**Public Water Access in Minnesota:**

The Minnesota DNR State Parks and Trails and Boat Access Division's water access program provides approximately 1,650 boat accesses, over 365 fishing piers and shore fishing sites and manages 31 designated Water Trails in Minnesota. The DNR, Federal Government and local communities cooperate to operate boat accesses. See the table on the right for specific site information. The DNR Boat Access program is funded by boat license fees and is related to marine use.

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

**Public Water Access Rules**

- Launch area must be kept clear and the following activities are unlawful: littering, burning, building fires, and consuming alcoholic beverages. See Minnesota rules, chapter 612 for complete rules.

**Boating in Minnesota**

- The Minnesota Boating Guide summarizes Minnesota safe boating laws and regulations in an easy-to-read format.
- The guide supplies information about operating watercraft on the state’s lakes. Minnesota boater age restrictions apply to operators 17 years old and younger.

**Licenses:**

- All motorized and non-motorized watercraft operators are required to have a boater license.

**Fishing in Minnesota**

- Fishing Regulations and Licensing: All persons 16 and older are required to have the appropriate license with them when fishing. Licenses are available at all DNR License locations, most County Auditor’s offices and many stores that sell fishing related goods. Traditionally, fishing requires a treat as a toll. More information can be found at the DNR Information Center (at 651-266-6157 or 1-888-646-6677). To purchase a license by phone 24 hours a day, call 1-888-MN-LICENSE (665-4236).

**Selective Harvest Fishing:**

- Improved technology and increased fishing have caused the quality of fishing to improve in many waters. Practices like ‘Selective Harvesting’ offer 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 barbleless hooks.
  - Play the fish quickly and handle the fish carefully.
  - Never hold the fish by the gills.
  - Ease the fish back into the water, do not throw it back.

**Working Together to Protect the Waters**

- Watercraft inspection is here to ensure watercraft and equipment are "clean, in safe, clean water access and environment.

**Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Laws and Requirements:**

- All woody plants, non-native aquatic plants and animals that require a permit to transport. For more information, contact the DNR Water Quality and Invasive Species Program or visit state.**

**Water Access Sites in southern St. Louis County**

- The DNR Water Access Program provides opportunities for people to use the lakes, rivers and streams in Minnesota. The Water Access Program is funded by boat license fees and is related to marine use.

**Safe Boating**

- Life Jackets: On all boats, larvae, and crawfish. They may also need at least one Coast Guard approved throwable device, such as a life ring buoy or self-inflating life ring.

**Working with Invasive Species**

- Public water access sites developed after 2012 have been designed with accessible parking spaces and accessible ramps to the top of the boat ramp. Some sites have additional accessible routes to a dock or other site amenities. These sites are identified with the red, accessible symbol shown above.

- Fishing access and developed shore fishing sites have been designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. Fishing is generally located within 300 feet of the site and there is a hard surface path from the parking area to the launch ramp.Fishing piers include cooperatives with local units of government to maintain the fishing pier.

- Sometimes, weather or vandalism can make these designed sites no longer accessible. If a site is found to be out of compliance, please report problems to the site operator listed in this guide or Contact the DNR Information Center, 651-266-6157 (800-MN-DNR) or email info.dnr@state.mn.us.

**Accessible Accesses**

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**Accessories**

- The DNR Water Access Program provides opportunities for people to use the lakes, rivers and streams in Minnesota. The Water Access Program is funded by boat license fees and is related to marine use.