

Le Sueur County Aquatic Invasive Species Community Based Social Marketing Program

Summary Report of Project Activities and Results

January 28, 2022

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1.1 Target Audience and Behavior

The target audiences for Le Sueur County's community based social marketing pilot project was Shoreline Residents and Lake Associations. The target and desired behavior was to have shoreline residents dry their water related equipment (such as docks and lifts) for 21 days before moving to another body of water. The pre-intervention data summary (see section 1.5) identified that the main barriers for shoreline residents to carry out the behavior of drying their water related equipment for at least 21 days before moving to another body of water was due to either lack of awareness or lack of cleaning equipment.

1.2 Behavior Change Intervention Strategy Design

STRATEGY

The main strategy of this pilot program was to partner with lake associations to communicate to shoreline residents about this topic. Communication about the program was done through websites, newsletters, and at public events. The main goals of this program were to increase awareness of the 21-day dry rule, and for participants to engage in the behavior of drying water related equipment for at least 21 days before moving it to a different body of water.

DESIGN

The design of this community based social marketing program was an incentive based approach. There were different "tiers" or "levels" of participation and commitment. The higher the level of participation and commitment the larger the incentive. At a minimum for signing up for the program, each participant received a yard sign and sticker. They were also required to post their yard sign somewhere on their property. There were two additional opportunities to further participate with this program. One was to attend an online training that was offered through the County. If participants attended this training they received a goodie bag (*See Appendix A*). The other opportunity to further participate was also considered the desired behavior of this program. Participants would need to dry their water related equipment for at least 21 days before moving to another body of water. The incentive for a participant who completed this behavior was an aquaweed stick (*See Appendix A*). The aquaweed stick was chosen as the incentive for the highest level of participation because one of the barriers identified in the pre-intervention data summary was a lack of cleaning equipment. This was a way help address one of the barriers when it comes to cleaning and drying water related equipment. There was no requirement for participants on what "tier" or "level" they wanted to engage in. It was up to each participant's discretion.

MATERIALS PRODUCED

- Yard Sign-21-day dry rule (*See Appendix A*)
- Participation & Commitment Form (*See Appendix B*)
- How to Handout-To dry your water-related equipment for 21 days (*See Appendix C*)
- Shoreland Owner Training Video (*See Appendix D*)
- Shoreland Owner Trainings and Recording (*See Appendix E*)
- Post Participant Survey (*See Appendix F*)

1.3 Pilot Implementation

LIST OF PARTNERS

Throughout the entire pilot project Le Sueur County worked with multiple partners. During the beginning stages of the program, Le Sueur County reached out to the following lake associations to gauge interest: Lake Washington Improvement Association, Lake Francis Association, Greater Jefferson German Lake Association, Lake Volney Association, Waterville Lakes Association, Lake Emily Association, Gorman Lake Association, and Rays Lake Homeowners Association. Once the program was under way, there were quite a few Lake Associations that helped Le Sueur County announce the project either on their website, newsletter, or at a lake association meeting.

Other partnerships that developed were due to the creation of a shoreland owner training video that comprises aquatic invasive species prevention best management practices (such as cleaning, washing, and 21-day dry time) for the water related equipment. Le Sueur County was able to obtain additional financial resources or in-kind services to help create a script for the video. The following local government units contributed to this project: Becker SWCD, Blue Earth County, Brown SWCD, Cass County, Cook County, Douglas County, Kanabec SWCD, Murray County, Nicollet County, Scott County, Sibley SWCD, Sherburne SWCD, Stearns County, Stevens SWCD, Ramsey County, Waseca County, Winona SWCD, and Wright SWCD.

TIMELINE OF DELIVERY TO TARGET AUDIENCE

In 2020, Le Sueur County focused on education and outreach efforts, marketing efforts, and developing materials needed for the program. Materials for project implementation were to be completed no later than June 30, 2021. Project implementation of the community based social marketing program was intended to start in 2021.

SUCCESSES

- Yard signs work! Multiple occasions where the signs caught the attention of neighbors and people recreating on the lake to either look at the sign or ask the homeowner questions about it.
- The trainings were very informative to the participants. It provided an additional opportunity for shoreline residents to learn more about aquatic invasive species.
- Le Sueur County was able to develop an aquatic invasive species prevention best management practices shoreland owner training video (*See Appendix D*). This was completed in partnership with 18 other local government units. Initially the video was not a part of the program, but Le Sueur County used it to adapt to limitations with in person meetings and events. The video helped address a gap with resources that are currently not available for aquatic invasive species and the 21-day dry rule. The video was used as part of the two trainings that were offered to participants in August or October (*see Appendix E*). This video is publically available online, free to use and share by any organization interested in promoting aquatic invasive species prevention best practices for shoreland owners.
- Le Sueur County developed a How to Handout that describes the proper techniques to clean, rinse, and dry water related equipment for 21 days. Again, this helped address a gap with

resources that are currently not available for aquatic invasive species and the 21-day dry rule (See *Appendix C*).

- One of the participants with this program did complete the desired behavior of drying water related equipment for at least 21 days before moving it to another body of water. The individual that sold the equipment and the individual that purchased the equipment were aware of the 21-day dry rule. Therefore, there is some local knowledge present.

CHALLENGES

- Le Sueur County's community based social marketing program had a very slow start to getting off the ground and gaining participants. Participation was much lower than expected. The main reason is likely because the program is really new; not enough people knew about it.
- There was a common response from those residents that decided not to participate with the program which was they are not planning on moving any of their water related equipment to another body of water so this topic is not relevant to them. This came up multiple times. Content from this program didn't seem relevant to those that felt this way.
- There is a significant portion of shoreline residents within Le Sueur County that aren't as tech savvy, and would prefer communication efforts via mail, local papers, etc. Limited resources were dedicated to outreach via direct mailings. More than likely that is part of the reason why there was lower participation. Le Sueur County does not have any current communications lists for residents who indicate their preference for communication efforts.

MODIFICATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Spend significantly more time and resources on marketing the program first. Since this was a very new program, many individuals were not aware it was out there. Some additional ways to market the program, besides posting on a website and within a newsletter, would be to post 1-2 news releases/year, participate in 1-2 interviews/year, send direct mailings especially for those that prefer communication efforts via paper, and lastly speak at multiple public events.
- Le Sueur County should obtain lists from Lake Associations on which members prefer information via email or electronic versus those that would prefer information via snail mail or paper copies.

1.4 Expenses (grant and matching funds, in-kind services)

- Total Grant Funds Used: **\$4,123.85**
- Matching Funds and In-Kind Services: **\$21,815.79**
 - This includes the \$15,000 to produce the video
- Total Project Budget: **\$25,527.26**

Item	Quantity	Unit	Cost	Shipping, Handling, & Tax	Grant Funds	Matching Funds & In-kind Services
Aqua weed stick-extendable 3-6ft	65	\$27.00/stick	\$1,755.00	\$372.70	\$3,152.70	N/A
Full Color 18" x 24" Yard Sign	65	\$15.77/sign	\$1,025.00	Included above	Included above	N/A
Printing (handouts, surveys, letters)	408 color pages and 204 black and white pages	\$1/page color \$0.50/page for black & white	\$510.00	N/A	\$510.00	N/A
Contingency funds (for Additional Shipping costs & Lakeshore Owner PSA Video)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$461.15	N/A
Staff time spent on administration/coordination/technical assistance and education/outreach	139.5 hours	\$44.20/hr	\$6,165.90	N/A	N/A	\$1,458.60 for 2020 \$4,707.30 for 2021
Bait bags, rapalas, stickers, and bobbers	65	N/A	\$475.00	N/A	N/A	\$475.00
Shoreland Owner Training Video	1	YouTube video	\$15,500	N/A	Included in contingency	\$15,000

1.5 Evaluation

THE PRE-INTERVENTION DATA SUMMARY

The pre-intervention data summary that was utilized was based off of the Shoreline Residents Survey Summary Report (DNR Behavior Change for AIS Prevention Project 2019). Shoreline Residents have strong attitudes and awareness when it comes to aquatic invasive species prevention. Many shoreline residents have the passion and drive to do their part to limit and prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. There is an opportunity for growth when it comes to increasing awareness and knowledge about aquatic invasive species laws, regulations, and best management practices with shoreline residents. Lastly, there is also a willingness with shoreline residents to participate in behaviors such as cleaning, washing, and drying water related equipment for at least 21 days before moving to a different body of water. However, the action steps for those behaviors listed above are not occurring at the same rate as the willingness of shoreline residents.

METRICS TRACKED

The metrics we utilized to track data and behaviors includes the pre-intervention data summary mentioned above, if they cleaned, washed, or dried their equipment before moving to a another body of water, if their behavior/attitudes have changed after the program, the number of participants and the type of activity they were engaged in, the number of commitments, and the number of yard signs distributed.

The participation/commitment forms (*Appendix B*) were able to track the number of participants within the program and which type of activity they would like to engage in. There were a total of 11 participants. All 11 participants posted their yard sign on their property, 6 of the 11 participants attended one of the two online trainings that were available, and 1 participant dried their water related equipment for at least 21 days before moving to another body of water. Additionally, the participation/commitment forms were able to quantify the number of commitments we received from lakeshore residents to prevent and limit the spread of aquatic invasive species. A total of 11 residents filled out the commitment portion of the form.

The Participant Post Survey (*Appendix F*) was able to track the behaviors of the participants. This was a tool used to see what behaviors they would be willing to engage in when it comes to cleaning, washing, and drying their water related equipment before moving it to another body of water. Other behaviors included within the survey were related to education and commitment. Lastly, the survey was utilized to gauge their attitudes and awareness about the 21-day dry rule. 5 of the 11 participants filled out the participant post survey.

- All 5 of the participants were aware that moving water related equipment to another body of water contributes to the spread of aquatic invasive species.
- 2 of the 5 participants did not know the 21-day dry rule was a Minnesota law.
- All 5 of the participants stated that there was nothing preventing them from removing visible debris and air drying their equipment for 21 days before selling or installing used/pre-owned water related equipment.
- All 5 of the participants stated they would be willing to attend similar trainings in the future.
- All 5 of the participants felt they had a better understanding and knowledge of aquatic invasive species prevention and best management practices for water related equipment.
- All 5 of the participants stated they would be willing to share the information they learned to other lakeshore residents.
- All 5 participants would be willing to display a more permanent aquatic invasive species prevention commitment, such as a metal sign or decal, on their lakeshore lot, dock, lift, or other equipment stating to clean and dry water related equipment 21 days before moving to a different body of water.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Even though the sample size was small, there was measured behavior change with this program. Awareness and attitudes of the 21-day dry rule for water related equipment increased for those that participated with this pilot project and for others that inquired about the yard signs. Shoreline residents are dedicated and committed to increase awareness to others as well as demonstrate their commitment to preventing and limiting the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Additionally, shoreline residents are willing to engage in behaviors to clean and dry their water-related equipment for 21 days before moving to another body of water in order to prevent and limit the spread of aquatic invasive species. One of our eleven participants accomplished the desired behavior. For the most part, water related equipment such as docks, lifts, rafts, and so forth do not move very often; therefore, this behavior will not occur on a regular basis for each shoreline resident. Further education and outreach efforts are extremely important to help increase awareness and knowledge for shoreline residents about the 21-day dry rule. When the time comes for a shoreline resident to move their water-related equipment to another body of water, they will be able to adopt aquatic invasive species prevention best management practices and help prevent and limit the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Appendices

Appendix A: Pictures



Picture 1: Yard sign posted on a participant's shoreline. Property is adjacent to an access.



Picture 2: Yard sign posted adjacent to a participant's driveway and near a popular road.



Picture 3: Yard sign posted adjacent to a shared driveway and near a road.

Picture 4: Goodie bag participants received when attending an online training.



Picture 5: Aquaweed stick-incentive for those that dried their water-related equipment for at least 21 days before moving to a another body of water.



Protect Our Lakes

Clean and Dry your Equipment



Before moving your docks, lifts, rafts, and other associated equipment to a different body of water:

- 1) Remove any AIS or debris that is present.
- 2) Wash/rinse off your equipment.
- 3) Dry your equipment for at least 21 days.

Le Sueur County needs shoreline residents' help with this program!

- Up to 65 shoreline residents can participate and will be given a free yard sign and AIS sticker.
 - Participants are asked to post their yard sign to encourage others to dry their equipment for 21 days before moving.
- Shoreline residents are given two additional options for further participation.
 1. Participants want to practice or see a hands-on-demonstration and/or training using tools to clean or wash their equipment.
 - Participants will receive a goodie bag (bait bag, rapala, and bobber).
 2. Participants intend to move previously-owned equipment either into or away from their lake, but will dry their equipment at least 21 days prior to moving.
 - Participants will receive a free aquaweed stick.



Commitment Form

The Minnesota DNR and Le Sueur County strongly encourages you to clean and dry your docks, lifts, rafts, and other associated equipment for at least 21 days before moving. Not only is it the law, all of these efforts will help reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota.

I, _____, will clean equipment and let it dry for 21 days before moving it.
(sign name here)

Participation Form

Would you like to participate in this program? If so, fill out the information below. By signing this form, you are agreeing to participate with Le Sueur County's Aquatic Invasive Species Behavior Change program which will help prevent and limit the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species. If at any time, you, the participant, decide to change your level of commitment you are more than welcome to do so, but must notify the Environmental Resources Specialist, Holly Kalbus, as soon as possible.

Your First and Last Name: _____

Your Mailing Address: _____

Your preferred mode of communication (phone or email): _____

Please indicate what level of participation you would like to be involved in (please check one):

- ☐ I will post a yard sign on my lakeshore property to publicize my commitment for preventing and limiting the spread of AIS, which will encourage my neighbors and community to do the same.
- ☐ I will post a yard sign on my lakeshore property to publicize my commitment for preventing and limiting the spread of AIS, which will encourage my neighbors and community to do the same. I will also attend at least one of the trainings and/or hands-on-demonstrations that are provided by Le Sueur County.
- ☐ I will post a yard sign on my lakeshore property to publicize my commitment for preventing and limiting the spread of AIS, which will encourage my neighbors and community to do the same. I will also attend at least one of the trainings and/or hands-on-demonstrations that are provided by Le Sueur County. Lastly, if I buy or sell used equipment (dock, lift, raft, or other associated equipment), I will clean and dry it 21 days before moving to another body of water.

Participant Signature

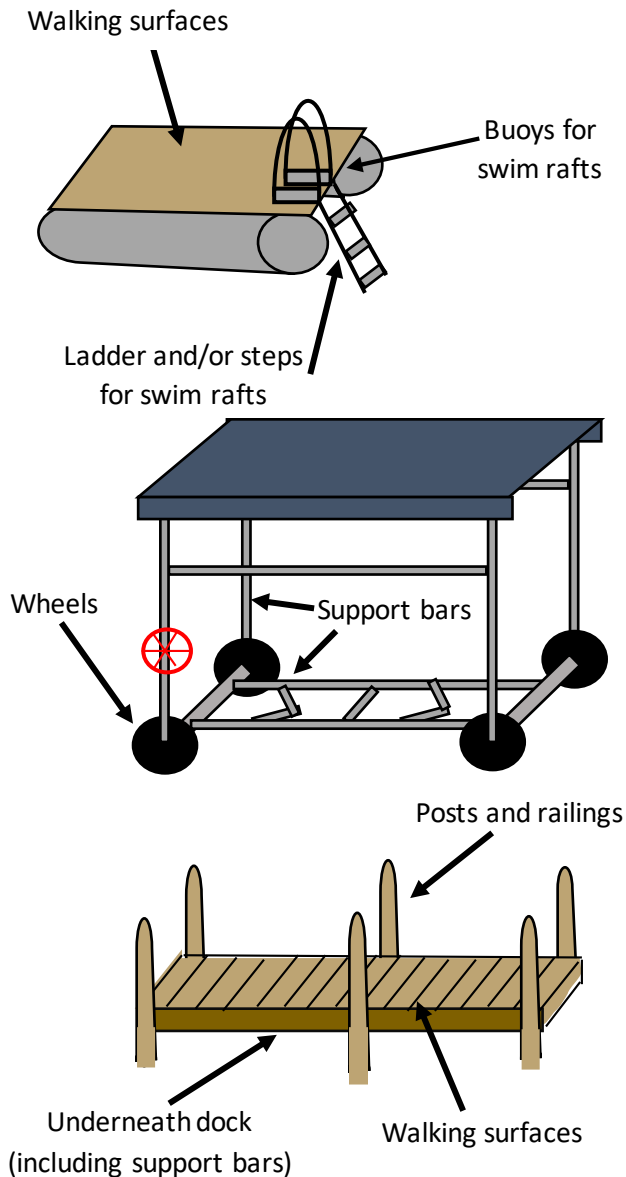
Date



Protect Our Lakes!

How to Clean Docks, Lifts, Swim Rafts, and Other Associated Equipment

Clean and Rinse these pieces of your equipment:



Minnesota law requires a dry time of at least 21 days for any used docks, lifts, swim rafts, or other associated equipment before moving and installing the equipment to a different body of water.

CLEAN

Thoroughly inspect all surfaces of your dock, boat lift, swim rafts, and other associated equipment. This includes any railings, posts, wheels, buoys, support bars, ladders, and steps. All of this equipment has been sitting in the water for a long period of time, which provides an opportunity for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) to attach themselves. Remove and dispose of any aquatic plants, small animals (e.g. snails, mussels, eggs), mud, and other debris. If you find an invasive plant or animal you think is new to your lake: take a picture, keep a sample, and report it to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources immediately.

RINSE

All of your equipment should be rinsed off. Pressure washers work great for getting off any AIS that maybe stuck or attached onto your equipment that are not easily removed by hand or a cleaning tool. If possible, rinse your equipment off with hot water (at least 120°F). Hot water will be able to kill off any AIS that is present that you may not be able to see with the naked eye.

DRY

If you buy or sell a dock, lift, swim raft, or other associated equipment, it must dry for at least 21 days before moving to a different body of water.

PLAN AHEAD

Cleaning, rinsing, and drying your docks, lifts, rafts, and other associated equipment will take time. If you need help with any of these tasks, there are some cleaning tools available for purchase through different vendors. Or if you are physically unable to clean, drain, or dry your equipment, ask a family member, friend, neighbor, or hire a permitted Lake Service Provider. It is important to take all of these steps to help prevent and limit the spread of AIS!

Appendix D: Shoreland Owner AIS BMP Video

Le Sueur County was able to develop an aquatic invasive species best management practices shoreland owner training video. This was completed in partnership with 18 other local government units. Initially the video was not a part of the program. The original intent was to have an in person and hands on training for participants. Le Sueur County adapted to existing limitations with in person meetings and events; and thus the video was created. The video helped address a gap with resources that are currently not available for aquatic invasive species prevention and the 21-day dry rule. Additionally, this video was also utilized as part of one of the two online trainings that were offered to participants.

[Shoreland Owner Training for AIS Prevention](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vabkGxzT9U)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vabkGxzT9U>

Appendix E: Shoreland Owner Training-Agendas & Training Video

Agenda

Lakeshore Resident Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Training

Date & Time: Wednesday, August 25th from 10:00am-11:00am

Location: Virtual-Webex

10:00am-10:05am	Welcome
10:05am-10:10am	Training Objectives
10:10-10:25am	Minnesota DNR Presentation-Adam Doll & April Rust
10:25-10:40am	Le Sueur County AIS Community Based Social Marketing Program
10:40-11:00am	Questions

Agenda

Protect Our Lakes-Clean and Dry Your Equipment

Lakeshore Resident Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Training

Date & Time: Tuesday, October 5th from 1:00pm-2:00pm

Location: Virtual-Webex

1:00pm-1:05pm	Welcome
1:05pm-1:10pm	Training Objectives
1:10pm-1:25pm	Minnesota DNR Presentation-Adam Doll & April Rust
1:25pm-1:40pm	Le Sueur County AIS Community Based Social Marketing Program
1:40pm-2:00pm	Questions

[Shoreland Owner Aquatic Invasive Species Training](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PYqLEKtKOM>

Appendix F: Participant Post Survey

Protect Our Lakes Clean and Dry your Equipment

This survey is intended to collect data about participant's awareness, knowledge, motivation, and willingness for aquatic invasive species prevention as it relates to the 21-day dry time for water related equipment before moving to a different body of water. Results from this survey and the program will be shared. Private information such as your name and contact information will not be included with the results.

1. Does moving docks, boat lifts, or other equipment from one body of water to another contribute to the spread of aquatic invasive species?
☐ True
☐ False
2. Did you know that Minnesota law requires docks and boat lifts to be out of the water for at least 21 days before putting them into another lake or river?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure
3. What would prevent you from removing visible debris before selling or installing used/pre-owned water related equipment? *(Please choose one option below)*
☐ Nothing
☐ It is difficult to maneuver or access under the equipment
☐ I don't have the tools and equipment I need
☐ I am not physically able to do so
☐ It is difficult to do so
☐ It takes too much time
☐ I don't know how

☐ I don't think there is a need to

4. What would prevent you from air drying for 21 days before selling or installing used/pre-owned water related equipment? *(Please select one option below)*

☐ Nothing

☐ My buyer wanting it right away

☐ I want to use it right away

5. Would you be willing to attend more trainings similar to this one in the future?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

6. Do you feel that you overall have a better understanding and knowledge about aquatic invasive species prevention and best management practices for your water related equipment?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

7. Would you be willing to share the information you learned today with other lakeshore residents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

8. Would you be willing to display a more permanent aquatic invasive species prevention commitment, such as a metal sign or decal, on your lakeshore lot, dock, lift, or other equipment stating to clean and dry your water related equipment 21 days before moving to a different body of water?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure