

MARTIN COUNTY

2024 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION PLAN



INTRODUCTION

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are threatening Minnesota waters. These nonnative species harm fish populations, water quality, water recreation, and infrastructure. This plan outlines the efforts that Martin County will undertake to help prevent the spread of harmful AIS within Minnesota. At this time there are no known aquatic invasive species in the county. Therefore, we will use this plan in conjunction with the Martin County Water Plan to educate the public and local governments about the implementation of actions to prevent the spread of AIS.

ACTIONS

Table 1. Actions that Martin County plans to implement in order to prevent the spread of AIS. In the following table, related actions and elements from the state plan are cross-referenced.

Actions for county plan	How action supports AIS prevention	Element in state plan	Action in state plan
Assess the county's resources and risk of AIS introduction			
Understand the variety of pathways of introduction to local waters.	Knowing the common pathways by which AIS can be spread is essential to effective prevention.	Prevention – Understand Risks	I-1-c

Actions for county plan	How action supports AIS prevention	Element in state plan	Action in state plan
Using MNDNR's list of water bodies that are designated as infested in the county, identify linkages to other water bodies.	Some AIS may travel or be more easily transported between infested waters and other connected water bodies; knowing these linkages will help prioritize prevention resources.	Prevention – Understand Risks	I-1-c
Increase county enforcement resources			
Work with the County Sherriff's department, adding certified seasonal employees to work with AIS enforcement and water patrol. Assist with funds for equipment needed to fulfill the positions.	Consistent enforcement of AIS regulations aimed at containment will help to prevent the further spread of AIS.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Enforcement	II-10-c
Ensure that local businesses are reducing the risk of AIS spread in their operations; for example, lake service providers are required to be certified by the MNDNR.	The day-to-day operations of some businesses, whether regulated or not, can pose a risk of AIS spread.	Prevention – Research and Technologies	I-7-d
Develop and distribute AIS prevention messages targeting riparian landowners who launch watercraft from their own private residential access.	Many watercrafts enter lakes and rivers from private residential property and are not reached by education and prevention efforts directed at public accesses and cooperating private non-residential accesses.	Prevention – Public Awareness	I-8-a & e
Survey launches for AIS signage. Install signs with the AIS prevention message where necessary.	Education is key to AIS prevention.	Prevention – Public Awareness	I-8-a & e

Actions for county plan	How action supports AIS prevention	Element in state plan	Action in state plan
Collaborate with other counties, watershed groups, and/or jurisdictions whose water bodies connect to the County's to develop a regional approach to AIS prevention.	Because AIS and the individuals who could transport them do not stay inside county borders, effective coordination is necessary to prevent AIS spread.	Prevention – Regional Approaches	I-9-a
Train county staff and city staff on management practices that will maintain and/or create diverse, native landscapes that are resilient to invasive species.	Making the environment more resistant to AIS can help prevent AIS infestation.	Prevention – Manage for Prevention	I-10-a
Hire seasonal educators, trained by the MN DNR, to distribute educational materials at selected public access points, and enlist additional volunteers to support this effort, particularly at high priority landings during peak usage times (holidays and weekends).	Targeting educational efforts to the users of a water body may help prevent AIS spread from or into that water body.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Public Awareness	II-8-a
Work with the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers campaign to strengthen awareness of AIS issues in the county.	Consistent messaging such as that from the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers ads may help educate individuals about their role in AIS prevention.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Public Awareness	II-8-d
Evaluate AIS prevention efforts, attend trainings, and cooperative relationships for possible improvements.	Participants at all levels can share input and new ideas to continuously improve the AIS prevention plan for the local area.		III-6-a, b, c

Actions for county plan	How action supports AIS prevention	Element in state plan	Action in state plan
Continue to build the partnership opportunities with existing outreach efforts developed by the MNDNR and the Minnesota Sea Grant Program.	Leveraging existing communications materials ensures that the public receives accurate messages about rules and best practices related to AIS prevention.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Public Awareness	II-8-d
Develop tailored messages aimed at lake-related businesses (home builders, developers, realtors) and local government staff regarding AIS prevention.	Ensuring that individuals are aware of AIS prevention measures that they can take in the course of their daily work will help to reduce the risk of AIS spread.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Public Awareness	II-8-f
Increase available resources and leverage partnerships			
Assist with funding local outreach and monitoring efforts by entities other than the county.	Overall AIS prevention efforts can be strengthened by supporting the capacity of other local organizations to conduct AIS outreach and monitoring activities.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Detection	II-1-h
Utilize the Martin County Conservation Alliance in implementing the County’s AIS prevention plan.	Additional partnerships among local organizations will increase the county’s capacity to implement its AIS prevention plan.	Leadership and Coordination - Local	IV-3-b
Broaden knowledge of and participation in early detection and rapid response activities			
Encourage county staff, businesses, and individuals to contact the MN DNR or Martin SWCD for suspected AIS.	The county can support early detection and prevention efforts by helping the MNDNR to quickly confirm new infestations of AIS.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Detection	II-1-d

Actions for county plan	How action supports AIS prevention	Element in state plan	Action in state plan
Coordinate with the Prairie Ecology Bus, educating Martin County students about AIS.	The Prairie Ecology Bus has a classroom session teaching students about AIS.	Early Detection and Public Awareness.	
Approve an early detection and rapid response program in the Fairmont Chain of Lakes, Fox Lake, Iowa Lake and South Silver Lake with the county acting in a resource support agreement with the MNDNR.	This program will ensure that new infestations are properly reported and rapid response is deployed, if required.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Detection	II-1-d
Cultivate partnerships with organizations interested in AIS prevention (e.g., lake associations) to support AIS surveys in water bodies (infested and non-infested) and on docks and lifts.	Leveraging the resources of existing organizations will help to find new AIS infestations more efficiently and to prevent further spread of those AIS.	Early Detection, Rapid Response, and Containment – Prioritize	II-3-b
Manage existing populations of aquatic invasive species Contingent Plan in the event an invasive species infests a water body in Martin County			
Coordinate with the MNDNR for information on management of AIS, and adopt control plans utilizing safe and cost-effective techniques. Funds are delegated for rapid response efforts.	Effective management of existing AIS populations may help prevent further spread.	Management of Invasive Species - Coordination/ Communication	III-4-b
Contract with private vendors that possess the equipment, knowledge, and expertise to facilitate management of AIS in water bodies the county deems impaired or damaged by aquatic invasive species. Discuss common carp management in the Fairmont Chain of Lakes.	Effective management of existing AIS populations may help prevent further spread.	Management of Invasive Species - Implement IPM Plans	III-3-a

Actions for county plan	How action supports AIS prevention	Element in state plan	Action in state plan
Assist with funding projects that will benefit in controlling the movement of invasive species. Project locations include, but are not limited to, Fairmont Chain of Lakes, North & South Silver Lakes, Iowa Lake and Dutch Creek.	Effective management of existing AIS populations may help prevent further spread.	Management of Invasive Species - Implement IPM Plans	III-3-a
Encourage the development of a boat decontamination service or partner with existing businesses like car washes that could provide such services.	Decontamination of watercraft is a key tool in preventing AIS spread.	N/A	N/A
Implement management practices that will maintain and/or create diverse, native landscapes that are resilient to invasive species.	Making the environment more resistant to AIS can help prevention AIS infestation.	Prevention – Manage for Prevention	I-10-a

IMPLEMENTATION

Martin SWCD will have staff delegated to implement actions in the Martin County plan to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Additional funding could possibly come from other organizations such as conservation clubs, lake associations, LGU's (local governmental units), or grants.

UPDATING AND AMENDING THE PLAN

This plan will be reviewed annually by the Martin County Board of Commissioners and will be updated as needed.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Plan participants

Table 2. Organizations partnering with Martin County to implement the AIS prevention plan, including contacts and their roles.

Organization	Contact(s)	Role(s)
MN DNR University of Minnesota Extension	Carli Wagner – DNR AIS Specialist Eric Schettler – DNR Conservation Officer Tina Fitzgerald – DNR	AIS Specialist – Education, and monitoring Education and enforcement of AIS Laws AIS Prevention Planner Education
Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR)	Jill Sackett Eberhart	Clean Water Fund contact
All Townships with public accesses	Township Chairperson	Education, shared information
Martin County Commissioners Martin County Planning & Zoning Martin Co. Sheriff’s Dept. City of Fairmont Fairmont Police Department Martin SWCD	Scott Higgins, Commissioners Pam Flitter Sheriff Jeff Markquart Tyler Cowing Police Chief Michael Hunter Ashley Brenke, Holly Petrowiak, & Dustin Benes	Education, Enforcement of AIS Laws Enforcement of AIS Laws Enforcement of AIS Laws, Monitoring of boats on the water and in transport on county’s roads. Education, Enforcement of AIS Laws by the Fairmont Police Dept. and monitoring of boats on the accesses and city streets Coordination of AIS Prevention Plan
Fairmont Lakes Foundation Fox Lake Association	Jon Omvig David Traetow	Education, monitoring at boat accesses
A & J Docks The Boat House Sommer’s Bait Shop Chain of Lakes Yacht Club	Jim Draper John Betts Justin Sommer	Dock and Boat Lifts Dock and Boat Lifts Information, education
Fox Lake Conservation League Martin County Conservation Club	Jim Miller, Tim Eisenmenger Bruce Moore	Education – Volunteers
Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce	Kandi Menne	Education, Promotion of AIS Plan

Organization	Contact(s)	Role(s)
4-H Clubs	Hannah Neil	4H Extension Coordinator
Faribault, Watonwan, Jackson Counties		Shared resources and information
Iowa Counties – Emmet, Dickinson, Kossuth		Shared resources and information
Lakeshore property owners and boat owners		Shared information, compliance with AIS Laws

Appendix B: County water resources

Table 3. Characterization of Lakes in Martin County

Number of lakes more than 10 acres in size	69
Number of lakes designated as infested with aquatic invasive species	0
Total number of public water accesses	22
Number of public water accesses owned or operated by the MNDNR	12
Number of public water accesses owned or operated by MnDOT	0
Number of public water accesses owned or operated by the county	4
Number of public water accesses owned or operated by a township	0
Number of public water accesses owned or operated by a city	6
Estimated number of non-public water accesses	6

Appendix C: Glossary of Acronyms used in plan:

BWSR: Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

MNDNR: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

MnDOT: Minnesota Department of Transportation

MDA: Minnesota Department of Agriculture

MPCA: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service

SWCD: Soil and Water Conservation District

USACE: United States Army Corps of Engineers

USFWS: United States Fish and Wildlife Service