

Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan

2020-2024



**Prepared by the Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District
with assistance by the Sherburne County Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force**

For Sherburne County

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Sherburne County Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force

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Background

A non-native, invasive species may be defined as:

- 1) Causing or may cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health; or
- 2) Threatening or may threaten natural resources or the use of natural resources.

These plants, animals, fungi or microorganisms may be found in a terrestrial or aquatic environments. Some examples of aquatic invasive species (AIS) include curly-leaf pondweed, starry stonewort, Eurasian water milfoil, purple loosestrife, rusty crayfish, New Zealand mud snail, and zebra mussels. The spread of these species has led to habitat alteration, ecosystem degradation, and a loss of bio-diversity due to intensified competition for resources. AIS typically have little-to-no natural predators in their new environment, reproduce very quickly, and are more aggressive than native species. Along with negatively affecting aquatic wildlife, AIS impede recreational opportunities and disrupt industrial use of public waters. Additionally, economic loss may occur through reduced waterfront property values or a decrease in tourism to infected waterbodies. Although great efforts are being made to eliminate AIS from a water body, history shows that it is nearly impossible to fully remove a population; often managing an existing population is the only solution, even though this too can be a time consuming and difficult task. As a result, it is illegal to possess, transport, and/or introduce any aquatic plants or animals within Minnesota that are designated as “prohibited and regulated” invasive species by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

In 2014 the MN legislature recognized that success in AIS efforts would require the combination of local, state, and federal agencies. As such, on May 20th, 2014 the MN legislature leveraged local energy by creating the AIS prevention fund [Chapter 308, HF3167: Omnibus tax bill. Article 1: Property Tax Aids and Credits. Section 11] (Appendix A). This fund distributes \$10 million annually at the county level. The bill specifically states that the proceeds must solely be used to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species at all access sites within the county. The guidelines set by the county may include, but are not limited to, providing for site-level management, countywide awareness, and other procedures that the county finds necessary to achieve compliance.

The amount of funding each county receives is based on a formula using the number of public accesses in each county and the number of boat trailer parking spaces at those public accesses. Thus, this funding amount may change annually as changes occur to public accesses statewide. Since the passing of the AIS Prevention Fund, Sherburne County has received in excess of \$68,000 each year.

In November 2014 Sherburne County, by resolution, delegated Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to develop and implement an Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan (Appendix B). The plan was to be approved by the Sherburne County Board of Commissioners and filed with the MN DNR. In 2014 an AIS Task Force was assembled to assist in development of a five-year work plan, which was completed in July 2015. This work plan was to be reviewed annually and updated with documentation of AIS accomplishments from that year. In 2019, the task force reconvened to review the previous years of AIS Prevention work and provide recommendations to Sherburne SWCD for continued work through a new 5-year plan. This report provides a reflection on the initial 5-year plan and forecasts activities for the time period of 2020-2024.

AIS Prevention

It is generally recognized that the most effective strategy against invasive species is to prevent their introduction and establishment. Preventative measures typically offer the most cost-effective means to minimize or eliminate environmental, societal, and economic impacts. Prevention here relies on a diverse set of tools and methods, including inspections (w/enforcement), outreach, best management practices, and monitoring. Management of existing aquatic species and natural areas surrounding our water resources is another way to decrease susceptibility to invasion by invasive species (e.g. maximizing diversity and reducing disturbance) and may also constitute an element of prevention. Management should focus on maintaining resilient systems that can act to slow the establishment, spread, and dominance of invasive species. Management of existing AIS, though a reactive measure, can reduce the potential of spread to nearby waterbodies and thus is considered a form of prevention as well.

Current Status of Sherburne County Waters

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) lists waterbodies holding AIS as being “infested”. Table I displays a list of AIS infested Sherburne County waterbodies. Please note that some species are not included within the MN DNR’s infested designation, including common carp or curly leaf pondweed. Even through these species do warrant an infested listing, they are still considered invasive and their presence can result in ecological and economic impacts. Roughly 800 Minnesota lakes are known to contain curly-leaf pondweed. Curly-leaf pondweed has been documented in 22 of Sherburne County’s 59 named lakes and is likely occurring in additional smaller lakes without official documentation.

	Waterbody	County	Invasive Species	ID #
Infested Waters	Mississippi River*	Multiple Counties	Zebra mussel, Eurasian watermilfoil	multiple
	Rum River**	Multiple Counties	Zebra mussel, Eurasian watermilfoil	multiple
	Big	Sherburne	Eurasian watermilfoil	710082
	Eagle	Sherburne	Eurasian watermilfoil	710067
	Little Elk	Sherburne	Eurasian watermilfoil	710055
	Mitchell	Sherburne	Eurasian watermilfoil	710081
	Rush	Sherburne	Eurasian watermilfoil	710147
	Fredrickson Slough	Sherburne	Eurasian watermilfoil	710110

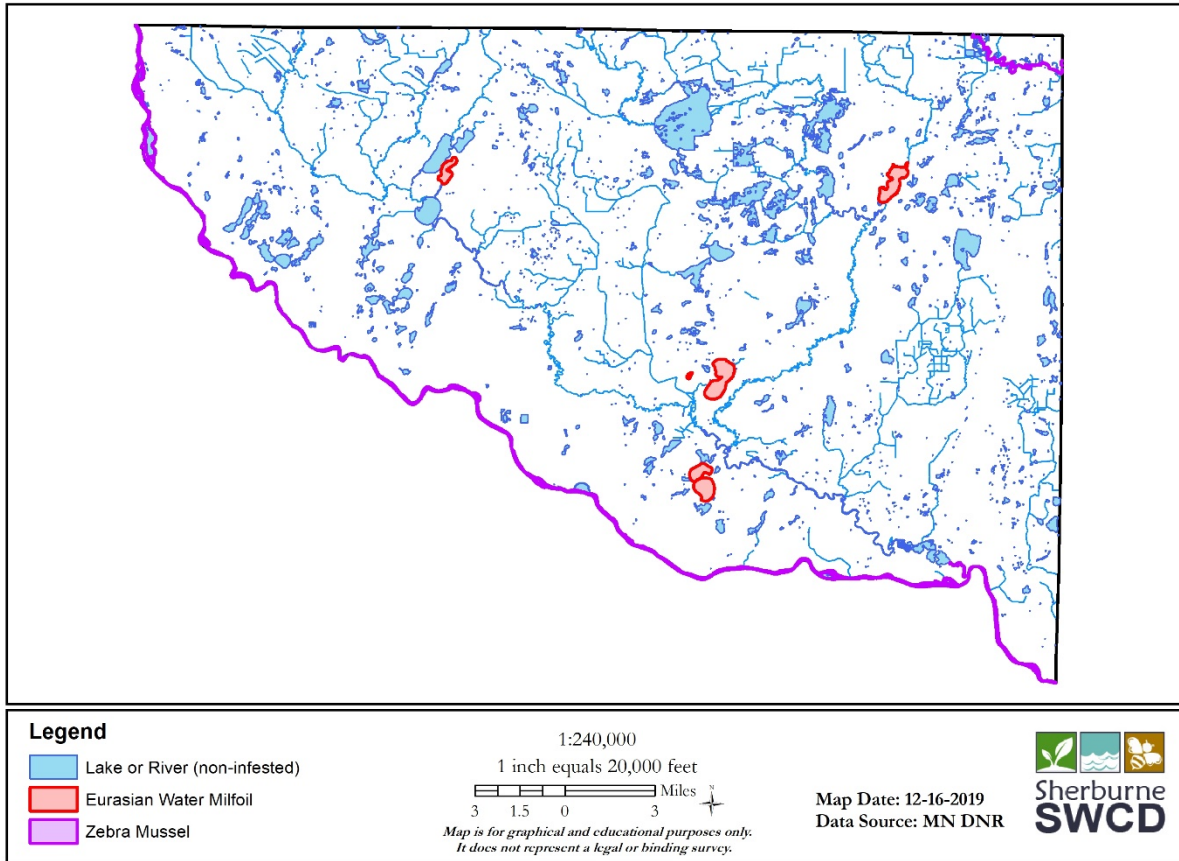
	Waterbody	ID #	Waterbody	ID #	Waterbody	ID #
Curly-leaf pondweed Lakes	Ann Lake	710069	East Hunter Lake	710023	Pickerel Lake	710158
	Big Lake	710082	Fremont Lake	710016	Rice Lake	710142
	Big Elk Lake	710141	Julia Lake	710145	Round Lake	710167
	Birch Lake	710057	Little Elk Lake	710055	Rush Lake	710147
	Briggs Lake	710146	Long Lake	710159	Sandy Lake	710040
	Camp Lake	710123	Mitchell Lake	710081	Thompson Lake	710096
	Eagle Lake	710067	Mosford Lake	710126	West Hunter Lake	710022
			Orono Lake	710013		

Table I. Sherburne County AIS waterbodies lists. Databases include MN DNR defined infested waters and curly-leaf pondweed waters in Sherburne County. MN DNR database, Nov 2019.

*includes 500 ft upstream of the mouth of the Pine River in Crow Wing County to the Iowa border and 500 ft upstream tributaries.

**Includes 500 ft upstream into its tributaries

Sherburne County AIS Infestations, 2019



Map 1. AIS infested waters in Sherburne County as of December 2019. Note that the Mississippi River and Rum River are listed as impaired for zebra mussels. The DNR lists connected / continuous waterbodies as being infested. Curly-leaf pondweed and common carp occurrences not included on this map due to their heavy presence in Minnesota waters.

Purpose of AIS Prevention and Management Plan

- Justifies the use of legislatively granted AIS prevention funds.
- Guide efforts that prevent the spread of AIS into Sherburne County lakes and streams.
- Exercise any and all powers necessary to assure implementation of this plan and its goals in order to preserve economic and environmental viability of Sherburne’s water bodies.
- Summarizes county-wide activities
- Informs and educates Sherburne County stakeholders

Plan Development and Consistency

In 2014, the Sherburne SWCD and AIS Task Force reviewed AIS Plans developed by Minnesota counties and the DNR, regularly communicated with the MN DNR AIS Prevention Planner and Invasive Aquatic Plant Specialist, participated in several AIS workshops, and factored in feedback from the AIS Task Force. These efforts were completed to better understand the AIS issue as a group and develop the initial

Prevention Plan. The topic of AIS Prevention was incorporated into the Sherburne County Local Water Plan during a 2018 update as well, identifying the issue as a priority concern for local waterbodies. In 2019, the Sherburne SWCD reconvened the AIS Task Force and held a series of focused meetings to review activities in the current plan, examine activities and programs occurring in other counties, and provide feedback on an approach for a new 5-year AIS Prevention Plan.

The AIS Prevention Plan is intended to guide activities on a local basis, but also to build upon efforts at the state level through agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources and University of Minnesota Extension and AIS Research Center. Every effort included in this plan is intended to compliment the work of state level partners and be consistent with guidance and protocols our partners from the state develop.

Adaptive Management

This plan is not meant to be static or prescriptive, or to limit the activities the county may consider. It provides a framework to adapt to rapidly changing conditions. AIS management is a relatively new field in water resource management, particularly at the County level, and new experience and evolving research will need to be incorporated to prevent and manage the presence of AIS. It is a journey of continuous improvement, building upon gained knowledge to reduce uncertainty, maximizing the efficient use of resources, and realizing more effective results. As such, this plan will be **reviewed by the Sherburne SWCD annually with assistance from the AIS Task Force periodically.**

Due to uncertainties of long term AIS funding, the SWCD will remain vigilant as to not make any long term financial commitments with the AIS aid in the off chance that the funding is revoked or changed by the State of Minnesota.

Sherburne County AIS Task Force

As previously mentioned, the Sherburne SWCD created a task force to assist with the development of the AIS Prevention Plan to ensure that the actions taken to slow the spread of AIS would be well suited to Sherburne County. The Task Force was created initially in 2014, and open seats were filled again in 2019 with the review of the 5-year AIS Prevention Plan. It is intended to have representation of numerous stakeholder groups on the Task Force, including Water Plan Committee members, Law Enforcement, Lake Associations, Lake Service Providers, Water Orientated Businesses (bait dealers, marine shops), Sportsmen's groups, and Local Officials (city/county/township). SWCD staff and DNR AIS staff are present for technical support.

It is anticipated that the AIS Task Force will continue to meet on a biannual basis to keep up-to-date on AIS activities and to advise the SWCD on additional priorities and needs per this plan's Adaptive Management goal.

AIS Prevention Priority Setting

The 2014 and 2019 AIS Task Force reviewed information and conducted priority setting exercises in order to more efficiently address AIS prevention and focus upon actions that were most effective for Sherburne County. A comparative analysis of the results from 2014 and 2019 priority ranking is as follows:

Similarities in 2015 and 2019 survey:

1. Education / Public Awareness ranked as a top priority
2. Early Detection Monitoring viewed as an important component in 2015 and 2019.
3. Each Task Force viewed local partnerships and volunteer engagement as a priority

Differences

1. Education / Public Awareness approaches
 - a. 2014 Task Force showed a slight preference for TV/Newspaper and other media, along with promotional materials for AIS Prevention.
 - b. 2019 Task Force indicated a greater preference for personal interactions, training and presentations.
2. The 2014 Task Force showed support for exploring partnerships for decontamination opportunities. The 2019 Task Force showed a relatively lower level of support, but discussions with the group highlighted the difficulty of logistics and cost with this tool.
3. Starry stonewort has become a relatively new species that has been elevated to a high level of concern with the 2019 Task Force.

Overall, the 2014 and 2019 AIS Task Force were in agreement that education and outreach was a top priority. However, the 2019 AIS Task Force also felt that other categories of AIS prevention were worth increased effort Figure 1. The Sherburne SWCD, as implementor of the AIS Prevention Plan, will work to balance identified priorities with a diverse approach to AIS prevention that is consistent with the available resources (time and funding).

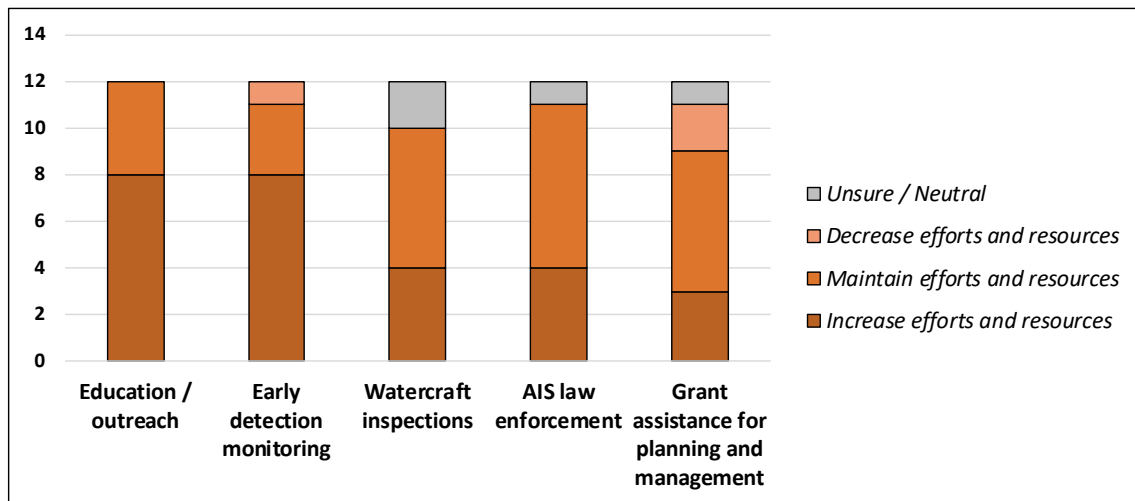


Figure 1. 2019 AIS Task Force Survey responses, “For the categories below, please indicate your opinion on increasing, decreasing or maintaining resource allocation.”

Select survey responses are included within the sections that follow in this document, while a full copy of the 2019 AIS Task Force Survey can be found in Appendix C.

AIS Prevention Initiatives

The sections that follow outline the areas of AIS Prevention, divided into categories that include:

1. Education and Public Awareness
2. Early Detection and Rapid Response
3. Inspections and Enforcement
4. Grant and Volunteer Engagement Programs

As previously discussed, since its inception in 2015 the Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan has recognized Education and Public Awareness as a top priority. Even so, at the same time the program recognizes the importance of addressing the AIS threat through a diversity of approaches that collectively aim to achieve the following:

- Ensure public awareness of the issue
- Minimize transport of new AIS to Sherburne County waters
- Create a network of partnerships
- Quickly identify new infestations should they occur
- Enforcing state AIS laws through inspections and partnerships with County Sheriff's Dept.
- Leverage the power of volunteer and user groups to increase program adoption and implementation

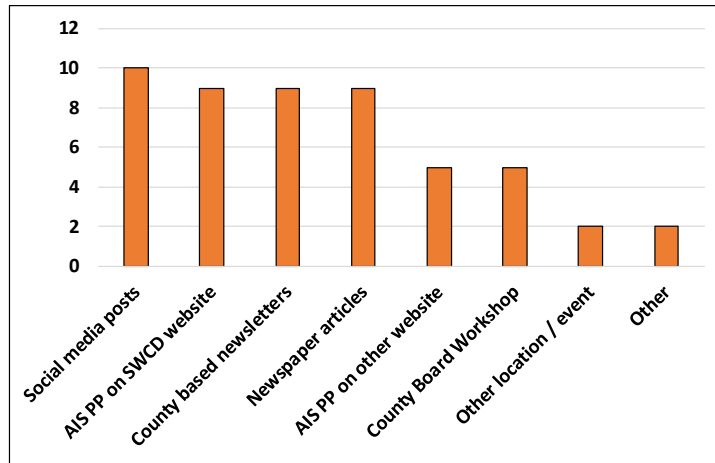
Though activities and spending may be somewhat categorized in the sections that follow, it must be recognized that each activity may have value as an educational opportunity and these opportunities should be seized upon. For example, Early Detection of AIS comes with an opportunity to bring youth groups to a lake to identify potential AIS plants and compare them to native plants. A watercraft inspection has the opportunity to present both an enforcement action as well as an education opportunity for the watercraft user. A symbiotic dovetailing of these efforts will only work to increase knowledge of the AIS threat and keep transport of AIS into and within the county to a minimum.

Education and Public Awareness

Background: Everyone has heard of AIS but not everyone remembers what they must do to follow the law. Education ensures that everyone who enjoys MN's water resources gets on board to help stop the spread of AIS. This category includes activities that support long-term education and awareness of AIS appropriate for Sherburne County.

Strategy: Lake and river users cannot help reduce the spread of AIS if they do not know why or how to do the right thing. Key audiences include direct users of water resources as well as future users – teenage youth. The AIS Task force clearly communicated the importance of an education and public awareness campaign which utilizes existing material when applicable; however, they also expressed the importance of adding a local touch to the material to make it stand out and resonate with local lake / river users.

Figure 2. 2019 AIS Task Force Survey responses, “In your opinion, how are non-urgent AIS related announcements best communicated to interested stakeholders?”



This plan will focus on creating a diverse set of public awareness and education pieces, so people are exposed to the same message many times and in many different formats. Activities associated with this category take significant staff time to develop and implement at first, but when programs are developed the time investment decreases. Foundational aspects of the educational campaign have been developed and will be modified as needed. Outreach avenues will include; maintaining an AIS webpage and social media presence, inventorying and improving signage at boat launches, implementing 6-12 education programming, providing AIS training for stakeholder groups, hosting AIS identification and management workshops, and building relationships with stakeholders. Upon establishing the foundation, the SWCD will continue to implement the AIS activities listed within this section as well as additional activities as identified. The 2019 AIS Task Force identified social media, websites, and newsletters as important resources for spreading information (Figure 2) and identified numerous interpersonal activities (trainings, workshops, presentations, etc.) as effective over passive outreach methods.

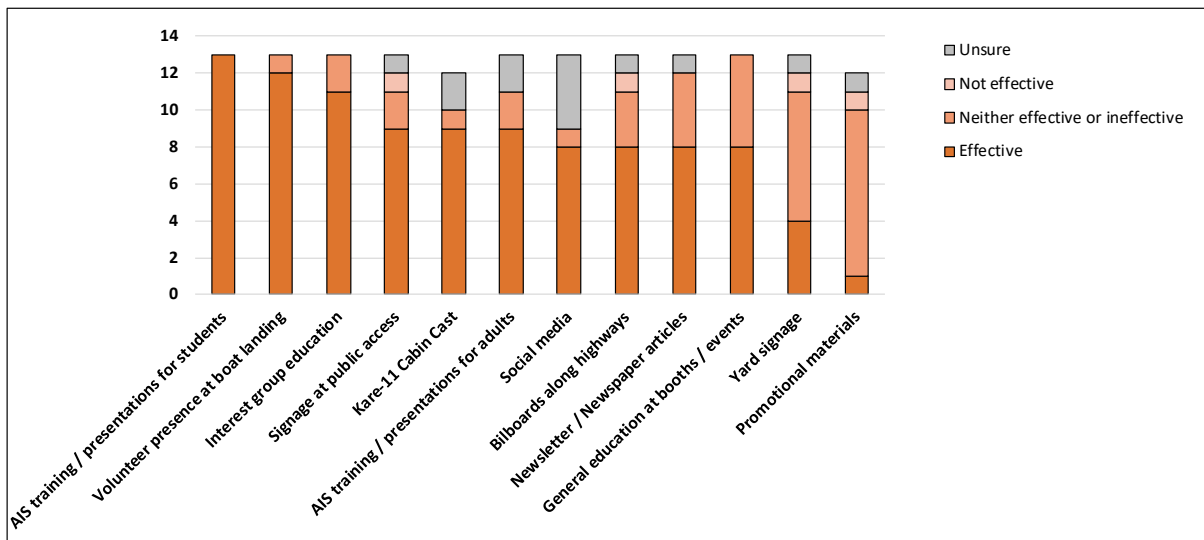


Figure 3. 2019 AIS Task Force Survey responses, “Please share your opinion on how effective the following education and outreach approaches are / would be for educating people who use Sherburne County waters.”

The Sherburne County AIS program encourages partnerships on awareness/education activities! Lake groups, the SC COLA and other interested parties are encouraged to communicate with the SWCD to discuss how efforts can be coordinated and complemented. As education and public awareness has been discussed as a high priority for the Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan, the 2019 AIS Task Force was asked a question related to stakeholder groups that should be prioritized for this outreach. Figure 4 indicates the Task Force felt that direct lake users (anglers, boaters, lake property owners) as well as future boaters (teenage youth) should be a high priority for outreach.

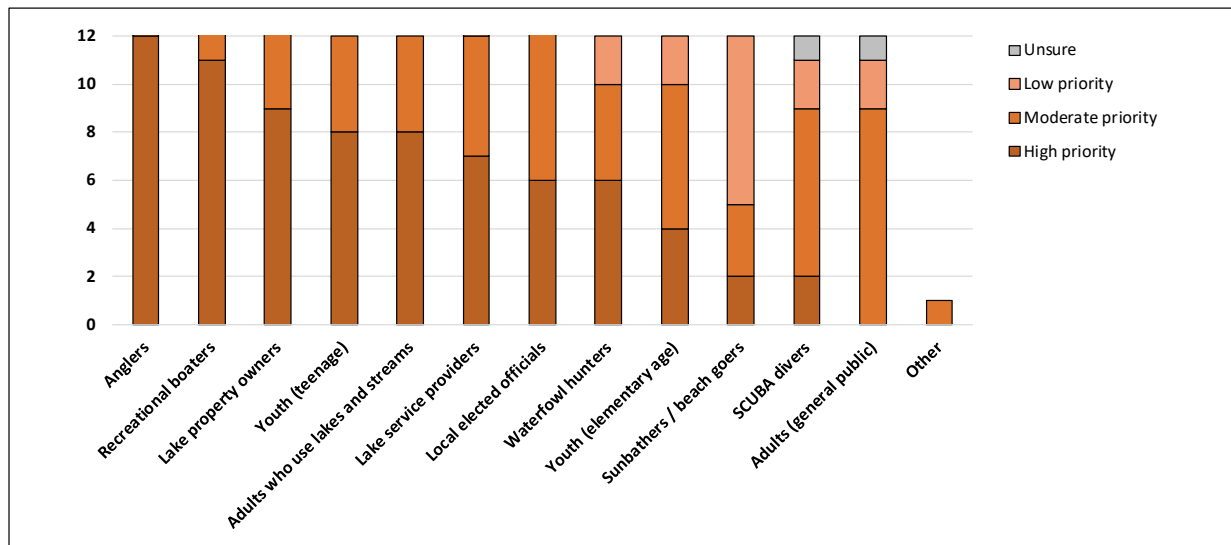


Figure 4. 2019 AIS Task Force Survey responses, “What level of priority would you place on the following stakeholder groups for education and outreach in order to enhance AIS prevention?”

Early Detection and Rapid Response

Background: “Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) are considered the “second line of defense” after prevention. It is a critical component of any effective invasive species management program. When new invasive species infestations are detected, a prompt and coordinated eradication and containment response can reduce the potential establishment, spread, and harmful impacts of a species. This action results in lower cost and less resource damage than implementing a long-term control program after a species is established. Early detection of new infestations requires vigilance and regular monitoring.” (MN DNR, 2013).

Strategy: The AIS Task Force articulated the importance of identifying infestations early and knowing who to contact when a new infestation is found. As such, this plan includes tasks associated with carrying out early detection monitoring activities for potential AIS as well as developing an early detection and response for each interested Sherburne County lake group.

Early detection has and will continue to focus on Zebra / Quagga mussels, Starry stonewort and Eurasian water milfoil (identified as high local priorities by the AIS Task Force). Starry stonewort has proven to be a potentially disastrous AIS for Minnesota lakes and has recently been found in three adjacent counties (Wright, Stearns and Hennepin). Rapid response entails being prepared for when an introduction of AIS should occur – knowing who to contact and what to do and how to develop a list of action options based upon the situation on hand.

As with the other initiatives included in this work plan, the tasks associated with this category will be phased in over time and subject to change. Activities focused on early in the program included the development of a contact list for reporting new infestations, establishment of a volunteer-based early detection monitoring program, and the development of plans regarding what strategies should be employed once a new AIS is detected. Continued work will include developing training modules for stakeholder / volunteer use and administering existing programs.

Other tasks implemented over time may include development of simplified techniques for monitoring, investigating partnerships with local colleges for monitoring, and investigating innovative strategies for early detection and control of AIS (i.e. snorkeling, scuba diving, bio-controls, etc.).

Volunteer Monitoring: In order to most efficiently utilize time and money, the SWCD has and will continue to encourage volunteers to engage in AIS monitoring. All volunteer monitors will need to attend a training specific to the monitoring exercise.



Photo 1 and Photo 2. AIS volunteer activities. Volunteer-based zebra mussel veliger early detection monitoring (left photo) and aquatic plant identification workshops (right photo) have been reoccurring programs with the Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan.

Inspections & Enforcement

Background

Inspection: The purpose of this program is to prevent the spread of AIS through boater education and watercraft inspections at public water accesses. The MN DNR employs inspectors which are assigned locations based on risk (and request); however, they do not have the ability to place inspectors everywhere. In order to overcome this shortfall, local units of government can sign a delegation agreement with the DNR and hire their own Level I or II Inspectors. Inspectors can prohibit the launching or operation of water-related equipment if a person refuses to allow an inspection or doesn't remove

water or AIS. Authorized Inspectors can also require a watercraft to be decontaminated prior to launching into MN waters. Only Level II Inspectors can use decontamination equipment. Volunteers may participate within a MN DNR volunteer-based inspection program. These are not paid positions, and a high level of emphasis is placed on the educational component as volunteers have no enforcement authority. However, it is beneficial to have local volunteers engage watercraft operators to help spread the message of AIS prevention and assist in examining watercraft for AIS. The Sherburne SWCD began promoting an AIS Volunteer Incentive program in 2018 to encourage involvement in the MN DNR's AIS Volunteer program. More information on this program is included in the "Grant Programs section below.

Enforcement: Any local peace officer can be trained to enforce AIS laws. Peace officers can enforce AIS laws and give civil citations (civil citations can be given only when trained by the DNR). Under current law, non-trained officers can only issue criminal citations. The DNR Conservation Officers provide this training for free. If a LGU enters into a delegation agreement to hire local inspectors, peace officers are required to provide support in conjunction with DNR Conservation Officers.

Strategies: The AIS Task Force ranked watercraft inspection and AIS law enforcement as 3rd and 4th level priorities, behind Education and Early Detection Monitoring (Appendix C, Question 4). It was generally felt that AIS watercraft inspectors were best suited for conducting actual inspections and lacked the education opportunity that comes with discussions at a public access point. Some concern was expressed over hiring inexperienced or younger inspectors to complete Level I inspections, as it was felt by some AIS Task Force members that watercraft operators may not take them seriously as opposed to experienced or older inspectors. It is recognized that some individuals have the skill set to work with the public better than others, but it is also recognized that the seasonal position of Level I inspectors means that typically younger inexperienced individuals are the only ones available to complete this work. The focus then shifts towards increased training opportunities to give inexperienced individuals the tools they need to navigate difficult situations that may arise when working with the general public.

Inspection: Based on this information, the SWCD will continue its program which includes three levels of inspection and education services; the Sherburne County Sheriff's Department (Enforcement), contracting with a local AIS Inspector hiring agency for Level I Inspections, and facilitating programs that encourage volunteer work on AIS outreach at public access locations. In addition to entry-level training provided by DNR, Sherburne SWCD will partner with neighboring county AIS Coordinators to host Advanced AIS Inspection training on an annual basis. Additional training will be sought for as needed on a continuing basis. The amount of budget geared towards either will likely vary from year to year based on actual costs, effectiveness, and new information.



Photo 3. Level I inspection at Little Elk Lake.

Level I Inspectors (Photo 3) have been contracted via a local company that has the capacity to cover hiring, training, equipment, coordinating, and insurance for inspectors. In an effort to employ local people for access inspections, the SWCD will coordinate with local colleges and interested parties to encourage them to apply with the company. In 2015-2019, Level I inspectors were hired to complete a dedicated amount of inspection hours at designated public accesses in a roving fashion. The use of this roving system may make people more aware of their behavior considering they may be surprised by an unplanned inspection. In 2018, the University of Minnesota AIS Research Center began examining water quality parameters and watercraft movement to develop a prioritized list of lakes that could become infested with AIS. The AIS Task Force recommended targeting Level I Inspections on these prioritized Sherburne County waters in 2019. Additionally, the SWCD and lake groups formed agreements to supplement AIS inspectors through payments from the lake groups for increased hours on their lakes.

Enforcement: Sherburne County currently has one Recreational Enforcement deputy who spends approximately 10-15 hours a week (generally one day during the week and one day during the weekend) on area lakes. Lakes with the most complaints are visited most often. The primary purpose of the water patrol program is to focus on water safety to ensure compliance with laws, regulations and ordinances. Since 2015 the Sherburne SWCD has established a relationship with the Sheriff Department’s Water Patrol Deputy to spread the message of AIS prevention while they are out on area lakes. Additionally, education of sheriffs and local peace officers on AIS would result in informal “inspections” which would be incorporated into regular traffic stops. The 2019 AIS Task Force included some members who were active with the DNR’s AIS Volunteer program so had some experience working with the public and communicating about AIS laws. In the 2019 survey, most Task Force members indicated there was some education lacking within the boating community about AIS laws (Figure 5).



Photo 4. Sherburne County Sheriff Department watercraft. Sherriff’s Department staff are able to enforce both water safety laws as well as educate lake users on AIS laws.

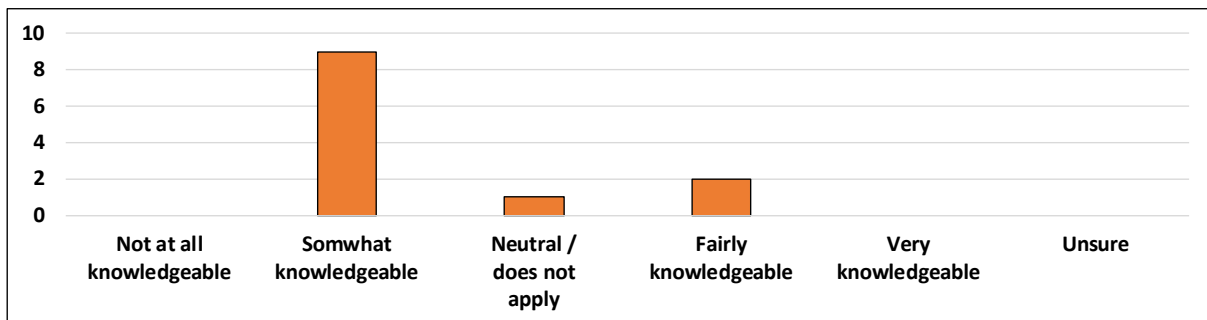


Figure 5. 2019 AIS Task Force Survey responses, “Overall, how knowledgeable do you believe lake and river users in Sherburne County are about the laws and regulations related to AIS?”

Grant Programs

Background: The Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan is committed to AIS prevention through multiple avenues, and this includes both leveraging local volunteer activities and empowering local groups to lead their own AIS prevention efforts. In 2017, the Sherburne SWCD developed two programs that would encourage volunteer and local AIS prevention efforts – the AIS Grant Program and AIS Contingency Program. The AIS Grant Program is intended to provide financial assistance to organized groups wishing to achieve the following:

- **AIS Management Planning:** This category is intended to partially fund strategic planning processes or AIS monitoring. AIS-Early Detection and Rapid Response plans, Lake Management Plans, and Lake Vegetation Management Plans are good examples of strategic planning projects. AIS monitoring for the purposes of determining management action effectiveness may be applicable as well.
- **AIS Control:** This includes direct management or control of AIS through Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) approved guidelines / practices. It is highly recommended that AIS control follow guidelines set forth by an applicant's strategic planning document (lake management plan, etc.).
- **AIS Volunteer Incentive:** Education is the first and foremost way in which AIS prevention may be obtained. This category is intended to incentivize active participation within the DNR's AIS Volunteer program amongst Sherburne County lake groups by providing a monetary award to groups that coordinate AIS volunteer activities.

In 2017-2019, the AIS Grant Program has awarded 25 grants to local organizations totaling \$49,115. It has also leveraged \$139,971 in local spending towards AIS projects fitting the categories above.

Also in 2017, an AIS Contingency Fund was established. The funds consist of money set aside each year from the AIS Prevention Aid. The purpose of the AIS Contingency Fund is to provide financial assistance for *“unanticipated AIS expenditures, emergency or critical rapid response efforts, or for use on emerging technology/ideas that may further assist Sherburne County in reaching its goal of preventing AIS spread and controlling existing AIS populations.”* A guidance document was approved in April 2017 regarding use of these funds. It is anticipated that these funds would be used for a rapid response scenario to contain or map a newly discovered AIS infestation, or to assist a local entity in implementing a “big purchase” item that helps to reduce AIS transfer. For example, in 2018 the AIS Contingency Fund assisted the City of Big Lake and Big Lake Community Lakes Association in purchasing I-LID cameras to monitor the public access points on Big and Mitchell Lakes. The I-LID camera is an educational and enforcement tool; when activated by motion sensors, the camera collects a picture of a watercraft entering / existing a waterbody and plays a pre-scripted message about AIS laws and the need to clean, drain and dry watercraft.

Strategy: The Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan will continue to allocate funds through the Grant Program, including traditional grants and AIS Contingency, in order to leverage volunteer actions and local efforts for AIS Prevention. These programs will provide financial incentive to gather information on and provide control for existing current infestations, look for new infestations, spread education on the topic with Sherburne County watercraft operators, and incentivize local actions for increased AIS prevention.

2020-2024 Proposed Annual Budget

Based upon five years of experience in managing the 2015-2019 AIS Prevention Plan, in addition to the priorities outlined by the 2019 AIS Task Force, an approximate budget has been proposed to guide the spending of AIS Prevention funds in the next 5-year AIS Prevention Plan (Figure 5). The graph in Figure 6 is to be a guiding resource that will be modified as needed per the AIS Prevention Plan's Adaptive Management clause on Page 7. Each year, the budget will be reviewed and edited based on planned activities as well as new AIS circumstances and new knowledge gained and shared by those researching and managing AIS. Of course, changes to the AIS Prevention program may result in a change to this budget as well. AIS Prevention Aid is received in two payments, the first in mid-July and the second in late December. Unused funds from any year will roll over into the following year and be added to the next year's spending or Contingency Fund. A list of program components and their approximate cost is included within Appendix D.

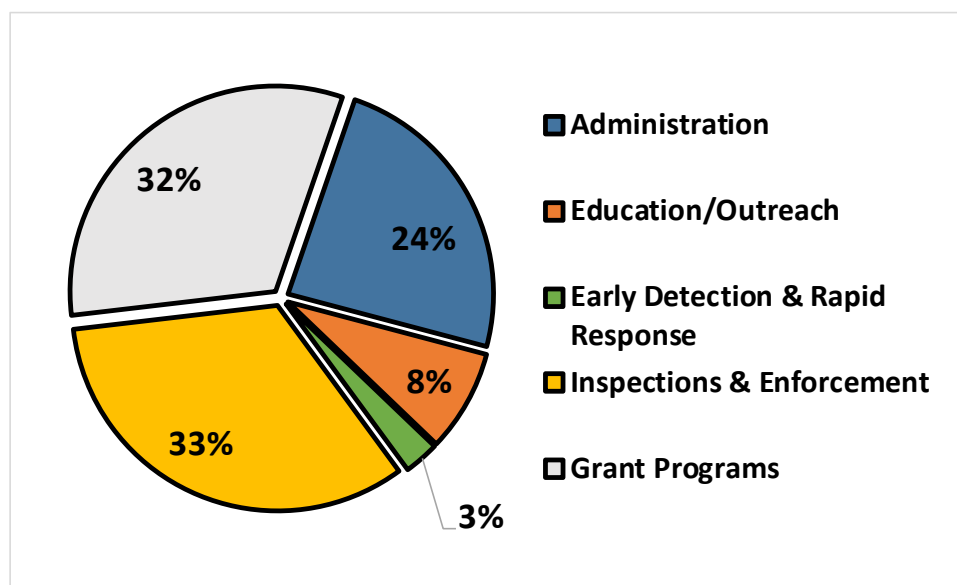


Figure 6. Anticipated 2020-2024 annual budget distribution. This annual budget projection is intended to guide expenditures based upon previous knowledge of program component costs and may be adjusted annually due to changes in program costs and situational circumstances.”

Annual Reporting

Reporting on the Sherburne County AIS Prevention Program will be conducted at both the local, county and state level. AIS program projects and expenses are documented by Sherburne SWCD staff and presented to the Sherburne SWCD Board of Supervisors for approval. Expenditures and program highlights are captured and presented to the Sherburne County Accounting Office on a quarterly basis. Sherburne SWCD provides documentation of program activities and expenditures to the MN DNR consistent with Minnesota Statute 477A.19 on an annual basis. Sherburne SWCD prioritizes an engaged audience and active partnerships on the topic of AIS, and so will be willing to host workshops, discussions or presentations with Sherburne County lake stakeholders (County Commissioners, Township Supervisors, City Staff, Lake Associations/Districts, Sporting / Recreational groups, etc.) upon request.

Conclusion

The AIS Prevention funds provided to Sherburne County by the State of Minnesota have been heavily utilized in a number of ways to combat new AIS infestations and prevent their transport. In order for success to be had, it is generally recognized that AIS prevention must be addressed through a multi-pronged approach; education of all lake stakeholders, inspections for compliance, early detection, local management of existing populations, empowering volunteers and local actions, and coordinating resources that will assist in managing unforeseen circumstances. Unifying stakeholders around threats from AIS (and other lake concerns) will result in a number of positive impacts such as increased awareness, increased participation in volunteer activities, coordination amongst a larger group, networking, and an overall larger and more unified voice regarding AIS issues.

Appendix A: Statute 477 A19- AIS Prevention Aid

477A.19 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION AID.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) When used in this section, the following terms have the meanings given them in this subdivision.

(b) "Aquatic invasive species" means nonnative aquatic organisms that invade water beyond their natural and historic range.

(c) "Watercraft trailer launch" means any public water access site designed for launching watercraft.

(d) "Watercraft trailer parking space" means a parking space designated for a boat trailer at any public water access site designed for launching watercraft.

Subd. 2. **Distribution.** The money appropriated to aquatic invasive species prevention aid under this section shall be allocated to all counties in the state as follows: 50 percent based on each county's share of watercraft trailer launches and 50 percent based on each county's share of watercraft trailer parking spaces.

Subd. 3. **Use of proceeds.** A county that receives a distribution under this section must use the proceeds solely to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species at all access sites within the county. The county must establish, by resolution or through adoption of a plan, guidelines for the use of the proceeds. The guidelines set by the county board may include, but are not limited to, providing for site-level management, countywide awareness, and other procedures that the county finds necessary to achieve compliance. The county may appropriate the proceeds directly, or may use any portion of the proceeds to provide funding for a joint powers board or cooperative agreement with another political subdivision, a soil and water conservation district in the county, a watershed district in the county, or a lake association located in the county. Any money appropriated by the county to a different entity or political subdivision must be used as required under this section. Each county must submit a copy of its guidelines for use of the proceeds to the Department of Natural Resources by December 31 of the year the payments are received.

Subd. 4. **Payments.** The commissioner of revenue must compute the amount of aquatic invasive species prevention aid payable to each county under this section. On or before August 1 of each year, the commissioner shall certify the amount to be paid to each county in the following year. The commissioner shall pay aquatic invasive species prevention aid to counties annually at the times provided in section 477A.015. For aid payable in 2014 only, the commissioner shall certify the amount to be paid to each county by July 1, 2014, and payment to the counties must be made at the time provided in section 477A.015 for the first installment of local government aid.

Subd. 5. **Appropriation.** \$4,500,000 in 2014, and \$10,000,000 each year thereafter, is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of revenue to make the payments required under this section.

History: 2014 c 308 art 1 s 11

Appendix B: Sherburne County AIS Resolution & Guidelines

Resolution # 110414-AD-1612

A RESOLUTION OF SHERBURNE COUNTY FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION AID

WHEREAS, 2014 Session Law Chapter 308 enacted by the Legislature, provides Minnesota counties a County Program Aid grant for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention. The amount designated for each county is based on the number of watercraft trailer launches as well as the number of watercraft trailer parking spaces within each county. Sherburne County was allocated \$32,832 for 2014 and \$72,960 for 2015, and;

WHEREAS, the legislation requires that Sherburne County must adopt of a resolution and establish guidelines for the use of the proceeds which are to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species at all access sites within the county, and;

WHEREAS, the County must submit a resolution and copy of its guidelines for use of the proceeds to the Department of Natural Resources by December 31 of the year the payments are received, and

WHEREAS, controlling Aquatic Invasive Species is one of the priority concerns identified in the County Water Plan.

WHEREAS, the County may appropriate the proceeds directly or may use any portion of the proceeds to provide funding for a joint powers board or cooperative agreement with another political subdivision, a Soil and Water Conservation District in the county, a watershed district in the county, or a lake association located in the county. Any money appropriated by the County and transferred to a different entity or political subdivision must be used as required under this section, and;

WHEREAS, the County has chosen to transfer the funds to the Sherburne County Soil and Water Conservation District along with delegating the responsibility of developing guidelines for the use of the money, and then to prepare and implement a jointly agreed to plan for AIS prevention, and;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED the Board of Commissioners of Sherburne County, Minnesota, adopts the guidelines and designates oversight of Sherburne County's AIS prevention efforts to the Sherburne County Soil & Water Conservation District and delegates to them the responsibility to prepare guidelines by December 31, 2014 and then develop and implement a plan as agreed to by the County Board, and report annually for the funding in accordance with the above legislation.

Resolution moved by Leonard, seconded by Petersen and adopted this
4th day of November, 2014.


John Kiebel, Chair
Sherburne County Board of Commissioners


Diane Arnold
Sherburne County Auditor/Treasurer

Sherburne County Aquatic Invasive Species Program 2014-2015
 Guidelines for Use of 2014 Allocated AIS Program Aid

2014 AIS Aid

\$32,832

<p>EDUCATION</p> <p>FY14</p> <p><i>Education and Awareness:</i> may include signage at public accesses (not owned by MN DNR), public service announcements, billboard posters, written articles, informational letters sent to lake-users, media releases, ambassador presence, workshops, posters, social media, flyers, education programs, deputy presence.</p> <p>>50%</p>	<p>FY14</p> <p>DEVELOPMENT, COORDINATION AND ADMINISTRATION</p> <p><i>SWCD and County Staff:</i> Includes items such as implementation of Education items (per guidelines), creation of AIS Task Force, development and implementation of County-wide AIS Prevention Plan.</p> <p>≤50%</p>
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NOTES:

Any Aquatic Invasive Species Program Aid not used in 2014 will be rolled over to support the 2015 Aquatic Invasive Species Program.

These guidelines will be amended as needed (i.e. upon final AIS Prevention plan development) to support the Sherburne County Aquatic Invasive Species Program.

Appendix C: 2019 AIS Task Force Survey Results

Sherburne County AIS Task Force 2019 Survey Results

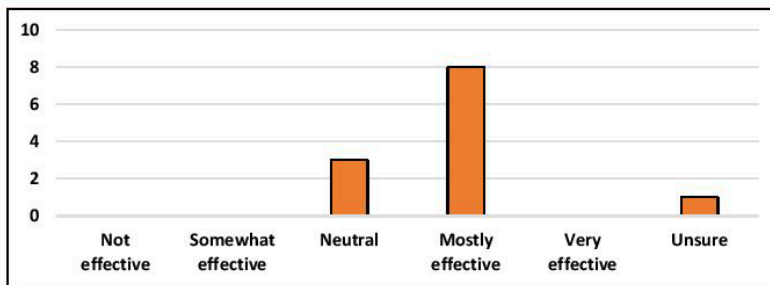
1 Please rank the following AIS to your level of concern for Sherburne County waters.



Comments

- 1 Priority to what is currently an issue. Concerns with items that people are using money familiar with - lack of education. How do you educate when issues / AIS types continue to change? Biggest issue may be the most challenging - How do we prepare?
- 2 Starry stonewort is my biggest concern - our lakes can survive the other AIS - but starry stonewort has no current effective treatment and could ruin our lakes - once we get it, there's no turning back - it will be a devastating, expensive battle to fight it until a treatment is discovered
- 3 Zebra mussel infestation can dramatically change the balance of a lake
- 4 Starry stonewort and Asian carp, while very news worthy, are not here yet. I think we can key on convention? A means of prevention while we work on controlling / eradicating those AIS we currently have.
- 5 From what I have heard about SSW, it can ruin a lake. It scares me.

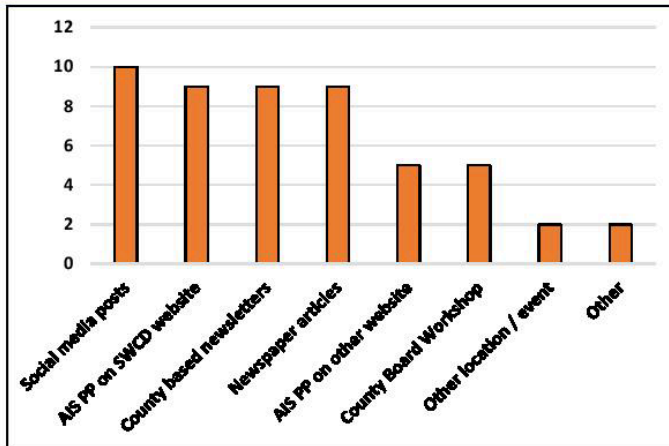
2 The AIS Prevention Plan intends to educate the reader about the issue of AIS and describe the actions Sherburne County takes in order to address AIS Prevention. How would you rate the current plans effectiveness in communicating these topics?



Comments

- 1 I would like to see more emphasis on starry stonewort and more promotion of the 5-day rule of being Clean, Drain, Dry for 5 days with watercraft when going from one body of water to another
- 2 How do we measure the plan's effectiveness

3 In your opinion, how are non-urgent AIS related announcements (new programs, program accomplishments, etc.) best communicated to interested stakeholders?



Responses

- 10 Social media posts
- 9 AIS Prev. Plan on SWCD website
- 9 County based newsletters
- 9 Newspaper articles
- 5 AIS Prevention Plan on other website
- 5 Presentation at County Board Workshop
- 2 Presentation at other location / event
- 2 Other

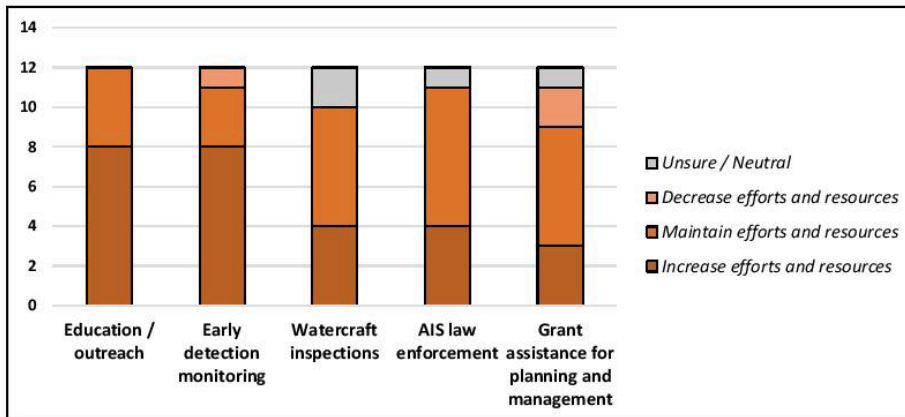
Other responses:

- 1 Sportsman's groups
- 2 lake association emails and newsletters

Comments

- 1 Incorporate this education with other local government - city/county to reach outside "normal" AIS audience
- 2 Bait shops and Boat dealers
- 3 AIS Prevention Plan on lake association Facebook page and website
- 4 b. get info to COLA's so members can get the info onto their lake association web sites or send to L.A's directly
- 5 County Board, Lake Association sites

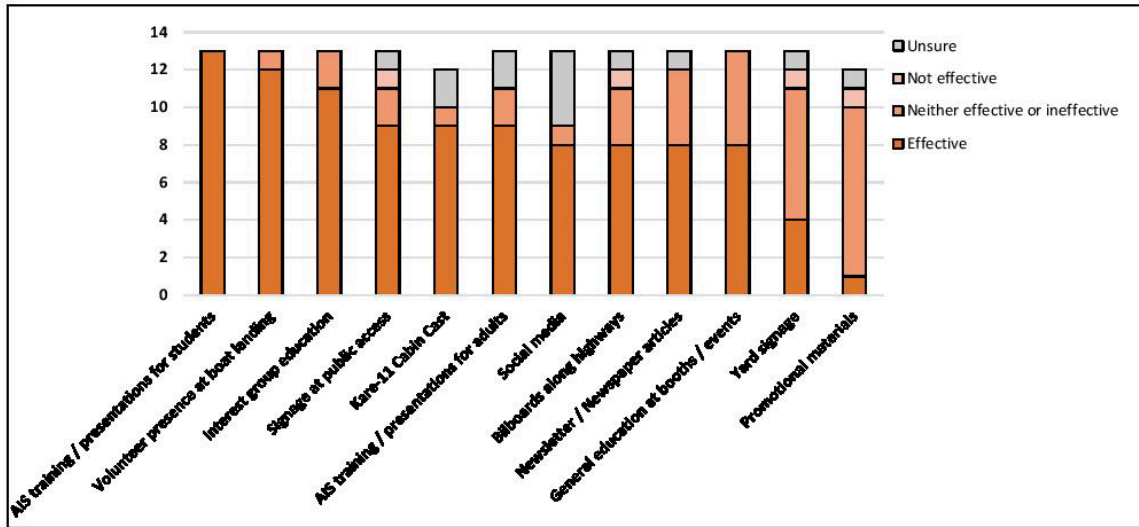
4 The existing AIS Prevention Plan intends to take a balanced and comprehensive approach towards AIS Prevention, focusing on splitting resources (time, funding, etc.) between categories. For the categories below, please indicate your opinion on increasing, decreasing or maintaining resource allocation.



Comments

- 1 Focus more on education to better utilize available funding
- 2 Education is critical. Many watercraft operators do not know anything about starry stonewort. Enforce the 5 day Clean Drain Dry rule - don't just make it a "recommendation"
- 3 Education is key
- 4 Not sure what to reduce. I understand the need for budgets, but lakes are the life-blood of Minnesota. Increased funding should be pursued.

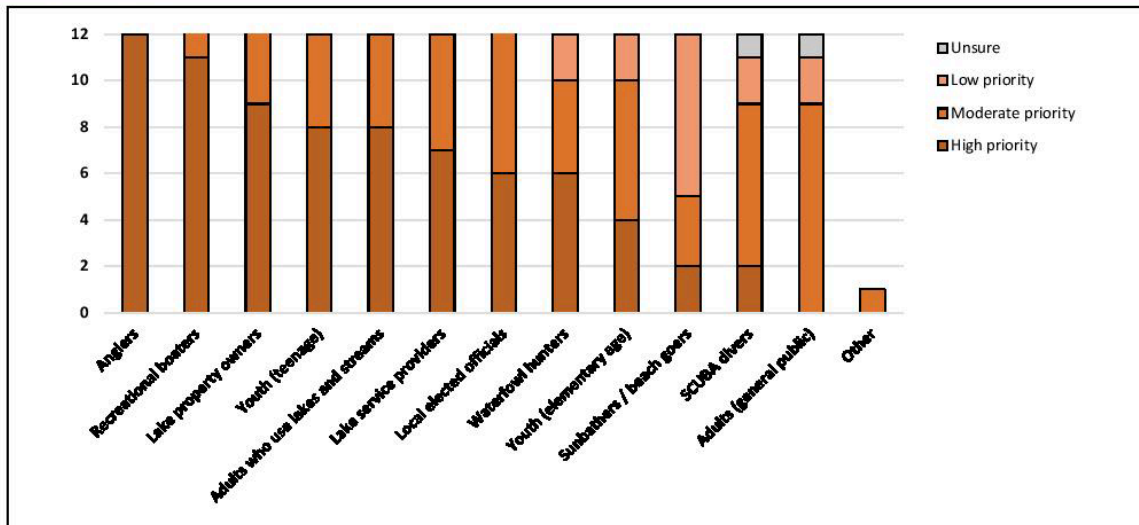
5 Please share your opinion on how effective the following education and outreach approaches are / would be for educating people who use Sherburne County waters.



Comments

- 1 Signage at each lake listing which AIS is in that lake
- 2 DNR signs not large enough. Educational handouts from DNR that fit in tackle boxes. Hand out list of lakes infected with starry stonewort. People should know what AIS is in their lake and the lake/water they are going to next.
- 3 The key to prevention is education
- 4 General education at booths / events: Doesn't reach a lot of people. AIS training for students: Young people are the future - we need to reach them
- 5 This is a difficult problem and the costs of inspections are high and only cover a short period of time
- 6 I think the general idea of Clean, Drain, Dry is generally accepted - There needs to be more education about specific species surrounding us (starry stonewort, zebra mussels, spiny waterflea) & more details of Clean / Drain / Dry

6 What level of priority would you place on the following stakeholder groups for education and outreach in order to enhance AIS prevention?

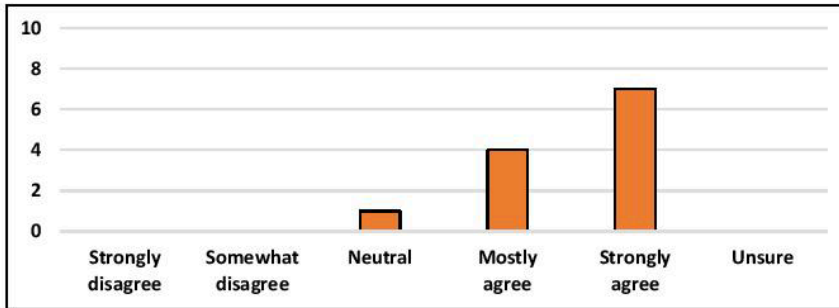


Other responses

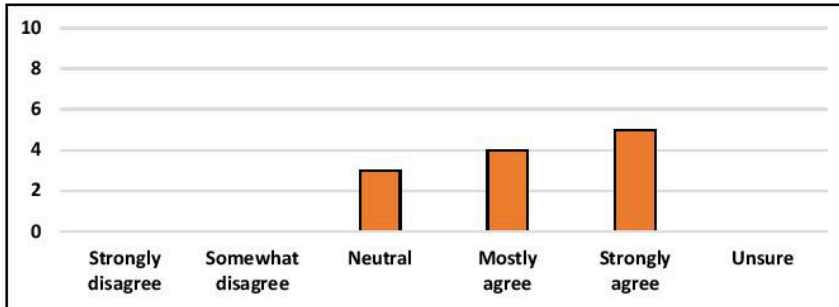
- 1 Sea planes
- 2 Fire suppression planes & helicopters

7 For the statement that follows, please indicate the response that best identifies your opinion.

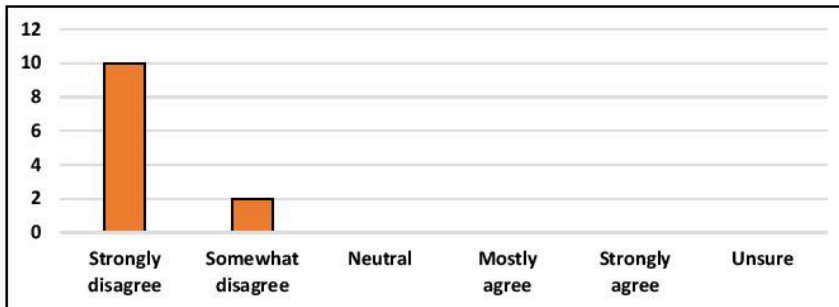
"Early detection is best completed by trained volunteers"



"Early detection is best completed by professionals"



"Early detection is not necessary"

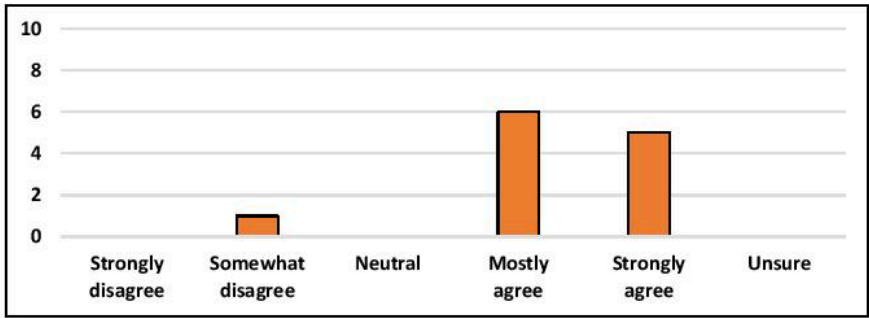


Comments

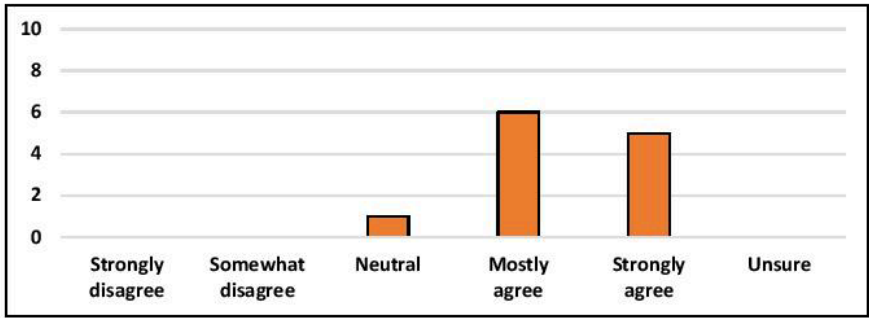
- 1 *Cost concerns for paying for this - doesn't seem like most cost effective to pay professionals*
- 2 *Proper AIS detection will save a lake - it's important to have professionals trained in AIS to do this*
- 3 *Early detection monitoring by professionals would be best, but there is not enough professionals or money to pay for more*
- 4 *Professionals are better but costs are high*

8 For the statement that follows, please indicate the response that best identifies your opinion.

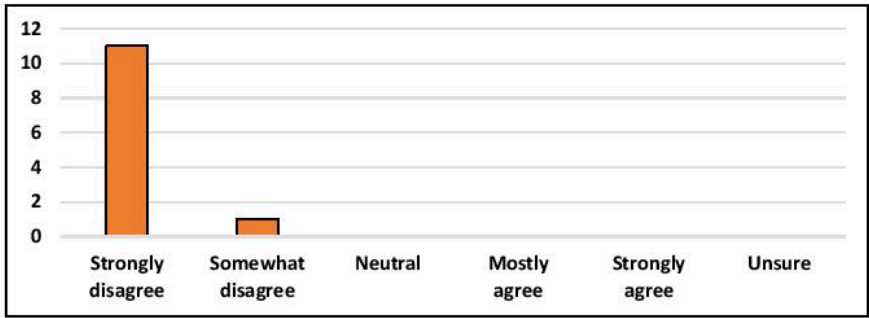
"Existing AIS population monitoring is best completed by trained volunteers"



"Existing AIS population monitoring is best completed by professionals"



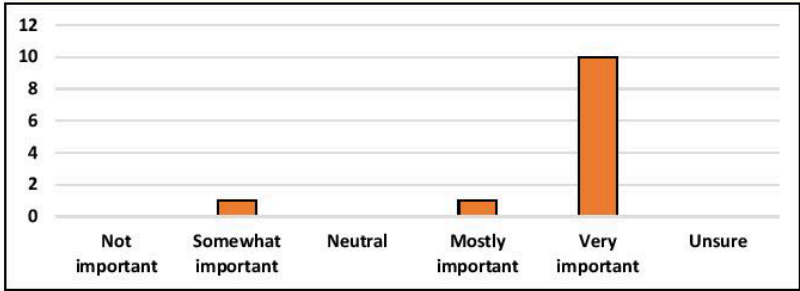
"Existing AIS population monitoring is not necessary"



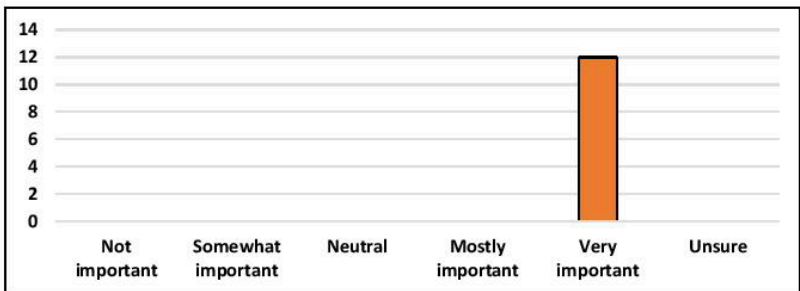
Comments

- 1 *Need for access / support from trained professionals always supports utilize volunteers when possible*
- 2 *AIS monitoring would be best, but there is not enough professionals or money to pay for more*
- 3 *If there no desire to treat and dependant on possible spread it may not be as necessary*

9 How important are inspections of watercraft entering and leaving Sherburne County waterways in preventing or slowing the spread of AIS?



10 How important is education of watercraft users entering and leaving Sherburne County waterways in preventing or slowing the spread of AIS?



11 Sherburne County's current inspection model is to provide 100 hours of Level 1 Inspections at the 8 most frequently used lake access sites on a random, rotating basis. Please indicate below your opinion on the the watercraft inspection approach that best works for Sherburne County.

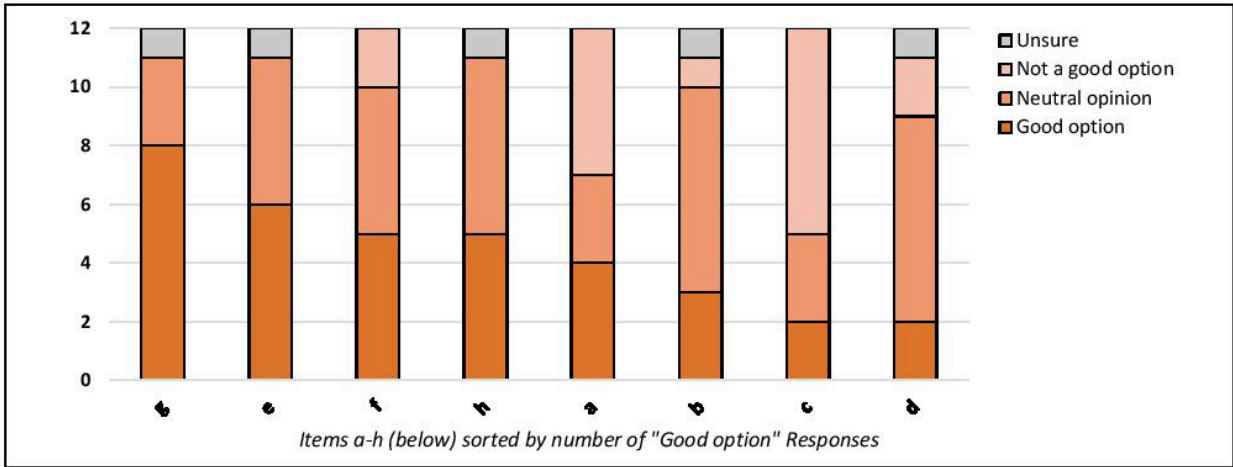
Response Choice

- 1 The current approach is a good fit
- 1 The 800 hours should be used on fewer sites, prioritizing the most frequently used public access sites
- 6 The 800 hours should be used on fewer sites, prioritizing the waterbodies indicated as "high risk" by MAISRC infestation models
- The 800 hours should be spread amongst more or all public access locations, regardless of how frequently they are used
- 1 The 800 hours should be increased and used on the same 8 frequently used access sites
- The 800 hours should be decreased and used on the same 8 frequently used access sites
- Unsure / No opinion
- 1 Other

Comments

- 1 *Specific program to ask for County funding - hours for boat inspections or county specific signage. This seems like a good way to get funding - or ask for next year, maybe get funding the following year.*
- 2 *Increased and spread over more waterbodies including more volunteers*
- 3 *High use lakes are at the highest risk of getting AIS*
- 4 *Inspections are important, but you need the right type of volunteers doing it. If you do not have friendly people doing it, you are doing more harm than good*
- 5 *A. or perhaps modify B. to read, "The same 800 hours should be used on the same 8 sites prioritizing the most frequently used public access sites"*
- 6 *Inspections are costly so limited time is possible. As an education venture I support it.*

12 Please indicate in your opinion below on the applicability of several tools for Sherburne County AIS prevention.



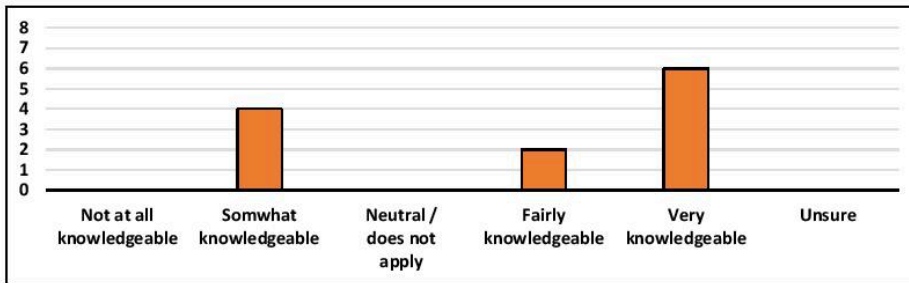
Responses

- a Watercraft decontamination station, centrally located in County for optional use
- b Watercraft decontamination station, trailered unit moved on rotating basis to public accesses
- c CD3 station, centrally located in County for optional use
- d CD3 station, trailered unit moved on rotating basis to public accesses
- e Locally made informational kiosk with manual cleaning tools, fixed at several public accesses
- f Locally made informational kiosk with manual cleaning tools, trailered unit moved on rotating basis to public accesses
- g I-Lid Camera System, fixed structure at highest use public access locations in the County
- h Grant program to assist and empower local cities, townships, lake or angler groups or other organizations to purchase any of the above mentioned tools.

Comments

- 1 Concerns about available staff time for item H
- 2 Watercraft decontamination too expensive, people are cheating their way around this
- 3 Trailered watercraft decontamination too expensive
- 4 CD3 station (trailered and non-trailered) too expensive
- 5 I-Lids: When people are on camera, their behavior becomes compliant visually
- 6 I-Lids seem most effective (in addition to education) to change people's behavior and make them be responsible boaters
- 7 DNR needs to change their current stance that they will not cite violators unless witnessed first hand (rather than use I-Lid video)
- 8 I think the I-Lid is a good technique to keep boaters attention fear of not taking the proper precautions
- 9 I-Lids: Already have, videos unreliable
- 10 Grant program: might be best for Big Lake to have our own Decontamination station with trained operators

13 Overall, how knowledgeable are you about the laws and regulations related to AIS?



14 If you selected option 2, 4 or 5 in Question 13, please answer the questions below:

a What resources helped you to familiarize yourself with AIS laws?

Responses

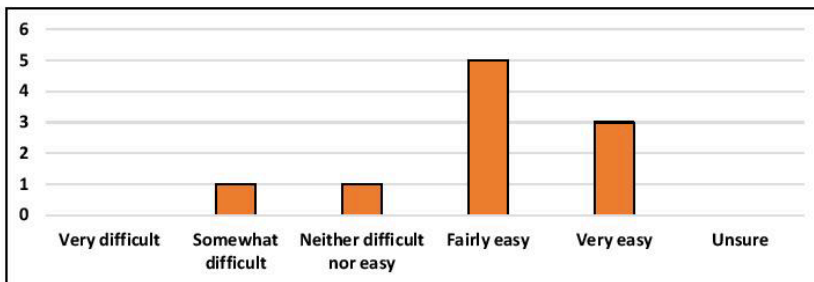
- Online resources (x4)
- Other related training (x3)
- Personal interest to learn more on topic (x2)
- AIS meetings (x2)
- DNR & DNR emails (x2)
- Presentations at lake association meetings (x2)
- Brochures
- General education topics
- Information from SCSWCD
- Inspections
- Newsletters
- Through my work
- U of MN class
- Volunteer class

b Did something prompt you to familiarize yourself with AIS laws?

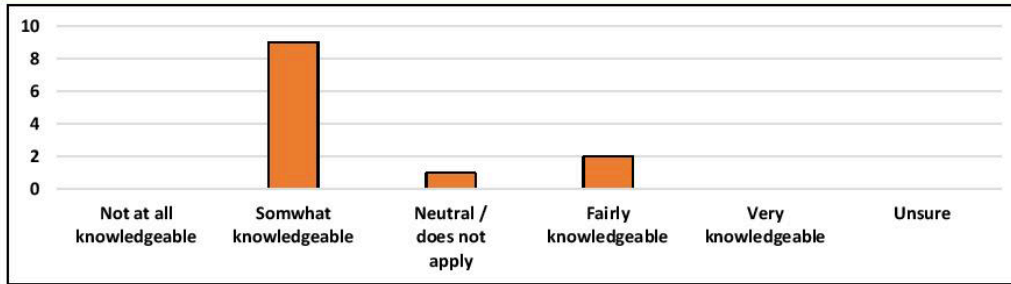
Responses

- Yes - job duties in related field (x2)
- General interest (x2)
- An interest in protection and improving my lake
- Became a volunteer inspector
- Concern about our lake getting starry stonewort
- Concern for keeping the lake usable in the best condition possible
- Fear
- Lake shore owner
- Milfoil in Lake Minnetonka 30 years ago
- Moved to Big Lake, joined BLCLA
- My degree and teaching
- Was on a lake association board
- Working with milfoil removal on Rush

c On the scale below, how difficult or easy was it to locate information about AIS laws?



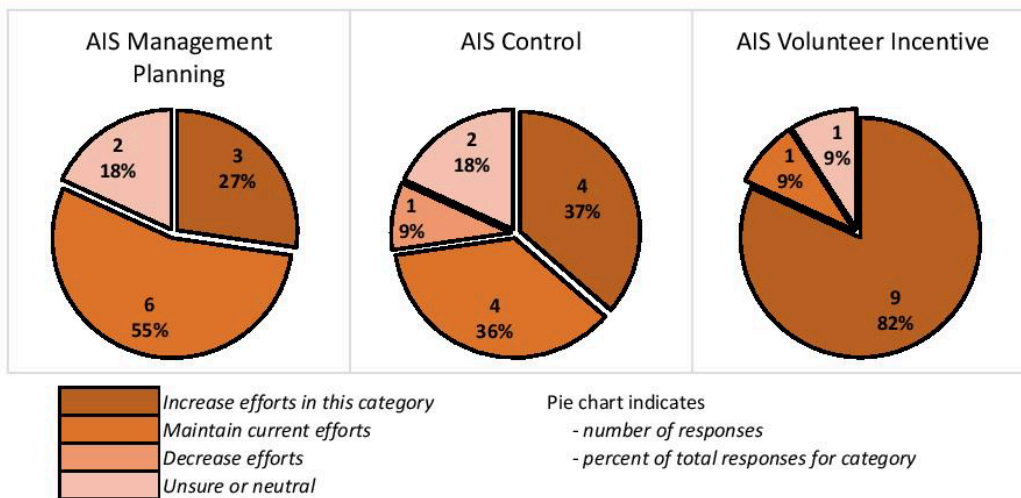
15 Overall, how knowledgeable do you believe lake and river users in Sherburne County are about the laws and regulations related to AIS?



Comments

- 1 Out of 30 boats we inspected in one 3 hr shift at Big Lake, NO ONE knew about starry stonewort
- 2 I believe the public basically just know to remove weeds from boat trailer
- 3 But must have the desire to learn

16 Sherburne County AIS Grant Program provides financial assistance to groups who wish to complete AIS work. Indicate below your opinion on increasing, maintaining or decreasing support for these programs.



Comments

- 1 Have volunteers pair up - one for watercraft inspection and the other one for educating family members

General Comments

Promote 5 day Clean Drain Dry - even if is disliked by anglers. We are trying to save our natural resources - if anglers were as concerned about the lakes as much as catching fish they would abide by this too. No Lake = No Fish

My observations are that some people in lake associations are very closed minded and are not open to other points of view. It's hard to work with people that are that way. I believe are goals are pretty close, but the way to achieve them are not. I do not believe they are using available facts and information, they are going off of what other members are telling them and making judgements off of emotions rather than facts. The fact of the matter is that until there is a way to kill them all you can do is slow down the spread of it.

Future of this group: I think continuing meeting 2 times per year would be in order to see how things are progressing and who is doing what

I think good education is key to success. Volunteers can be better trained & equipped with information and knowledge than they are presently. When young kids take the boaters training, is there much info & testing on AIS? I'm not sure, but there should be. The young generally listen, learn, & accept what they are taught. Sherburne Co. should develop volunteer training programs for increasing volunteer comfort in volunteering.

I spend many hours working on milfoil hand pulling and identifying plants but only boat inspectios count. Hard to get help without paying them. Some incentive could get others involved?!

Appendix D: 2020-2024 Activities List

Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan

Education Activity	Task Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Public Access Sign Campaign	Request DNR AIS signs where missing at DNR owned public access locations					
	Investigate opportunities to develop design for local sign campaign. Work with local stakeholders and DNR to develop approvable signage.	x	x	x	x	x
Targeted Messaging	Evaluate Geo-Fencing media campaign-trial year (continue if deemed cost effective)		x			
6-12 Education	Identify theater or interactive groups to speak with students - example: CLIMB Theater					
	SWCD staff to give presentations to classrooms	x	x	x	x	x
	Develop and implement local outdoor program - AIS monitoring, aquatic plant identification, etc.					
Education Materials	Investigate existing K-12 events to attend with AIS education information	x	x	x	x	x
	Purchase materials from DNR, Sea Grant, Wildlife Forever to support AIS programs					
	Materials to be used at existing events	x	x	x	x	x
Attendance at Events	Attend events with promotional/educational materials					
	County Fair, Enviro Education, Green Expo, etc.	x	x	x	x	x
	Investigate use of volunteers to use materials at events					
Social Media	Develop and maintain a local AIS Information page on the SWCD website	x	x	x	x	x
	Partner with LGUs to add our webpage link to websites					
	AIS articles in SWCD E-newsletter, county newsletter, local newspapers	x	x	x	x	x
	Regular postings on Facebook or other media platforms	x	x	x	x	x
Workshops & Trainings	Extension Educator to provide trainings to field staff and interested parties					
	Trainings may include: AIS identification, monitoring techniques, prevention methods, management techniques	x	x	x	x	x

EDRR Activity	Task Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Zebra Mussel Veliger Monitoring	Implement annual volunteer monitoring program					
	Encourage lake associations to designate a volunteer for the program					
	Oversee volunteer monitoring of zebra mussel substrate platforms	x	x	x	x	x
	Investigate partnering with colleges to implement program					
AIS Plant Monitoring	Participate in annual Starry Trek monitoring program	x	x	x	x	x
	Facilitate trainings for Starry Trek and other volunteers (plant ID workshop, support AIS Detectors program, etc.)	x	x	x	x	x
	Support local lake group paid professional monitoring studies	x	x	x	x	x
Response Plan Development	Establish a communication plan using the DNR RRP guidelines. Work with Sherburne County COLA to assist local lake associations / districts with EDRR development.		x	x	x	x
Investigate innovative strategies for monitoring and Rapid Response	Could include snorkeling, scuba diving, hand pulling, bio-control, etc.	x	x	x	x	x

Sherburne County AIS Prevention Plan

Inspections and Enforcement	Task Details	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Sheriff & Water Patrol	Interested sheriffs and local peace officers to attend DNR training	x	x	x	x	x
	Water Patrol Inspections during regular shifts	x	x	x	x	x
Level I Inspectors	Work with local company to hire Level I Inspectors	x	x	x	x	x
	Facilitate additional training opportunities for Level I Inspectors	x	x	x	x	x
	Encourage local college students and interested parties to apply for positions	x	x	x	x	x

Grant Programs	Task Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
AIS Grant Program	Maintain financial assistance program for groups overseeing AIS management and prevention activities.	x	x	x	x	x
AIS Volunteers	Support a volunteer base to increase awareness of AIS issues at local public water access points. Financial incentives for volunteer groups, hand-out materials, and additional training opportunities are needed.	x	x	x	x	x
Innovative AIS Prevention and Control Techniques	Stay informed with new research and recommendations by DNR and University of MN AIS Research Center on new/innovative control techniques.	x	x	x	x	x
Contingency Fund	Develop and maintain a contingency fund balance to assist in emergency response situations or innovative projects	x	x	x	x	x