

A non-profit organization dedicated to



maintaining our fish & wildlife heritage

March 19, 2025

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Committee Members,

On behalf of the following organizations, representing a broad coalition of state and national organizations, working to protect Minnesota's lakes, rivers and streams, we urge you to maintain full funding for the Department of Revenue County Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid program. Since inception, this program has reduced AIS spread and serves as a national model for empowering local communities to implement on-the-ground AIS prevention activities

For over a decade, County AIS Prevention Aid Funding has led to the deployment of public education and outreach campaigns, watercraft cleaning stations, boat ramp inspectors, and early detection & rapid response programs. Continued efforts are critical to preserving our lakes and rivers for future generations while supporting the fishing, boating and outdoor industries, including community utilities that rely on healthy, uninfested waters.

Cuts to this program would jeopardize years of progress and make our state more vulnerable to the costly and damaging impacts of AIS. From zebra mussels to starry stonewort, invasive species pose a serious threat to our increasingly stressed ecosystems and lake community property values. Recent studies have also linked zebra mussels to a dramatic increase of mercury loading in fish, exceeding consumption advisories. Consistent investments in prevention of AIS is far less expensive than management and eradication of infested waters.

We respectfully ask that you reconsider any proposal that reduces funding for this essential program where the absence of adjustments for inflation have already decreased the collective impact of this program. Any cuts will lead to a loss of jobs and erode the foundation of AIS awareness and community preparedness should existing or new AIS be discovered.

Thank you for your steadfast leadership and dedication to preserving Minnesota's outdoor heritage through community engagement and prevention of aquatic invasive species.

We, the undersigned, stand united in our commitment to conserve Minnesota's aquatic resources and urge your continued support in maintaining base funding and inflationary adjustments for the Aquatic Invasive Species County Prevention Aid Program.

Signatories:

American Sportfishing Association (ASA)
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.)
Becker SWCD
Big Pine Lakes Association
Big Stone County 4-H
Byron N Karns / One Pine Aquatic Resource Assessments
Carlton County
Cass County Board of Commissioners
CD3 Systems
Chippewa County Land & Resource Management Department
Chisago County Water Resources
Clearwater SWCD
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF)
Cook County Coalition of Lake Associations (CCCoLA)
Cottonwood County
County of St. Louis Board of Commissioners
Douglas County AIS Task Force
Hubbard County Board of Commissioners
Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (HCCOLA)
International Game Fish Association (IGFA)
Itasca SWCD AIS Program
Kanabec SWCD
Lac qui Parle County SWCD
Lake County SWCD
Major League Fishing (MLF)
Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC)
Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations
Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC)
Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates (MLR)
MN-FISH
Murray County
National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA)
National Professional Anglers Association (NPAA)
Nicollet County Property Services
Norman County SWCD
North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA)
North St. Louis SWCD
Polk County AIS taskforce
Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department-Soil and Water Conservation Division
Red Lake County SWCD
Renville County Environmental Service
Root River SWCD (Houston County)
Roseau County SWCD
Sherburne SWCD
Sibley SWCD
State Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Committee (SAISAC)
Stearns County Board of Commissioners
Stevens SWCD
Tood County SWCD
Wabasha County Environmental Services Department
Washington Conservation District
Whitefish Property Owners Association
Wildlife Forever
Wilkin SWCD
Winona County SWCD
Wired2Fish
Yellow Medicine County