



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### CROW WING COUNTY REQUESTS COMMENTS ON PROPOSED 2019 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION PLAN

The Crow Wing County Land Services Department is requesting public comment on the proposed 2019 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Plan. The 2019 AIS plan can be viewed on the County website at [www.crowwing.us](http://www.crowwing.us) by clicking on “Crow Wing County Listens”. Written comments on the plan will be accepted until Wednesday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm and may be submitted to Crow Wing County at [landservices@crowwing.us](mailto:landservices@crowwing.us) or mailed to 322 Laurel Street, Suite 15 Brainerd, MN 56401.

The County Board will review the proposed 2019 AIS Prevention Plan at a regularly scheduled meeting in early 2019. The meeting will be held in the County Board Room on the third floor of the Historic Courthouse at 326 Laurel Street Brainerd, MN 56401.

Crow Wing County has been allocated \$443,109 by the State legislature to assist in the prevention of the spread of aquatic invasive species within County lakes and rivers in 2019. The AIS plan proposes to accomplish this through several approaches, including:

- Boat landing inspections
  - Crow Wing County has partnered with the University of Minnesota – Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) and the United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service to develop an optimized model for locating DNR trained watercraft inspectors on Crow Wing County’s public watercraft access landings. The model was developed to specifically maximize the number of inspected watercraft that move from infested (AIS) to uninfested water bodies. Approximately 16,600 hours of inspections will be conducted on 42 landings in Crow Wing County in 2019. Since 2014, over \$1.3 million has been allocated to cover the cost of boat landing inspections.
- Decontamination units
  - The County plans to operate the AIS decontamination station at the Crosslake Joint Highway Maintenance Facility that will be open Friday through Monday from Memorial Day weekend through end of September, free of charge. Watercraft decontamination consists of a very hot water rinse used to kill zebra mussels and if needed a high pressure spray to remove material from boats, motors, trailers, and personal gear.
- Treatment of Eurasian water milfoil
  - Crow Wing County has 11 lakes that are infested with milfoil that also have a public access. As in previous years, funds will be allocated for chemical or biological treatment of milfoil in these lakes.
- Education & Awareness

- Since 2014, Crow Wing County has allocated approximately \$31,000 directly to lake associations to conduct an education outreach campaign to their members. Over 30 lakes have participated. In 2019, the County plans to again offer this program. In 2019, the County proposes funding up to 18 lakes for lake association public awareness campaigns. In addition, other proposals are education and awareness initiatives include a potential bait shop bait-bag partnership program, print media (rack cards, newspaper ads, stickers, posters, etc.), an annual AIS spring newsletter to all riparian landowners, and other targeted advertising (movie theaters, online, etc). Since 2014, approximately \$156,100 has been allocated to covering the costs of AIS related education and awareness programs.
- Innovation / Special Projects
  - The County plans to continue to work with area lake associations and an environmental lab to conduct veliger testing in 2019.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service while helping landowners make wise choices that protect Crow Wing County's extraordinary natural resources. Citizens are encouraged to visit the County's website at [www.crowwing.us/ais](http://www.crowwing.us/ais) or contact the Land Services Department at (218) 824-1010 or [landservices@crowwing.us](mailto:landservices@crowwing.us) to discuss AIS or other land use related activities.

**Our Vision:** Being Minnesota's favorite place.

**Our Mission:** Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.

**Our Values:** Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.