

2021 Aquatic Invasive Species Plan for Goodhue County

Introduction

According to Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are threatening Minnesota waters.

Invasive species are defined as a nonnative species that: (1) causes 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.

These nonnative species harm fish populations, water quality, and recreation. This plan outlines the efforts that Goodhue County will undertake to prevent the spread of harmful AIS within Minnesota. Minnesota statute 477A.19 provides Minnesota counties a County Program Aid grant for Aquatic Invasive 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. Goodhue County will be allocated \$63,420 for AIS prevention implementation programs in 2021.

Infested Waters within Goodhue County as Identified by MNDNR

- Cannon River (Flowering Rush)
- Mississippi/Lake Pepin (Bighead & Silver Carp, Zebra mussels, Eurasian Watermilfoil)

Significant public accessible waterway's to implement AIS protections

- Cannon River, Zumbro River, Lake Byllesby, Mississippi River/Lake Pepin

Lake Pepin is considered to be a primary AIS concern due to the number of infestations, number of boat launches, and heavy recreational use.

AIS Plan Development

An AIS Plan development committee was assembled including at least one representative from Goodhue County Land Use Management, Soil and Water Conservation District, and Public Works.

Site visits to the eight MNDNR registered boat launches in Goodhue County was completed in November 2015. The goal was to choose tentative locations for upgraded or new signs. The boat launches will be reassessed in 2021 to evaluate the status of AIS signage and determine if upgrades are needed.

Actions that Goodhue County plans to implement in order to prevent the spread of AIS.

The following actions will increase public awareness and participation in protecting Goodhue County's waters from the threat of AIS.

Short Term Action Goals

Maintain AIS information signs at Goodhue County Public water access points indicating what invasive species are present, identification, risks, instructions on proper procedures, and who to contact for more information. Continue to address Purple Loosestrife identified in west end of Lake Byllesby.

Long Term Action Goals

Establish and maintain connections with local governments, businesses, private owners, lake associations, and other agencies within and around Goodhue County with the purpose of preventing the spread of AIS at the regional level.

Ongoing Actions

➤ **Improve awareness and participation in prevention of AIS**

- Inform county staff with duties related to public waterways and ensure they are trained in practices to avoid spreading AIS
- Inform businesses with operations involving public waterways of AIS prevention procedures.
- Develop and disseminate informational materials aimed at Landowners with private access to infested/at-risk waters regarding AIS prevention
- Developing curricula for schools and informal education materials to support youth education about AIS
- Distribute AIS informational materials to local businesses and landowners associated with infested/at-risk waters
- Establish a newsletter or column with local periodicals to inform residents about AIS prevention activities
- Continue Level-1 AIS inspection program at Lake Byllesby Park water access in coordination with Dakota County
- Promote AIS awareness through messaging campaigns including radio, gas-station ads, billboards, mascots, promotional products, and various other channels.
- Use AIS Mascot “Doug the Plug” to promote AIS education and awareness

➤ **Coordinate with MNDNR**

- Work on management of AIS and adopt control plans utilizing safe and cost-effective techniques.
- Keep the public aware of AIS through local publications
- Ensure public access points of infested/at-risk waters are properly enforced.
- Coordinate AIS watercraft inspection efforts with DNR

➤ **Monitoring**

- Maintain GIS mapping application for efficient monitoring of AIS. Including sign locations, monitoring routes, and areas of increased AIS risk
- Provide bi-annual monitoring of infested/at-risk waters by DNR trained staff.
- Create a program to investigate citizen reports of AIS

Potential future developments

- Investigate the cost and feasibility of purchasing decontamination trailers or partner with existing businesses that could provide the same service
- Investigate the cost of installing facilities for proper decontamination at boat launches with the heaviest use
- Expand AIS signage to other public water access such as canoe launches, fishing areas, and beaches
- Design and install AIS cleaning/decontamination lane in Lake Byllesby Park.

Updating and amending the plan

This plan will be reviewed annually by the AIS plan development committee and updated as needed.