's water recreation system. The Water Recreation Account directly supports boaters, paddlers, anglers and riparian residents with facilities, services, and information.

#### **Major Program Elements**

- Support operations and maintenance of the water recreation system.
- Increase boating access site rehabilitation including:

- Improve degraded boat ramps, parking lots and access roads.
- Implementation of best management practices to minimize the effects of storm water runoff and erosion, to buffer shoreline areas, and to restore native vegetation at boating access facilities. This will enhance water quality.
- Upgrading facilities to American with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards.
- Prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species by adding boat clean-and-drain areas to public boat access sites.
- Capture federal Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act funds used to acquire, develop and maintain the system of public boating accesses, safe harbors and state water trails.

#### **Key Measures and Outcomes**

- Improve 30-50 boat accesses and water trail facilities per year.
- A thriving water recreation-based economy.
- Healthier lakes and cleaner water.
- Satisfied recreational boaters.

#### **Fiscal Impacts**

- \$1.9 million for FY16
- \$3.1 million for FY17 and beyond.

#### **For Further Information, Please Contact:**

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