



## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### CROW WING COUNTY APPROVES 2016 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PLAN

The Crow Wing County Board has approved the 2016 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Plan for the treatment and prevention of invasive species in county waters. The 2015 AIS plan was developed with the input of area lake associations and concerned citizens in the fall of 2015. Building upon the 2015 AIS plan, the 2016 plan focuses on the top priorities identified by these groups including; boat landing inspections, watercraft decontamination, eurasian water milfoil treatment, education / awareness and innovative special projects. Funding for local AIS prevention efforts was allocated by the state legislature in 2014 as part of program aid given to Minnesota counties.

“Invasive species are a serious threat to our waters and the tourism business which supports our local economy. The 2016 plan continues to build on our status as a leader among Minnesota counties in the fight against the spread of AIS,” stated Commissioner Paul Thiede, who also sits on the statewide AIS Advisory Committee. “Definitive answers with universal agreement may not be in the cards right now but this utilizes the available resources in a manner that finds agreement with most of our partners.”

In 2015, nearly 43,000 watercraft inspections for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) were conducted in 2015 by County or DNR inspectors at approximately 50 landings within the County. Due to the diligence of the inspection program, only two new infestations of AIS were documented in 2015 in Crow Wing County: Ruth Lake for Zebra Mussels and White Sand Lake for Eurasian-watermilfoil. The infestations in both cases were subsequently treated and contained.

Full details of the 2016 AIS Prevention plan are posted on the Crow Wing County website, including maps identifying boat access sites where inspectors will be located during the boating season. The plan can be viewed at [www.crowwing.us](http://www.crowwing.us) and searching “AIS.”

Land Services would like to remind people about the important role they can play in preventing the spread of AIS. Draining all water, removing plants, mud and other debris, and inspecting trailers and watercraft as you move from lake to lake can minimize the risk of spreading AIS. Additionally, 21 days of drying time is needed when purchasing used docks, lifts, or swim rafts before locating them in a different water body.

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 contact the Environmental Services Office at (218) 824-1125 or [environmental.services@crowwing.us](mailto:environmental.services@crowwing.us) to discuss AIS or other land use related activities.

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**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.

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[www.crowwing.us](http://www.crowwing.us)