

St. Louis County 2014 Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan

Program Overview

In 1991 the Minnesota Legislature directed the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish the Invasive Species Program to implement actions to prevent the spread of invasive species and manage invasive aquatic plants and wild animals. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are defined under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 84D as non-native species that:

1. Cause or may cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health; or
2. Threatens or may threaten natural resources or the use of natural resources in the state.

The 2014 legislature established a new AIS Prevention Aid program to help Minnesota counties with their AIS prevention programs. This document describes the St. Louis County 2014 Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan. A separate plan will be written for 2015.

Program Funding

St. Louis County will request project proposals that prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout St. Louis County. The county will retain 10 percent of the funding for administrative costs.

The state funding is allocated equally by numbers of watercraft trailer launches and watercraft trailer parking spaces. In 2014 a total of \$4.5 million has been allocated and certified by the Department of Revenue. St. Louis County allocation for 2014 is estimated at \$305,396. If funds are not all distributed in 2014, they may carry over to 2015.

Funding Priorities

St. Louis County will seek and award funding for projects which are consistent with the following three goals:

1. Prevent the introduction of new invasive species into St. Louis County.
2. Prevent the spread of invasive species within St. Louis County.
3. Reduce the impacts caused by invasive species to St. Louis County's ecology, society, and economy.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include joint powers boards, political subdivisions, soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, or lake associations. The applicants must meet minimum county contract requirements including financial controls, record

keeping, insurance, and any required workers compensation. A draft contract is available for applicants to review.

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must address at least one of the three primary goals and adhere to best practices to accommodate aquatic invasive species prevention methods. Projects may be new or the expansion of existing AIS efforts. Projects must also include goals and measurable outcomes.

Types of projects that are eligible include but are not limited to the following:

1. Education and Outreach
2. Signage at Non-water Access Locations
3. Voluntary Inspection Programs
4. Decontamination Efforts
5. Containment Efforts
6. Research and Assessment to Prevent the Spread of AIS

Project Selection

Priority will be given to projects located in areas impacted by AIS and/or highly-visited water bodies. Applicants are encouraged to use the AIS program to leverage other funding sources and collaborate or demonstrate partnerships.

St. Louis County Planning and Community Development Department will request project proposals once the plan has been approved by the County Board. Program information and the application form will be available on the website <http://ais.stlouiscountymn.gov>. Links to DNR resources and an email address for more information will also be provided on the website.

County staff will review applications for eligibility, goals, and outcomes. A funding recommendation will be provided to the County Board. The County Board will make the final funding determination.