

# Making a Difference with Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid: Tracking Metrics & Accomplishments

**Organization: Sherburne SWCD (on behalf of Sherburne County)**

**Year: 2017**

**Total Aid Used in this Year: \$62,100**

## Program Summary

In 2017, Sherburne SWCD continued delegated authority of leading AIS Prevention activities within Sherburne County. Three staff members (one primary, two secondary) accomplished the following:

- Administered 14 AIS program elements
- Coordinated inspections of 2,500 watercraft
- Engaged 10 lake associations
- Mobilized 50 volunteer positions
- Educated 1,000 elementary students
- Discussed AIS with 25 local elected officials
- County Sherriff partnership (40+ hours of AIS Enforcement & Education)
- Reached countless individuals with AIS education, promotional items and signage

## Snapshot Overview: AIS Prevention Aid Budget

Category	Budget (\$)
Program Coordination, Partnerships & Job Creation	\$28,000
Public Awareness & Education	\$6,500
Watercraft Inspection & Decontamination	\$18,000
Enforcement	\$3,000
Monitoring, Early Detection & Response Planning	\$6,150
Management of AIS Populations	\$10,630
Contingency – large future project fund growth	\$10,000 <i>(includes carryover funds from 2016)</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$82,280</b>

## Program Coordination, Partnerships & Job Creation:

**\$ 38,000 estimated aid spent on program management, forming partnerships, facilitating task force activities, and creating jobs.** *Note: the dollar figure includes “program coordination” and “watercraft inspection” categories from table above; \$18,000 was used to hire seasonal contracted inspectors.*

Metric	Example Measures	Results
Jobs created and staff dedicated to AIS work (e.g. program coordinators, seasonal staff, interns, inspectors, officers, etc.)	# new/existing staff (full or part time), % staff time, permanent or seasonal	One 30% position, one 5% position funded Five seasonal contracted inspectors
Volunteers recruited	# active volunteers, # hours served	50 volunteer positions, ~275 hours
AIS Task Force / Committee	# of meetings held, # of members, # of stakeholder groups represented	AIS Task Force, 8 members @ 2 meetings COLA: 9 steering comm members @ 6 mtgs 12 regular members @ 4 mtgs
Joint projects implemented (multiple counties, multiple organizations, etc.)	# of projects, counties involved, organizations involved	Partnership with Wright County on AIS yard signs, creation of Sherburne County COLA.
Grants awarded to local organizations (list types of projects, e.g. inspection, public awareness, invasive aquatic plant management)	\$, # of groups, # of projects, types of projects	Six grants totaling \$14,500 awarded for AIS monitoring, Lake Veg Plans, AIS strategic control (treatment)

Metric	Example Measures	Results
Additional contributions leveraged from local organizations (e.g. grants, contributions, matching funds, in-kind services) for all county AIS activities	\$, hours, supplies	\$26,600 offered from lake associations for grant matching funds. Countless hours spent on AIS program correspondence, feedback, reviews, etc.

### Comments on your program coordination, partnerships & job creation activities:

Activities in this category include administration positions as well as hired staff to complete watercraft inspections. Numerous volunteer activities and expenses are included in the table above but are likely under-estimated. The success of the Sherburne County AIS Prevention Program lies on feedback and discussions with county stakeholders, as well as their participation in county partnerships such as the newly formed Sherburne County COLA.

### A story of success:

In its first year, the Sherburne County AIS Grant program awarded \$14,500 for six projects. Grant recipients were able to hire out professional lake AIS monitoring services, complete lake vegetation management plans, and complete AIS control through integrated approaches (herbicide and hand-pulling).

### Public Awareness & Education:

#### \$6,500 estimated aid spent on public awareness and education activities

Metric	Example Measures	Results
AIS presentations, public meetings, booths at community events	# of presentations; # of meetings; # of events; # of attendees	6 CLIMB Theater presentations, 1,000 students reached, 1 statewide AIS education event (Starry Trek), 2 AIS Task Force meetings (~20 people), 3 AIS identification site visits, presentation by SWCD and County Water Deputy to ~25 locally elected officials.
In-school AIS presentations	# of presentations; # of children educated	6 CLIMB Theater presentations, 1,000 students reached. 2 SWCD AIS presentations, 100 students reached.
Outreach to businesses (bait shop, lake service provider, resort, etc.)	# businesses; type of interaction	Invitation to 1 bait shop owner & 1 service provider to attend AIS Task Force meetings
Materials (publications, giveaways, displays, newsletters, etc.) and media (TV, radio, billboards, newspaper)	\$, # unique material created, # printed, # distributed, # of times aired	2 newspaper articles, 1 AIS pamphlet, 1,000 custom AIS bobbers, 1,000 custom can koozies, 1 Hwy billboard, 3 social media posts.

### Comments on your public awareness & education activities:

A goal of the AIS Prevention program is to increase education and awareness across a variety of county resident demographics. Targeted education was completed to ~1,100 elementary and high school students through in-school presentations. Lake residents received opportunities for AIS identification through the state Starry Trek monitoring day. A billboard placed along Hwy 10 displayed the “Clean Drain Dry” message to all travelers (watercraft users and non-users). AIS prevention, management, and laws were discussed with locally elected officials during a SWCD Conservation Tour in partnership with the County Water Deputy. AIS was determined to be the county’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority Concern within the 2018-2028 Local Water Management Plan; discussion of AIS was had with the Water Plan Advisory Committee, DNR staff and Sherburne County Board of Commissioners as a part of the plan drafting process.

### A story of success:

AIS identification and awareness showed signs of increasing this year, with 12 volunteers learning to identify and then searching for starry stonewort. Three lakefront property owners contacted the SWCD about a potential AIS infestation. All occurrences turned out to be native plant look-a-likes.

### Watercraft Inspection & Decontamination:

**\$18,000 estimated aid spent on watercraft inspection activities**

**\$0 estimated aid spent on decontamination activities**

Metric	Example Measures	Results
Authorized inspectors (Level 1 and/or 2) trained and hired	# Level 1 inspectors; # Level 2 inspectors	5 Level 1 inspectors
Inspections performed	# inspections	2,475 inspections
Inspection coverage	Season dates, # hours, # accesses, # waterbodies	May 13 to Sept 3, 8 access points covering 12 lakes
Boaters arriving in compliance with AIS laws	% clean arriving inspections; % arriving with drain plugs out	91% with drain plugs out (1,463) 9% drain plugs in (149)
Violations	plug in on arrival, residual water, attached plants, attached zebra mussels	149 watercrafts had plug in, 27 had plants and 9 had residual water.
Boats exiting with plants attached (thus removed by inspector)	% (or #) of exiting boats with plants attached	127 had plants present, 4 with water present
Decontamination units in operation and decontaminations performed	# units, total # of decontaminations, # required, # courtesy	No decon stations in Sherburne County
Watercraft tracking	# counties/states watercraft are from or going to	Incoming – 37 counties, 14 states Outgoing – 34 counties <i>Majority however is inter-county traffic.</i>

### Comments on your watercraft inspection & decontamination activities:

Level 1 Inspectors were contracted through WaterGuards LLC to cover 8 of the higher use access points in the county. Additionally, one lake group received a DNR cost-share inspector grant to increase inspections at their access. Numerous volunteers were trained for AIS Volunteer work by DNR staff. SWCD coordinated these efforts to minimize duplicate public access work, and examined end of season data.

### A story of success:

Discussions of a decontamination station have been had, but no solution has been apparent for the issues that exist (no “central” location, no identified source of funds for maintenance & staffing). Discussions have led to the idea of purchasing advanced cleaning equipment however; one lake group and city partnership is investigating feasibility of the new CD3 cleaning station for their public access.

## Working with Local Law Enforcement:

**\$3,000 estimated aid spent on enforcement activities**

Metric	Example Measures	Results
Local law enforcement actively involved in enforcing AIS laws	\$, # officers, # hours, # inspections by enforcement	4 officers, 38 hours AIS enforcement during holiday weekends
Officers trained on AIS laws by DNR staff	# trainings, # officers	4 officers, 38 hours AIS enforcement during holiday weekends
AIS warnings and/or citations issued by local law enforcement	# warnings, # citations	<10 warnings issued, no citations

### Comments on your enforcement activities:

In 2017, AIS enforcement was approached through a partnership with Recreational Enforcement Water Deputy Cole Petroske of the Sherburne County Sheriff's office. Deputy Petroske and 3 colleagues received DNR training for AIS laws and reached out to the community during high traffic holiday weekends.

### A story of success:

At an annual SWCD Conservation Tour, one stop featured AIS Prevention. SWCD staff discussed current initiatives the county is involved with, and that discussion was followed by a presentation by Deputy Cole Petroske of the Sherburne County Sheriff's office. Deputy Petroske discussed AIS transport and boat plug laws, then physically demonstrated to the tour attendees typical AIS "hiding" places on his watercraft. This was the first time an AIS topic was included in the Sherburne SWCD Conservation Tour, an annual event. The audience included numerous local and regional decision makers including members of the Water Plan Advisory Committee, local township board members, city staff and council members, county commissioners, and a state senate representative.

## Monitoring, Early Detection & Response Planning:

**\$10,300 estimated aid spent on Monitoring & Early Detection**

**\$ 0 estimated aid spent on Response Planning & Implementation**

**\$ 12,000 estimated aid set aside as contingency or rainy day fund for potential future response efforts**

Metric	Example Measures	Results
Lakes and rivers surveyed for AIS	# of waterbodies	15 lakes (16 public access lakes in Sherburne County)
Zebra mussel settling plates deployed	# of samplers; # of waterbodies	6 samplers, 6 lakes
Veliger tows	\$, # of waterbodies sampled; # of samples analyzed	39 samples from 13 lakes analyzed for ZM veligers, 6 samples from 2 lakes analyzed for spiny water flea
Contracted AIS surveys	# surveys, # waterbodies, survey types	Provided cost-share funding for 2 point-intercept studies on one lake, meander-based visual survey on 7 lakes
New infestation response plan developed	\$, scale of plan (county-wide, lake-specific, species-specific)	None, county wide and lake-wide (2 lakes) plans previously drafted
New infestation response effort(s) funded	\$, # of projects	None, no new AIS occurrences in 2017. Three site visits conducted by SWCD staff to identify suspect aquatic plants.

### Comments on your monitoring, early detection & response activities:

Sherburne SWCD staff, contractors and volunteers completed a variety of monitoring and EDR activities. The above dollar estimate would have been \$4,000 higher, but work completed by Minnesota Conservation Corps crews was able to be funded through a state grant so these services were free for Sherburne County. Monitoring strategies were employed that targeted a variety of species, as well as species life-cycles (ZM veligers and adults, early and late-season surveys, etc.). Volunteers spent an estimated 100 hours with early detection monitoring in 2017.

### A story of success:

A new Sherburne County AIS Grant Program is allowing cost-sharing for detailed point-intercept and meander-based AIS surveys completed by professional contractors. Without these funds, access to professional services would have been cost prohibitive. The surveys generate very good data regarding the presence, abundance, and spatial location of both native and non-native species.

### Management of AIS Populations:

**\$10,630 estimated aid spent on AIS Control using herbicide, mechanical (harvest or hand-pull), biological, and/or pesticide control methods**

Metric	Example Measures	Results
Control projects funded	# waterbodies; # of projects; acres of treatment; species treated; treatment type	Seven waterbodies, four projects, cost share towards 78 acres of AIS control (CLP and EWM). Methods include herbicide application as well as both volunteer and contracted hand-removal.

### Comments on your AIS control activities:

Funds were available to lake organizations through a cost-share grant program. Four lake groups utilized the program to control nuisance conditions of CLP and EWM, providing match financial costs and volunteer activities towards the projects as well. Conditions of each grant are that DNR permits are obtained, the treatments target high use public waters (or areas outlined according to strategies in a lake management plan), and DNR guidance is incorporated to the treatment application (early season treatments, etc.).

### A story of success:

The first year of the cost-share grant program allowed four lake groups to pursue AIS management projects. Through requirements associated with the program, there has been much education about the importance of managing AIS populations on a lake-wide (not property-wide) basis as well as planning for effective treatments. These projects are necessary to enhance recreational opportunity and ecological condition of the lakes, as well as keep population sizes down to a level which is more difficult to transport to further lakes.

### Other Metrics Tracked by Your Program – Contingency Funds

A minimum of 3% of the annual county allocation is deposited to this funding source.

Metric	Measure	Results
Contingency Fund addition	Dollar amount	3% or excess funds from annual budget
Contingency proposals	# of proposals	None official – a proposal for CD3 watercraft cleaning station is currently in discussion

### Comments on the information provided above:

In March of 2017, a Contingency Fund guidance structure was developed by Sherburne SWCD with guidance from DNR and the AIS Task Force. The Contingency Fund allows for the accumulation of leftover funds from previous years, to be used towards “large expense” items. Examples of these expenses might include EDRR treatments, decontamination stations, or advanced cleaning stations at public access points. It has been expressed that the ~\$70,000 Sherburne County receives just is not enough to fund these larger projects and continue to conduct education, outreach, administration, inspections, etc. The Contingency Fund guidance developed in March 2017 was reviewed and approved by the Sherburne SWCD Board in April 2017. The guidance includes requirements of potential funding applicants, including submitting a proposal to the SWCD staff and board which outlines the need and use of funds.



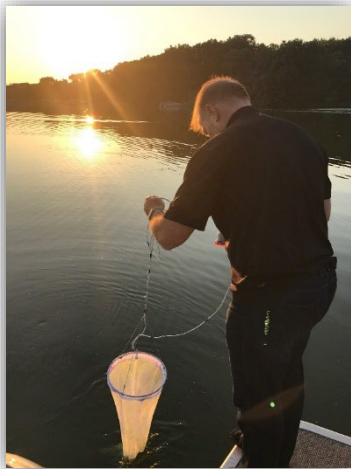
Photo(s) of AIS activities



***Sherburne County Deputy Cole Petroske speaks at the SWCD Conservation Tour, September 2017.***



***AIS Billboard along Hwy 10 near Becker, summer and fall 2017.***



***A Little Elk Lake volunteer samples the water for zebra mussel veligers, July 2017.***



***A Lake Orono resident is awarded funds through the first Sherburne County AIS Cost-Share Grant Program, March 2017.***



***SWCD staff and Sherburne County volunteers about to set off in search of AIS during the statewide "Starry Trek" monitoring event, August 2017.***



***Custom promotional items created by Sherburne SWCD staff, summer 2017.***