



Saint Louis County

Planning and Community Development Department • 100 Missabe Building, 227 West
First Street • Duluth, MN 55802 • Phone: (218) 725-5000 • Fax: (218) 725-5029
Toll Free in Minnesota: 1-800-450-9777 • www.stlouiscountymn.gov

Barbara Hayden
Director

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Barbara Hayden, Director
Planning and Community Development Dept.
(218) 725-5008

County seeks proposals to prevent/limit Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

With commissioners' approval of an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) plan last week, St. Louis County is now seeking proposals to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of harmful, non-native species at all access sites within the county. Proposals should relate to protecting and maintaining lakes, reservoirs, streams and rivers, and social and/or economic impacts of AIS.

Applications and additional information on this request for proposals is available online at stlouiscountymn.gov/ais. The deadline to apply is June 12. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions in August. Applications must be for at least \$10,000.

To be considered for implementation, projects must address one or more of the seven categories and associated actions outlined in the St. Louis County Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan:

1. Assess county resources and risks for AIS introduction and spread.
2. Increase resources for county-wide education and enforcement.
3. Increase public awareness and participation in prevention.
4. Raise available resources and leverage partnerships.
5. Broaden knowledge of and participation in early detection and rapid response activities.
6. Manage existing populations of AIS.
7. Address specific pathways for AIS introduction.

Aquatic invasive species disrupt the health of water bodies, and pose a myriad of threats to natural, cultural and recreational resources of the region. Key AIS species of concern in St. Louis

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County include zebra and quagga mussels, the New Zealand mudsnail, viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), round and tubenose gobies, Eurasian ruffe, faucet snail, mystery snail, spiny water flea, Eurasian watermilfoil, purple loosestrife and rusty crayfish.

The Minnesota Legislature last year created the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid Program to provide funding to Minnesota counties to participate in AIS control and prevention activities. Through this program, counties are allocated funds based on a formula that factors each county's share of watercraft trailer launches and watercraft trailer parking spaces. Of Minnesota's 87 counties, St. Louis County has the second highest number of watercraft trailer launches (166) and the highest number of watercraft trailer parking spaces (1,173). St. Louis County's share of funding totaled \$305,356 for 2014 and will be \$680,790 in 2015.

For more information about St. Louis County's Aquatic Invasive Species plan and its request for proposals, visit stlouiscountymn.gov/ais or contact the Planning and Community Development at (218) 725-500.

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