Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Laws of Minnesota 2014 Accomplishment Plan

Date: January 08, 2014

Program or Project Title: Evaluate Effectiveness of AIS Prevention Strategies

Funds Recommended: \$ 4,040,000

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Legislative Citation:

Appropriation Language:

County Locations: No Counties Listed

Ecological Planning Regions:

- Forest / Prairie Transition
- Metro / Urban
- Northern Forest
- Prairie

Activity Type:

- Enhance
- Evaluate the effectiveness of aquatic invasive species prevention strategies

Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

Habitat

Abstract:

Assess the effectiveness of a range of strategies to prevent introduction of Aquatic Invasive Species in uninfected or minimally impacted lakes in Minnesota through a range of inspection, education and outreach, enforcement, and/or other methods that can be administered locally.

Design and Scope of Work:

INTRODUCTION

Nationally, introductions of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) have caused the decline of many plant and animal species. They have significant impacts on human activities; for example, in 2005 they cost the U.S. economy over \$120 billion (Flathead Basin [Montana] Aquatic Invasive Species Strategic Prevention Plan, 2010). As they are increasing in their occurrence and distribution, adverse impacts associated with AIS continue to rise. This scenario is playing itself out regionally and locally as well.

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 84D.01, Subd. 9a defines "Invasive species" 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. Many invasive species of concern have been identified that may likely be introduced and survive in Minnesota. Once introduced into new habitats where they have no natural controls or enemies, they disturb native species through competition, predation, displacement, hybridization, and spread of diseases and parasites and, in the process, degrade fish and wildlife habitat. AlS can also adversely affect commercial, agricultural, recreational, and residential activities that depend on water resources.

THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT--VECTORS AND PATHWAYS

What is common among all AIS is that they have been introduced to North America by human activity. Primary vectors and pathways of concern include:

- Transient users of water resources (e.g., recreational activities, such as boating, fishing, diving) through public and private accesses
- Activities affecting water resources (e.g., commercial, natural resource management, or construction activities)
- Natural and man-made conveyance of waters
- Owners of riparian lands
- · Watercraft and trailers
- Docks, lifts, and other such equipment
- Bait harvesters and bait users
- Construction/resource management equipment (e.g., barges, plant harvesters, waders, boots, diving equipment, aquarium and aquascaping)
- Storm water drainage systems (including outlet streams and pipes)
- Float planes
- Tributary waters

PROIECT PURPOSE

This project will assess the effectiveness of a range of implementation activities to prevent the introduction of AIS into uninfested lakes or to prevent the introduction of additional AIS in previously infested lakes in Minnesota. More specifically, the project will examine the most innovative, legal, effective, and financially sustainable methods of preventing the spread of AIS through a range of education and outreach, inspection and decontamination, enforcement, and/or other methods to enhance fish and wildlife habitat that can be administered locally. This purpose will be realized under the following three goals:

Goal 1—AIS Planning and Data Collection—

While it is recognized that finding rare occurrences of AIS in lakes is a daunting challenge, successful pilot projects will be required to have some current baseline monitoring completed on impacts of AIS on fish and wildlife habitat in their lakes. Grant reimbursable activities under this goal include but are not limited to:

- Creation of an AIS prevention plan following a standard format, or;
- Update of an existing AIS prevention plan;
- Update or population of an AIS database;

These activities will help guide and track efficient and effective long-term AIS prevention activities that enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

Goal 2—Prevention and Containment--The primary goal of this project is to keep pilot project lakes free of new AIS. Secondarily, there is the reality that AIS may exist, be introduced or spread in pilot project lakes, or be transported out of pilot lakes. All activities under this goal are intended to enhance fish and wildlife habitat by providing long-term or permanent solutions to AIS infestation and must be based on the best available science regarding AIS prevention and control. Grant reimbursable activities under this goal include but are not limited to:

- Strategies to manage access to and from pilot project lakes;
- Inspection and decontamination of watercraft and other equipment to limit the spread of AIS to and from pilot project lakes;
- A local cooperative strategy for strong enforcement of existing AIS laws or experimental local regulations;
- Extensive public information campaigns, including social marketing principles, on AIS prevention and corresponding enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat;

Successful pilot projects must marshal additional manpower, equipment, and funding to extend and expand the AIS prevention effort. Projects must also focus State, Tribal, and local efforts on rapid response and removal where AIS infestations exist. Adaptive management to allow strategies to be modified or replaced during the active project is allowed but must be approved in advance.

Goal 3—AIS Pilot Project Results Reporting—Successful pilot projects must establish a rigorous results reporting program, using a standard format, to monitor and report interim as well as overall progress, successes, and challenges. Non-LSOHC matching funds will be used to complete activities under this goal including but are not

limited to:

- Use of science-based strategic planning and evaluation models;
- Reports on the reactions and attitudes of lake residents, lake service providers, business owners, and nonriparian citizens to aggressive, targeted approaches to prevent human-assisted AIS migration to or from pilot project lakes, and the unintended consequences or strategies that failed to achieve their intended goals;
- Reports on the degree of support, interaction and cooperation between State and local governments, Tribal governments, and private organizations in administering AIS prevention/control efforts;
- Risk management and cost/benefit analyses;
- The ability of a project to attract local or other outside matching resources to expand and financially sustain the AIS prevention/control effort;
- Recommendations for changes or additions to AIS prevention and regulation laws to enhance fish and wildlife habitat at the State or local level.

Planning:

MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:

- H2 Protect critical shoreland of streams and lakes
- H4 Restore and protect shallow lakes
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams

Plans Addressed:

- A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use -- Goals and Outcomes 2006-2012
- Ducks Unlimited Living Lakes Initiative
- Long Range Plan for Fisheries Management
- Long Range Plan for Muskellunge and Large Northern Pike Management Through 2020
- Managing Minnesota's Shallow Lakes for Waterfowl and Wildlife
- Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- National Fish Habitat Action Plan
- 100th Meridian Initiative

LSOHC Statewide Priorities:

- Address Minnesota landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife, wildlife species of greatest conservation need, Minnesota County Biological Survey data, and rare, threatened and endangered species inventories in land and water decisions, as well as long-term or permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Attempts to ensure conservation benefits are broadly distributed across the LSOHC sections
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and
 others while doing this important work; provides the most cost-effective use of financial resources; and
 where possible takes into consideration the value of local outreach, education, and community
 engagement to sustain project outcomes
- Leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Use a science-based strategic planning and evaluation model to guide protection, restoration and enhancement, similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model

LSOHC Forest Prairie Transition Section Priorities:

Protect, enhance, and restore wild rice wetlands, shallow lakes, wetland/grassland complexes, aspen
parklands, and shoreland that provide critical habitat for game and nongame wildlife

LSOHC Metro Urban Section Priorities:

 Protect, enhance, and restore riparian and littoral habitats on lakes to benefit game and nongame fish species

LSOHC Northern Forest Section Priorities:

 Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas

LSOHC Prairie Section Priorities:

Protect, restore, and enhance shallow lakes

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds:

No Relationships Listed

Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts:

Pilot project grant recipients would be required to provide local cash or qualifying in-kind match for state funding to supplement efforts during the first two active years of the project and the three years of follow-up monitoring (and any ongoing implementation).

Grass-roots efforts are pushing LUG's to help stop the spread of AIS and more comprehensive, cooperative AIS programs are being demanded. AIS statutes now make it possible for LUG's, Tribal governments, and 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations to participate in AIS prevention and control. Local volunteer efforts are expected to continue as long as cooperative progress is made toward more complete and cost effective solutions.

DNR looks to local government, Tribal governments, and 501c3 nonprofit organizations to help protect public waters and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. This request is not a substitution for other State resources.

Sustainability and Maintenance:

The AIS Prevention Plans developed through this process will provide local focus and direction for long term AIS control and prevention and fish and wildlife habitat enhancement programs. Local governments, Tribal governments, and 501c3 nonprofit organizations will need to provide or secure additional funds for long term AIS prevention.

It is assumed that local support and funding will continue for efforts that are identified as successful and costeffective. Conversely, State and local funding and other resources can avoid being wasted on strategies that are found to be ineffective. The final pilot project reports and survey results will likely provide important guidance on AIS issues that could lead to meaningful changes in existing programs and future AIS management approaches.

Permanent Protection:

Is the activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, subd 13(f) and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15? - Yes (Public Waters)

Other Activity:

Evaluate the effectiveness of aquatic invasive species prevention strategies

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The Initiative Foundation will develop this project as an initiative under its Healthy Lakes and Rivers Partnership (HLRP) program. The project will include the following broad program components:

- Convene a Review Committee including expert representation from AIS science, education, and evaluation; DNR Divisions of Ecological Services and Water Resources, Fisheries, and Enforcement; local units of government; Tribal governments; lake property owner organizations; and the recreation and resort industry. The University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center will serve as independent scientific advisors to the Committee. The Committee will design or endorse criteria and protocols for the program, and assist in initial planning for public outreach. This Committee will also help the Foundation develop or endorse eligible lake criteria, determine species prevention priorities, establish the evaluation program, and review and score applications. To the degree possible, the Foundation has strong interest in coordinating with the existing DNR AIS Advisory Council which already exists, and which has substantial expertise in these areas. A secondary advantage of this collaboration is to minimize redundancy with existing programs and add value to the work already completed by DNR.
- Issue a Request for Proposals from potential program partners, seeking "inquiry" level of explanation of their strategies and potential implementation partners.
- Invite full proposals from Local Units of Government, Tribal Governments, or 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations in the form of an AIS prevention management plan, outlining AIS status in the lake watershed, prevention/control strategy, timeline, budget, and management structure or responsibility (See required full proposal information below). We anticipate supporting individual lake projects, or umbrella projects involving several lakes provided they are managed by a single local entity/partnership, well-coordinated, and able to demonstrate measurable results.
- Support implementation activities through contracts for service with program partners. Contracts will require expenditure of a majority of implementation funds within the first 24 months of the project.
- Contract with a third party organization to standardize surveys and reporting, and assure consistency.
- Over the last three years of the program, observe self-supported implementation efforts begun in first two years of program and continue to evaluate success of strategies.

The project proponent wishes to acknowledge the constructive input of the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations (MNCOLA), Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in creating this proposal. All three have expressed a strong sense of urgency in advancing this work. If this proposal is recommended for approval, then these partners will convene early in the winter of 2014 to explore what processes or activities can begin prior to July 1st to allow the project to "hit the ground running" once funds are available. This may include development or updating of AlS prevention plans, development of the Request for Proposals, promotion of the RFP, and establishment of clear procedures which link regulatory review (by DNR) with proposal assessment (by the review committee) so that we are able to support innovative, costeffective, and legal projects.

APPLICATION PROCESS

With input from the Review Committee, the Foundation will:

- Develop a Request for Proposal/Program Manual incorporating LSOHC priorities;
- Solicit inquiry level applications;
- Work with selected applicants to submit full scorable proposals;
- Oversee grant selection;
- Adopt an AIS prevention/control plan template;
- Prepare and execute grant documents;
- Review expenditure documentation, insuring financial integrity, and makes payments;
- Monitor pilot project progress;
- Oversee ongoing evaluation, monitoring, and quality control;
- Assist recipients with closing out agreements;
- Prepare required reports

REQUIRED INQUIRY LEVEL PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Prospective applicants will be asked to provide:

- A list of proposed strategies and potential implementation partners;
- Administrative and financial capacity to administer the program;
- General lake data (physical area, depth, recreational use intensity, etc);
- Availability of current AIS and fish and wildlife habitat survey data;
- A summary of local AIS education, monitoring, and prevention/control efforts to date.

FULL PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

Foundation staff and Review Committee will evaluate and score applications based on criteria listed below. A final score will be given to all applications. Foundation staff will work with grantees to complete financial reviews, grant agreements, and other paperwork. Work may not begin until the grant is executed. The Foundation may choose to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with LSOHC policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available or if a grantee cannot complete a project as planned.

REQUIRED FULL PROPOSAL INFORMATION

In the preparation of full proposals, successful applicants will be asked to submit information including but not limited to:

- Sponsoring organization name and status—governmental unit, 501(c)3 nonprofit, etc.;
- Proposed lake watershed targeted for prevention—provide maps, available data;
- AIS of focus—multiple species approaches get priority;
- Current AIS monitoring/surveys—some existing monitoring effort required
- Physical characteristics of the lake watershed;
- Adjacent or upstream infested waters;
- Potential downstream impacts;
- Recreational and commercial use information—provide available data;
- Strategy to manage lake access;
- Participating LUG's, Tribal governments, and other local organization sponsors, and the nature and extent of their participation;
- Agreement stating administrative and financial capacity to administer and cash flow the program on a reimbursement basis:
- Agreement stating a specified enforcement mechanism—DNR CO's, Sheriff's Dept., Tribal CO's;
- Support by local residents--lake association, resorts, water-related businesses, lake service providers;
- Support by LUG's—Counties, Cities, SWCD, WD, Townships;
- Support by DNR and other State agencies;
- Support by Tribal or Federal governments, if applicable;
- Prevention strategy elements and timelines—who, what, when, where?
- Conflict resolution strategy--between partners and affiliated organizations, and/or with the general public;
- Agreement stating sources local match—cash and/or qualifying in-kind;
- Commitment and mechanism to continue the prevention strategy beyond the grant period;
- Long term monitoring strategy;
- Budget—personnel, contracted services, equipment, maintenance, insurance, etc.

APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Lake watershed characteristics:
- Adjacent or upstream infestations;
- Potential downstream impacts;
- Long-term or permanent nature of AIS prevention/control proposal for the enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat;
- Demonstrated administrative and financial capacity to administer the program;
- Applicants' capacity to successfully complete, sustain the goals of the project.
- Based on the best available science regarding AIS prevention and control;
- Local support—government, recreation industry, recreational users, lake service providers, lake residents;
- Current baseline AIS survey
- Multiple AIS prevention benefits;
- Preservation of public access for recreation, hunting, and fishing while adequately enhancing fish and wildlife habitat through AIS prevention;
- Degree of collaboration between local organizations to prevent AIS spread;
- Budget/ cost effectiveness;
- Project match funding strategy—degree to which the application accesses non-State matching funds, other resources, and volunteer labor and equipment to expand and sustain the project;

PROJECT REVIEW AND REPORTING

Grantees must submit quarterly reports on forms provided by the Foundation staff, based on LSOHC report forms, with final reporting to LSOHC the responsibility of the Initiative Foundation. Non-LSOHC matching funds will be used to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of and reactions to individual AIS prevention/control strategies. Costs incurred in preparing required statistical and grant-related reporting with be grant reimbursable.

Reports will account for the use of grant/match funds, and outcomes in terms of numbers and types of AIS information and education materials produced and distributed, numbers of surveys conducted, numbers of

accesses managed, numbers of inspections performed and species found, number of decontaminations conducted, enforcement actions required, effective conflict resolution techniques employed, and AIS monitoring updates. A final report is required by all grantees 30 days after project completion. Foundation staff will submit accomplishment reports to LSOHC as required and post reports on the Foundation's website and other websites as may be determined useful. The third year report (summarizing impact and assessment of prevention activities) will include conclusions and recommendations, based on all completed projects, which may be used as supporting documentation for funding additional AIS prevention projects. The final reports (years four and five) will include ongoing monitoring results documenting lasting effectiveness and/or impact of AIS prevention efforts.

GRANTEE PAYMENT

Grantees and contractors are paid on reimbursement or "for services rendered" basis, meaning payment is made to the grantee after work has been performed or materials purchased, but before the vendor is paid by the grantee. Grantees provide proof that work is completed or a purchase made to receive payment. Proof that the vendor was paid must be submitted to the Foundation staff before additional grant payments are made.

Reasonable amounts may be advanced to projects to accommodate cash flow needs, match federal share, or for acquisitions following the procedures and standards within the Initiative Foundation's standard operating practices or negotiated as part of a grant agreement. Advances must be specified in final grant agreement. Partial payments are allowed.

The Initiative Foundation reserves the right to terminate a pilot project before its completion date if, in the opinion of the Foundation staff and the Review Committee, a good faith effort is not being made to fulfill the contractual obligations of the project according to the approved work plan.

DNR TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The DNR Divisions of Ecological Services and Water Resources, Fisheries, and Enforcement will provide ongoing technical guidance for AIS prevention and control.

Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed		
Assemble and Convene Review Committee	July/August 2014		
Review Committee finalizes AIS Prevention Pilot Program criteria and priorities	August 2014		
Deadline for Inquiry Level Applications	October 2014		
Review of Inquiry Level Applicationsselection of full proposal applicants	November 2014		
Deadline for Full AIS Prevention Proposals	December 2014		
Scoring and selection of successful full proposal applicants	December 2014/January 2015		
AIS Prevention Project activity begins	January 2015/February 2015		
Formal AIS Prevention Project activity commences	February 2015 to end of grant		
Follow up monitoring and final reporting completed	Annually, with conclusion in June 2019		

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

 Improved aquatic habitat indicators Demonstration of effective strategies of fish and wildlife habitat enhancement by successful implementation of locally-led efforts to implement and financially sustain AIS prevention efforts.

Programs in forest-prairie transition region:

- Improved aquatic habitat vegetation Demonstration of effective strategies of fish and wildlife habitat enhancement by successful implementation of locally-led efforts to implement and financially sustain AIS prevention efforts.
- As our proposal is for statewide impact, the proposed program outcomes are the same for each region. Please refer to the "Other" program outcomes detailed in the northern forest region.

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

• Improved aquatic habitat indicators Demonstration of effective strategies of fish and wildlife habitat enhancement by successful implementation of locally-led efforts to implement and financially sustain AIS prevention efforts.

Programs in prairie region:

- Protected, restored, and enhanced shallow lakes and wetlands Demonstration of effective strategies of fish and wildlife habitat enhancement by successful implementation of locally-led efforts to implement and financially sustain AIS prevention efforts.
- As our proposal is for statewide impact, the proposed program outcomes are the same for each region. Please refer to the "Other" program outcomes detailed in the northern forest region.

Budget Spreadsheet

Budget reallocations up to 10% do not require an amendment to the Accomplishment Plan

Total Amount of Request: \$ 4040000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$282,000	\$0		\$282,000
Contracts	\$3,598,000	\$3,598,000	Private Source	\$7,196,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$40,000	\$0		\$40,000
Professional Services	\$30,000	\$0	Private Source	\$30,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0		\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$10,000	\$0		\$10,000
Supplies/Materials	\$80,000	\$400,000	Private Source	\$480,000
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0		\$0
Total	\$4,040,000	\$3,998,000		\$8,038,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Project Manager (D. Hickman, VP Community and Economic Development)	0.20					\$107,000
Project Coordinator (J. Sumption, Consultant)	0.50	5.00	\$125,000	\$0		\$125,000
Accounting	0.00	5.00	\$50,000	\$0		\$50,000
Total	0.70	15.00	\$282,000	\$0		\$282,000

Output Tables

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Туре	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	2,200	2,200
Total	0	0	0	2,200	2,200

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Туре	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,040,000	\$4,040,000
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,040,000	\$4,040,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Туре	Metro Urban	Forest Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	550	550	0	550	550	2,200
Total	550	550	0	550	550	2,200

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Туре	Metro Urban	Forest Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$1,010,000	\$1,010,000	\$0	\$1,010,000	\$1,010,000	\$4,040,000
Total	\$1,010,000	\$1,010,000	\$0	\$1,010,000	\$1,010,000	\$4,040,000

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles

0 miles

Parcel List

For restoration and enhancement programs ONLY: Managers may add, delete, and substitute projects on this parcel list based upon need, readiness, cost, opportunity, and/or urgency so long as the substitute parcel/project forwards the constitutional objectives of this program in the Project Scope table of this accomplishment plan. The final accomplishment plan report will include the final parcel list.

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type protect.

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.