Public Water Access in Minnesota:

The Minnesota DNR State Parks and Trails water recreation program provides approximately 1,650 boat accesses, over 365 fishing piers and shoal fishing sites and manages 35 designated Water Trails in Minnesota. The DNR, Federal Government and local communities operate boat accesses. See the table on the right for specific site information. The DNR boating programs are supported by sales tax on boat fuel and gasoline related to marine use.

Public accesses are usually open 24 hours unless otherwise posted. Some accesses have launch ramps but some sites, especially on smaller rivers, are carry in only. Bathrooms and docks are usually located only on the larger and busier sites.

Public Water Access Rules: The launch area must be kept clear and the following activities are unlawful: littering, camping, shopping, building fires, and consuming alcoholic beverages. See Minnesota Rules, chapter 6218 for complete rules.

Boating in Minnesota: The annual Minnesota Boating Guide summarizes Minnesota's laws and regulations in an easily read form. The guide supplies information about operating wastewater on the water. The boating program provides approximately 1,650 boat accesses, over 365 fishing piers and shore fishing sites and manages 35 designated Water Trails in Minnesota. The DNR, Federal Government and local communities operate boat accesses. Please contact the DNR License Bureau for information.

Fishing in Minnesota: Fishing Regulations and Licensing: All persons 10 and older are required to have the appropriate license with them when fishing. Licenses are available through the DNR License Bureau, most County Auditors and many stores that sell fishing related goods. Trout fishing requires a trout stamp. For more information call the DNR Information Center at (651) 296-6157 or 1-888-MN-LICENSE (665-4236). A DNR safety video is available.

Selecting Harvest Fishing: Improved technology and increased fishing have caused the quality of fish to decline in many waters. Practicing "Selective Harvest" offers anglers an opportunity to take some fish home while releasing others back into the water to improve fishing quality. Here are some tips to use for effective Selective Harvest fishing:

- Use barbless hooks
- Play the fish quickly and handle the fish carefully
- Never hold the fish by the eyes
- Use a needle nose pliers to remove hooks or cut the line if it is too deep
- Ease the fish back into the water, do not throw it back.

Safe Boating: Life Jackets: - On all boats (except a sailboat) regardless of length there must be a readily accessible Coast-Guard approved wearable life jacket for each person on board. In addition, on boats 16 feet or longer, a "no wake" zone is established to protect swimmers and boaters in the water. Operator age restrictions also apply. Consult the Boating Guide for more information. A DNR safety video is available free of charge.

Aquatinea Invirtues Species (AISI) Laws and Requirements: The AISI lists lakes and rivers as "infested" with certain aquatic invasive species. If you are harvesting bait, commercial fishing, or fishing or taking water, you might need to follow special regulations in infested waters.

To identify an infested water, look for orange Invasive Species Alert signs at the access. You can also use the lake finder to find out if a particular lake is listed as infested. For more information about infested waters, including an up-to-date list of infested lakes and additional location information, visit mndnr/parks.

Before leaving the water access or shoreline property, you MUST:

- Clean your boat and pull your plug as soon as possible.

There are ISDS waters and ISDMR organisms, it is YOUR responsibility to inspect, clean, and dry your boats!

AIS Bait Laws: It is illegal to transport lake and river water. To save your bait (minnows or leeches), the DNR recommends bringing "fish safe" treated water from home and keeping it in your vehicle or cooler. Drilling ice can be a good idea on warm days to cool down the water.

DO NOT dump unwanted bait into water bodies or on the shoreline! Unwanted bait belongs in the trash or a designated compost bin. Unwanted waste must be disposed of in the trash.

Working Together to Protect the Waters: Watercraft inspectors are here to ensure watercraft and equipment are “clean in, clean out.” If you need assistance, have questions about the laws, or are curious about the program, please ask!

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- Please clean your boat and pull your plug as soon as you are safely able to. That way when the inspector comes, the inspection process will move quickly.
- If there is a Decommission Unit present, please follow all the instructions given by the inspector, for your safety and theirs. There will be plenty of time to ask questions and watch them work from a safe distance.
- Ways the Watercraft Inspectors can help you:
  - The inspectors have tools, wrenches and pliers, so if you are having trouble with your plug, ask!
  - If there are weeds that are hard to reach, inspectors can also help pull weeds off boats or other such tools. They also have boiling tools for plants.

When you see the Watercraft Inspectors, please be cooperative. The law requires compliance with inspectors, and it will help everyone to follow their way in a timely and pleasant manner.