



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

6A

Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: October 14, 2014

Title of Item: AIS Prevention Plan

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
Submitted by: Terry Neff		Department: Environmental Services
Presenter (Name and Title): Terry Neff, Environmental Services Director/Steve Hughes, SWCD Manager		Estimated Time Needed: 15 Minutes
Summary of Issue: 2014 State Legislature appropriated funding to each county for the prevention of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Aitkin County has received the 2014 amount of \$125,061 and will receive \$277,913 in 2015. In order to use these funds, the County must adopt an AIS Prevention Plan. On August 12, 2014, the County Board approved of establishing an AIS Committee to draft an AIS Prevention Plan and report back to the County Board. Attached is the proposed AIS Prevention Plan and proposed budget prepared by the AIS Committee. In addition I have attached a Resolution for Aquatic Invasive Species Aid.		
Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:		
Recommended Action/Motion: Approve adoption of the AIS Prevention Plan, proposed budget and Resolution.		
Financial Impact: Is there a cost associated with this request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i> Legislature has appropriated \$125,061 in 2014 and \$277,913 in 2015 for AIS prevention to Aitkin County. Aitkin County must adopt an AIS Prevention Plan before the funds can be used.		

Legally binding agreements must have County Attorney approval prior to submission.

Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan for Aitkin County September 16, 2014

Guidelines for using Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid (Mn Statute 477A.19)

INTRODUCTION

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are threatening Minnesota waters. These nonnative species harm fish populations, water quality, water recreation, and impair property values. This plan outlines the efforts that Aitkin County will undertake to help prevent the spread of harmful AIS within Minnesota.

STRATEGIES

The following five elements provide a structure for organizing action items to address aquatic invasive species in Aitkin county.

- **Element 1** **Education/prevention**
- **Element 2** **Inspections**
- **Element 3** **Enforcement**
- **Element 4** **Emergency Response**
- **Element 5** **Decontamination**

Element 1 – Education/prevention

Implement procedures and practices to prevent new introductions and/or spread of AIS.

1A Communications Plan

Conduct an annual local communications plan including radio, TV, newspaper, billboard and other media ads implementing the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers campaign.

Continue to expand the audience for public education literature and strengthen awareness of AIS issues in the county.

One of the keys to successfully preventing AIS from spreading is to fully inform the public of the issues at hand and the importance of their actions in limiting this spread.

Explore partnership opportunities with businesses and existing outreach efforts developed by the DNR and Sea Grant.

1B Inform buyers and sellers of plants and wild animals

Inform buyers and sellers of aquatic plants and wild animals of how they can help prevent the release or escape of invasive species, and comply with state and federal laws.

1C Inform businesses and local governments

Inform appropriate lake related businesses and local government staff, how they can help prevent the spread of invasive species.

1D Work with DNR to publicize new infestations at access sites.

Publicize in newsletters, include information in local publications.

1E Identify known and additional nonnative pathways of concern

Understand the variety of pathways of introduction to local waters.

1F Reduce risk of introductions through business and government operations

Work with businesses – like lake service providers – to make sure they are certified by the MNDNR. Use local training sessions, or other actions to reduce risk of invasive species introduction through business and government operations.

1G Support youth education

Support K-12, and informal youth education through development and use of existing and new lesson plans and curricula, as well through special events.

1H Raise awareness of priority species of concern as well as ‘watch’ species

Obtain and distribute Watch ID cards, possible products include: informative placemats at restaurants, lakemaps with AIS message, shoreland owners guide, drink coasters .

1I Develop partnerships to increase invasive species identification and surveys (e.g., lake associations performing annual aquatic invasive species searches; dock and lift searches).

Monitor for new populations of AIS not previously found in the lake(s) of concern.

Augment communication and reporting mechanisms for citizen monitoring of lakes and rivers.

In order for rapid response to function properly, county will need the help of lake association members, lake service providers, shoreline property owners, and other citizens to monitor lakes on a seasonal basis and facilitate early reporting of new infestations of AIS in county waters.

1J Provide notice of infested waters

Provide information on local infested waters through local communication methods.

1K Collaborate with partners to help coordinate invasive species related efforts.

Foster the development and participation of local partnerships (e.g., Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Coalitions of Lake Associations, lake associations, counties, municipalities, citizen groups) to address invasive species using landscape and watershed approaches.

Meet regularly with plan participants.

Develop and maintain contacts with other organizations and government entities.

Open lines of communication between federal, state, and local governments to encourage the sharing of up-to-date information on new AIS research, outreach and education methods, and monitoring/survey data for AIS on County lakes and rivers.

Element 2 - Watercraft Inspections

2A Conduct watercraft inspections

Conduct watercraft inspections at water accesses using authorized inspectors.

Hire seasonal “educators” – with training provided – to distribute educational materials and conduct inspections at selected public access points, ensuring users were abiding by current regulations.

Enlist additional volunteers to support this effort and to educate lake users, particularly at high priority landings during peak usage times (holidays and weekends).

Investigate the cost and feasibility of purchasing decontamination trailers, for use in cleaning boats and equipment used in infested lakes within the county.

Install traffic counters at select public accesses. This action will help Aitkin County determine which lakes are receiving the most pressure by tracking boating traffic that enters and exits lakes and rivers. It will also help evaluate the risks of aquatic invasion for lakes with no introduced AIS or minimal infestation by quantifying recreational tendencies.

Element 3 - Enforcement

3A Use local peace officers to enforce state regulations

Use peace officers from various jurisdictions/agencies to enforce state regulations (e.g., M.S.84D - civil penalties) and conduct training where appropriate.

Increase AIS law enforcement by ensuring peace officers within the county have been trained to enforce AIS laws and by increasing the number of peace officers within the county.

This action contributes to the efficient use of allocated resources, and time, to extend the reach of public awareness and regulatory compliance with AIS laws. These efforts do not supplant other government units in the provision of watercraft inspections, but rather seeks to expand and/or complement their efforts

Create, renew or expand patrolled enforcement by AIS trained peace officers.

AIS peace officers patrol various roadways near infested lakes to issue compliance checks with AIS laws. This service can be effective at communicating the presence of law enforcement and help to educate lake users on the seriousness of AIS laws and the penalties for infractions.

3B Enforce laws to contain invasive species

Enforce state regulations that prohibit transport of prohibited invasive species, aquatic plants, and water from designated infested waters.

Element 4 – Emergency Response

Develop management strategies to detect new invasive species infestations and limit the spread of established populations of AIS in county waters and to other waters of the state.

4A Contact DNR for verification if new infestations are reported.

Submit samples to DNR for field checking.

Approve an early detection and rapid response program. Provide for safe and accessible storage of rapid response equipment. This program will ensure new infestations are properly reported, evidence is rapidly confirmed, and rapid response is deployed, if required. Aitkin County will explore the likelihood of acting in a partnership role with the MN DNR. While the MN DNR currently has the capabilities for rapid response, whether or not an agreement can be reached is unknown. The arrangement that is approved will need to be expedient and effective at responding to new threats.

4B Work to reduce the impacts caused by established invasive species to Minnesota's ecology, society, and economy.

Use integrated pest management where appropriate to control populations of high priority aquatic invasive plant species (Eurasian water milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, flowering rush, purple loosestrife, etc.).

4C Provide technical advice

Adopt biological/physical/mechanical control plans utilizing safe and cost-effective techniques.

Aitkin County can explore the prospects of partnering with special purpose units of government (e.g. Townships, LID's, others) in devising herbicidal treatments or mechanical harvesting of problematic AIS. The county may also contract with private vendors that possess that equipment, knowledge, and expertise to facilitate AIS control in water bodies the county deems impaired or damaged by aquatic invasive species.

Element 5 - Watercraft decontamination efforts

Coordinate with existing car wash businesses to meet decontamination standards for temperature and pressure.

Provide signs identifying decontamination sites and decontamination instructions.

Investigate the cost and feasibility of purchasing high pressure hot water wash units for use in cleaning boats and equipment used in infested lakes within Aitkin County.

Purchase decontamination units and provide to businesses throughout the county and provide training, equipment, and funding for operation of those units.

Implementation Plan

It is the intent of the plan development committee that at least in its first year, administration, coordination, and oversight of this plan should require 7 percent of the grant funds.

Amending the Plan

This plan should be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

Appendices:

- a. Aitkin County Lake and River Information
- b. Contact List
- c. Maps, other info.

Aitkin County AIS Budget (Draft)		
Annual budget		
Task	% budget	\$
Education	10%	\$ 27,791.30
Inspections	60%	\$ 166,747.80
Enforcement	10%	\$ 27,791.30
Emergency Response	3%	\$ 8,337.39
Decontamination	5%	\$ 13,895.65
Maintenance Fund	5%	\$ 13,895.65
Admin/Coordination	7%	\$ 19,453.91
Total	100%	\$ 277,913.00
startup (1st year)		
decon. units	\$ 60,000.00	
traffic counters	\$ 5,000.00	
equip. (inspectors)	\$ 4,000.00	
equip. enforcement	\$ 30,000.00	
emergency response	\$ 5,000.00	
Maintenance, other	\$ 21,061.00	
Total	\$ 125,061.00	

By Commissioner: xx

101414-0xx

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 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. Aitkin County was allocated \$125,061 for 2014 and \$277,913 for 2015 and years following, and

WHEREAS, the legislation requires that Aitkin County must establish, by resolution or through adoption of a plan, 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 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, and

WHEREAS, the 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, and

WHEREAS, Aquatic Invasive Species is a priority concern identified in the 2009 Water Plan. A stated goal in the Water Plan is to provide leadership in the fight against Aquatic Invasive Species by developing proactive solutions aimed at educating and empowering local citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Commissioners of Aitkin County, Minnesota, designates oversight of Aitkin County's AIS prevention efforts to the Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation District and delegates to them the responsibility to implement the Plan, report annually and allocate the funding in accordance with the Plan and approved grant requests. Grant requests and Plan updates are to be approved by the Aitkin County AIS Committee. For 2014, the plan is on file in the Aitkin County Environmental Services Department and Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation District Office.

Commissioner xx moved the adoption of the resolution and it was declared adopted upon the following vote

FIVE MEMBERS PRESENT

All Members Voted Yes

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
County of Aitkin) ss.
Office of County Auditor,)

I, Kirk Peysar, Auditor, of the County of Aitkin, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution filed in my office on the 14th day of October A.D., 2014, and that the same is a true and correct copy of the whole thereof.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE at Aitkin, Minnesota, this 14th day of October A.D. 2014

KIRK PEYSAR, County Auditor

BY _____, Deputy