



## Invasive Species Prevention and Management

Operational Order .....	113
Policy Executive .....	Ecological and Water Resources Division Director
Policy Owner .....	Laura Van Riper, Terrestrial Invasive Species Coordinator, Division of Ecological and Water Resources
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### Policy Statement

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protects and manages the diverse natural resources of Minnesota. Because invasive species have the potential to adversely affect these natural resources, it is the DNR's policy to limit the introduction of invasive species onto DNR-managed lands and waters, limit their rate of geographical spread, and reduce their impact on the state's natural resources. This operational order sets forth DNR policy and procedures to:

**Prevent or limit the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species by DNR actions.** Most of the department's field-based inventory, management, and regulatory activities are potential pathways for the introduction or spread of invasive species. Movement of equipment, organisms, and organic and inorganic material are potential pathways. Each of these pathways must to be considered and addressed where appropriate to reduce risks associated with invasive species movement. This operational order focuses on actions taken by DNR employees, which includes working with the public, contractors, etc., to help them prevent the spread of invasive species, as well.

**Implement site-level management to limit the spread and impact of invasive species.** Invasive species are present in all types of habitats in the state. Many of the department's field-based activities can potentially cause increases in invasive species abundance thereby negatively affecting a site. Site-level management includes planning, implementation, and evaluation procedures that reduce impacts of invasive species and the risk of their spread.

Detailed policies along with procedures and responsibilities are outlined below under categories of activity.

## Purpose and Scope

Operational Order 113 provides direction to employees to reduce the impacts of invasive species on Minnesota's natural and cultural resources. The policy:

1. Requires divisions to develop and maintain division guidelines to implement this operational order
2. Provides policy and procedures for prevention and management of invasive species regarding the following:
  - Intentional movement of equipment
  - Intentional movement of organisms and organic and inorganic materials
  - Identifying invasive species and implementing management strategies to reduce geographic spread, as well as impact at the site level
  - Monitoring and reporting new invasive species infestations

This operational order applies to activities by DNR employees. It also applies to non-DNR individuals or organizations on DNR-administered lands and public waters that receive permits, leases, contracts, or grants from the DNR. It is designed to ensure that DNR resource management activities protect our environment from the impacts of invasive species, comply with state laws and rules governing invasive species and meet requirements for dual forest certification by Forest Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

Invasive species that may cause economic or environmental harm, pose human health risks, or threaten natural resources and their use are subject to this operational order. For a list of all invasive species to which this operational order applies, see the [Operational Order 113 Invasive Species List](#). This includes species that the DNR has identified by rule as prohibited invasive species or regulated invasive species, prohibited and restricted noxious weeds, early detection invasive plant targets as identified by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and species deemed to be a severe threat by the Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council.

This operational order does not cover species that the DNR has formally listed as [unregulated nonnative species](#) of wild animals and aquatic plants. It does not cover Minnesota native species being moved outside their natural ranges for management purposes. It does not exhaustively address all species that may be introduced in Minnesota.

## Procedures

Program and project managers making invasive species prevention and management decisions will base decisions on human safety, state law, rules and regulations, ecological impacts, economics, and DNR management goals. Some situations, such as fire and flood emergencies, may preclude compliance with these provisions. Division guidelines will highlight appropriate mitigation activities to address emergency situations.

### DIVISION GUIDELINES

1. All DNR divisions are required to develop and maintain division guidelines to accompany this operational order. The guidelines will contain procedures specific to each division that are necessary to implement this operational order. Activities that are likely to cause the introduction or spread of invasive species include management activities (field work, moving equipment, construction, site management, etc.) and other

actions DNR issues permits for or funds (grants or contracts). This includes activities carried out by contractors, volunteers, and cooperators working on the agency's behalf.

2. Division guidelines must specify the procedures for dealing with emergency situations that arise within division activities.
3. Division guidelines must specify alternative procedures for activities that cannot practicably adhere to the standard operational order procedures.
4. Division guidelines must be reviewed every four years or when changes in division work responsibilities generate new work activities that are not adequately covered by existing guidelines.
5. Division guidelines must be reviewed by the Invasive Species Operational Order Committee and approved by the appropriate division directors.

### **INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION**

Each division whose actions may contribute to the introduction, establishment, or spread of invasive species shall identify activities that pose a risk, identify potential risks, and outline mitigating actions to reduce those risks. Activities likely to cause the introduction or spread of invasive species include:

- Management activities (field work, moving equipment, construction, site management)
- Actions that DNR permits or funds (grants or contracts)

#### **Requirements for Intentional Movement of Equipment**

Equipment includes trucks, tractors, boats, off-highway vehicles, nets, anchors, heavy equipment, tools, personal gear, etc.

1. Before arriving at a work site, inspect the equipment and remove visible plants, seeds, mud, dirt clods, and animals.
2. Before leaving a work site, inspect the equipment and remove visible plants, seeds, mud, dirt clods, and animals.
3. Before leaving an aquatic work site, drain water from all equipment, tanks, or water-retaining components of boats such as motors, live well, bilge, or transom wells onto dry land. Drain plugs, bailers, valves, or other devices for draining water must be removed or left open while transporting water-related equipment on a public road.
4. After working on an aquatic site, clean and dry equipment prior to using it in other locations. Follow your division guidelines for recommended containment methods (such as tagging equipment) for each species or group of organisms.
5. When possible, purchase equipment that is easy to clean.

#### **Requirements for Intentional Movement of Materials**

Materials include organisms and organic and inorganic material including water, fish, plants, mulch, soil, gravel, rock, etc.

1. Do not plant or introduce prohibited or regulated invasive species or other listed invasive species as listed on the [DNR website](#) and the [Operational Order 113 Invasive Species List](#).
2. Do not transport water from infested waters, except by permit or in an emergency.
3. To reduce the likelihood of introducing or spreading invasive species:
  - Use certified weed-free products such as weed-free seed or hay whenever possible.
  - Use mulch, soil, gravel, etc., that is free of invasive species whenever possible.
  - When using stockpiled material, remove the top 6 inches of mulch, soil, gravel, etc., and use the material underneath as it likely has fewer weed seeds.
4. In planting operations, inspect soil and plant material for signs of invasive species, and remove or destroy the invasive species or the plant and associated soil if the invasive species cannot be separated out. Examples of signs include other plant material such as weeds, insect galleries, egg masses, and jumping worms.
5. Do not transplant organisms or plant material from any waters with known populations of invasive aquatic invertebrates (see [infested waters list](#) on DNR website).
6. Do not move soil, dredge material, or raw wood products that may harbor invasive species from infested sites except under contract specifications, permit, or compliance agreements.

## **SITE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

1. Each division shall exercise site-level management to minimize the introduction, spread, and impact of invasive species.
2. Site-level management shall include planning, implementation and evaluation procedures that reduce the risk of introduction, spread, and impact of invasive species. Identify appropriate procedures in division guidelines.

Identify invasive species and determine the extent to which you plan to mitigate the geographic spread and impact at the site level. Site-level planning and management should include, at minimum, the following chronological steps. Examples of site-level planning considerations are included following each step.

- a) Awareness of documented infestations of invasive species at the site
  - Check invasive species databases to determine if waters or lands at or near projects and activities are infested (i.e., GIS layers for terrestrial invasive plants, infested waters list, etc.)
  - Provide for recurring inventory of invasive species on state lands and updating of invasive species databases
  - Check each project site for invasive species infestations prior to management activity
- b) Strategies and actions to minimize the spread and impact
  - Segregate work activity in infested waters or areas from work in uninfested waters or areas
  - Change frequency and timing of maintenance activity
  - Minimize the area of disturbance during projects (keep construction activity confined)
  - Design and construct projects that minimize spread of invasive species by users of DNR lands

- c) Implementation of management actions and mitigation activities
  - Preserve existing native vegetation
  - Monitor and manage invasive species in high exposure or risk areas (management sites, storage areas, gravel pits, trails, designated public use areas)
  - Encourage recreationists (such as hikers, off-highway vehicle users, mountain bikers, or horseback riders) to stay on the trails to minimize the spread of invasive species into natural areas
  - Minimize impacts of invasive species in restoration efforts (e.g., changes to soil)
  - Consider source of materials, obtain invasive species-free source if possible
- d) Evaluate mitigation effectiveness and plan future actions
- e) Post-activity monitoring for invasive species
  - Treat new infestations promptly where feasible to prevent populations from spreading

## **INVASIVE SPECIES INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

1. The “[How do I report invasive species](#)” webpage lists which species are of top concern for reporting. Each division shall report findings of these species according to the instructions on the webpage. Each division shall report suspected invasive species that are new to Minnesota to the DNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources Invasive Species Program using standardized procedures found on [the Operational Order 113 mapping webpage](#). When mapping invasive species on state land, DNR employees will use standard mapping protocols as outlined in division guidelines and on the [Operational Order 113 mapping webpage](#).
2. The Division of Ecological and Water Resources Invasive Species Program will maintain and distribute information regarding invasive species to support the implementation of the invasive species operational order.

## **OPERATIONAL ORDER EVALUATION AND MONITORING**

1. The DNR will have an Invasive Species Operational Order Committee. All DNR divisions shall provide at least one representative to serve on the Invasive Species Operational Order Committee. The committee facilitator shall be the Ecological and Water Resources representative.
2. The Invasive Species Operational Order Committee is responsible for reviewing the invasive species division guidelines, coordinating the review and monitoring of the invasive species operational order, and for updating the [Operational Order 113 webpage](#) as needed.

### **Responsibilities**

- a) Review statutory or regulatory changes related to invasive species management and prevention and recommend changes to the invasive species operational order and division guidelines.
- b) Review division guidelines to ensure conformity with department policy and applicable regulations.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The responsible Assistant Commissioner**, with input from **regional directors**, will review and monitor the DNR's overall compliance with this operational order.

**Division Director** directs implementation of appropriate policies and procedures, and directs the development and implementation of the division guidelines. Division director ensures that employees have appropriate training and equipment to meet the division guidelines.

**Division Manager or Supervisor** ensures that all division personnel that he or she supervises implement activities consistent with this operational order and division guidelines. They also approve site-level management plans.

**Operations managers** determine appropriate employees to oversee the collection of invasive species information in the field and ensure that the data are collected in a standard format.

**The Division of Ecological and Water Resources** shall maintain and update invasive species location information and distribute that information to DNR employees.

**Program and project leads** are responsible for implementing the operational order and division guidelines as they pertain to specific work activities. They also develop and implement site level management plans.

**Employees that administer grants, contracts, leases, or permits** are responsible for communicating the invasive species prevention and management requirements to the grantee, contractor, or permittee.

**Invasive Species Operational Order Committee** is responsible for review of the invasive species division guidelines, coordinating the review and monitoring of the invasive species operational order, and for updating the [Operational Order 113 website](#).

**Policy Owner** is responsible for maintaining an Intranet page with resources to help DNR employees implement this operational order. An Intranet resource page enables us to keep such details out of the policy document and in a location where employees can easily access the materials for reference and the policy owner can manage and update the information and links directly.

## Contacts

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## Definitions

These are selected definitions relating to this operational order. See division Operational Order 113 guidelines for other definitions.

**Clean:** The removal of plants, invertebrates, and pathogens by physical, chemical, or biological methods. Recommended cleaning practices for each invasive species, groups of species, or pathogens can be found in the division guidelines.

**Equipment:** includes trucks, tractors, boats, off-highway vehicles, nets, anchors, heavy equipment, tools, personal gear, etc.

**Infested sites:** A site or area that has a known population of a listed invasive species.

**Infested waters:** Waters designated by the Commissioner of Natural Resources that contain a population of an aquatic invasive species that could spread to other waters if use of the water and related activities are not regulated to prevent this movement (per [Minnesota Statute 84D.01](#)).

**Inspect:** The visual examination of equipment for the presence or absence of invasive organisms, plants, viable plant pieces, and soil.

**Invasive species:** A non-native species that causes or may cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health or threatens or may threaten natural resources or the use of natural resources in the state (per [Minnesota Statute 84D.01](#)).

## Related information and resources

[Operational Order 113 intranet webpage](#)

[Operational Order 113 species list](#)

[Infested waters list](#)

[Minnesota aquatic invasive species and invasive wild animal laws](#)

[Minnesota terrestrial invasive species laws](#)

It is illegal to transport water from infested waters except under permit or for emergency use such as firefighting (*Minnesota Rules*, part [6216.0500](#)).

It is illegal to transport aquatic plants, unless it falls under one of the exceptions in statute (see full list under *Minnesota Statutes*, section [84D.09](#)), which allow transport of duckweeds, transport of aquatic plants in a sealed container to a DNR office for identification, transport as specified by the commissioner, and other exceptions, such as by permit.

It is illegal to launch or attempt to launch a boat or trailer with aquatic plants or prohibited species attached (*Minnesota Statutes*, section [84D.10](#)).

A person leaving waters of the state must drain boating-related equipment holding water and live wells and bilges by removing the drain plug before transporting the watercraft and associated equipment on public roads. Drain-plugs, bailers, valves, or other devices used to control the draining of water from ballast tanks, bilges, and live wells must be removed or opened while transporting watercraft on a public road. Marine sanitary systems and portable bait containers, when fishing through the ice, except on waters listed as infested for viral hemorrhagic septicemia, are exempt from this requirement. A person must not dispose of bait in waters of the state. (*Minnesota Statutes*, section [84D.10](#)).

It is illegal to introduce prohibited or regulated invasive species into public waters (*Minnesota Statutes*, sections [84D.05 and 84D.07](#), and *Minnesota Rules*, chapter [6216](#)).

It is illegal to transport materials or equipment containing the propagating parts of noxious weeds, except by permit (*Minnesota Statutes*, sections [18.82 and 18.86](#)).

State and federal quarantines of areas with plant pests prohibit movement of the pests and associated regulated materials (such as firewood or equipment with gypsy moth eggs on it) from quarantine areas. *Minnesota Statutes*, chapter [18G](#) cover state regulations and [USDA APHIS plant pests and disease programs](#) has links to federal regulations relating to the pests they regulate.

## **Forms and Instructions**

Not applicable.

## **History**

**Amended:**

**Supersedes:** Operational Order 113 dated 9 January 2013