

**AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS) PLAN TASK FORCE****5:00 P.M.****Wednesday, September 19, 2012****Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Office****Lower Level Meeting Room****18202 Minnetonka Boulevard****Deephaven, Minnesota 55391**

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District is committed to a leadership role in protecting, improving and managing the surface waters and affiliated groundwater resources within the District, including their relationships to the ecosystems of which they are an integral part. We achieve our mission through regulation, capital projects, education, cooperative endeavors, and other programs based on sound science, innovative thinking, an informed and engaged constituency, and the cost effective use of public funds.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Acceptance of September 5, 2012, Meeting Notes**
- 3. Update on 2013 Workplan and Budget**
- 4. Discussion about Identifying and Setting Priorities**
- 5. Discussion about Additional Activities for Plan for Enhanced AIS Management in 2013**
- 6. Other Matters**
- 7. Reminder of Next Meeting – October 3**
- 8. Adjournment (by 6:30 p.m.)**

Agenda Materials:

- Meeting Notes, September 5, 2012, Task Force Meeting
- Additional Information re 2013 AIS Budget
- Memo re Discussion of Priorities (from Craig Dawson)
- Email from Joe Shneider re Additional Activities for 2013
- Note – Staff will present a memo re Possible Additional Activities for 2013 at the Task Force Meeting

AIS Plan Task Force Members Present:

Vern Wagner, Anglers for Habitat
Joe Shneider, Christmas Lake Association
Steve Gunther, Lake Minnewashta Preservation Association
Tom Frahm, Lake Minnetonka Association
Kurt Zuppke, Pierson Lake Association
Ken Gothberg, Citizens for the Minnehaha Creek Corridor
Jerry Moja, Carver County Parks Commission
Jay Green, Anglers for Habitat
Tom Niccum, Minnetonka Portable Dredging
Gabriel Jabbour, Tonka Bay Marina
Sara Wyatt, Three Rivers Park District
Tom Casey, MCWD Citizens Advisory Committee
Lee Keeley, MCWD Citizens Advisory Committee

Not Present: Doug Babcock, Lake Minnetonka Conservation District
Dave Oltmans, Friends of Diamond Lake
Tim Latterner, Dock & Lift, Inc.
Bob Fine, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

Also Present:

Craig Dawson, AIS Program Director
Louis Smith, District Counsel
Eric Fieldseth, AIS Specialist
Jim Calkins, MCWD Board and Hydrodata Committee Member
Bill Olson, MCWD Board and Hydrodata Committee Member
Sherry White, MCWD Board and Hydrodata Committee Member
There were also two residents in the audience.

1. Call to Order

The meeting began at 5:00 p.m. Louis Smith announced agenda would not be in effect for this meeting.

2. Acceptance of August 15, 2012, Meeting Notes

Tom Casey requested the following change in his comments on page 5: "...He stated that AIS will be introduced regardless of whether the level of noncompliance with regulations is 20 percent or 2 percent; thus, AIS management and prevention needs to be done."

3. Review of 2013 AIS Workplan and Budget

Craig Dawson reviewed these items for the Task Force. There were questions whether the information presented covered all of the AIS activities for 2013, as there were recollections that other projects had been spoken about but were not shown in the materials presented. Upon further investigation, Dawson noted other workplans involving AIS projects for other funds prepared by other staff members had not been included (including the weevil study, a zequanox trial, and flowering rush). The additional information will be provided for the next meeting.

4. Discussion about Involvement of Local Elected Officials

Dawson explained that the design for the composition of the Task Force was to keep it of a manageable size (a maximum of around 15 people) who represented a variety of organizations. It was not intended also to have a variety of types of persons (such as elected officials) serve on the Task Force. There was also a concern that, whether it be cities or elected officials, which ones could be seen as truly representative of these large groups of interest in the process.

Sara Wyatt reiterated her concerns expressed at the August 15 meeting that because elected officials will be involved in implementing the plan, it's important to have their buy-in during the development of the plan.

Other Task Force members made comments, often not favoring the addition of new members at this point of the planning process. One observed that there had not been much interest shown or expressed by councilmembers around Lake Minnetonka. Elected officials should be invited to attend and observe Task Force meetings, or perhaps to a listening session near the completion of the plan. It was suggested that some communication be sent to city managers and administrators about the progress of the Task Force (perhaps monthly) and to forward it to their councilmembers with the Task Force's invitation that they attend and be encouraged to share brief comments at meetings.

Ken Gothberg moved, and Lee Keeley seconded, that staff begin regular progress communications with city managers/administrators by sending them a letter to forward to their councilmembers, inviting elected officials to attend Task Force meetings and encouraging their comments. Motion passed 12-1 (Wyatt opposed).

5. Discussion about Immediate Short-term Priorities

Dawson related that, based on the recommendation of its Hydrodata Committee, the Board of Managers had decided to add \$250,000 to the proposed 2013 tax levy; the public hearing on the proposed levy and budget would be held September 6.

Specifically, the Board added \$250,000 to the levy for additional 2013 stop-gap activities, and the revised plan presented by the Hydrodata Committee, which must be reviewed by the AIS Plan Task Force, must be received by the Board by December 13, 2012. The goal of the revised plan is, with broad public support for these efforts in 2013, to prevent expansion of AIS to waters where they are not present. If such plan is not approved, the additional levy for 2013 would be removed.

A wide-ranging discussion ensued about what stop-gap activities the Task Force could identify and develop a plan for.

- The \$250,000 available was to be used for stop-gap activities; i.e., immediate measures, not research.
- The MCWD could be a pilot for State programs that are to take effect sometime after 2013; e.g., boater certification/AIS competency (which is to be in effect in 2015), developing a prototype process and introducing legislation in 2013 to enable it.
- There were many comments about doing activities on a pilot basis in 2013, and using experience to improve them in following years. Some mentioned that it's OK not to achieve 100% effectiveness at the beginning, that something less than that is reasonable and is still more effective than doing nothing.
- While it's worthwhile to do more watercraft inspections, what is lacking now is some place to send boaters for decontamination if they fail inspection. Decontamination is needed soon, and some public/private initiative could be developed. This could be a pilot project.
- Decontamination needs to be offered on a scale to do thousands of boats, not hundreds. There is a difference between boat washing (which some thought is what the DNR facilities were performing) and decontamination (which is more thorough and expensive).
 - Task Force members encouraged each other to visit Minnesota Inboard in Excelsior to see the decontamination unit at that business.
- While the Task Force in June identified several activities identified several long-term management activities, there were likely a few that could be undertaken in the short term. Some of these activities might include
 - Public education for anyone moving boats or water-related equipment, perhaps also targeting public schools.
 - Inspections, perhaps supplementing current schedules to cover time gaps when inspectors are not provided.
 - Decontamination (there was some philosophical discussion about whether MCWD taxpayers' funds should be used on the private owner of watercraft). It was noted that the LMCD has a little-used decontamination unit that might be made available.
- MCWD funds could be used, or set aside, to leverage others' funds (e.g., Lessard-Sams/ Legacy funds from the State)

Joe Shneider moved, and Steve Gunther seconded, that

- The Task Force begin a process to have a plan to the Hydrodata Committee by Thanksgiving
- The Task Force state its support for the additional \$250,000 levy, and that this statement be presented at the public hearing on the 2013 proposed budget and tax levy on September 6, 2012
- The Board of Managers be informed that the Task Force will be working on a plan for stop-gap activities using these funds.

Motion passed, 12-1 (Wagner opposed).

6. Discussion about Identifying and Setting Priorities

This item was not discussed; it will be continued to the next meeting.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, **September 19**.

8. Adjournment took place at 6:35 p.m.

Submitted by:

Craig Dawson, Recorder



MEMORANDUM

TO: AIS Plan Task Force
FROM: Craig W. Dawson, AIS Program Director
DATE: September 19, 2012, Task Force Meeting
SUBJECT: Additional AIS Activities in 2013 Budget

For the September 5 Task Force meeting, staff inadvertently provided only partial information covering AIS activities in the proposed 2013 budget. This memorandum should complete the budget information that the Task Force has requested.

The most complete summary of AIS activities proposed in 2013 is as follows:

AIS Fund (mostly)

AIS Cost Share Program	\$ 100,000	
Carp Management	\$ 0	
Zebra Mussel Monitoring	\$ 35,000	
Curly-leaf Pondweed Research	\$ 17,000	
Communications	\$ 30,000	
Media Relations	\$ 5,000	
AIS Management Plan Development	\$ 128,360	
Economic Impacts Study	\$ 25,000	(total study = \$50,000)
Total	\$ 340,360	

Research Fund

Weevil Study	\$ 113,300	
Flowering Rush Pilot	\$ 35,000	
Zequanox Trial/Study	\$ 30,000	
Carp Mgmt, Six-Mile Cr Project	\$ ---	(incl. in that fund; ~\$45-50,000/yr for 3 yrs.)
Total	\$ 173,300	

TOTAL \$ 513,360 (Multiple Funds, excluding personnel)

Available for Additional Activities \$ 250,000
 \$ 763,360

The work plans for projects in the research funds are attached.

Weevil Study

Fund 2407 – Joint Watershed Research

2012 Funding:	\$113,300
2012 Estimate:	\$ 23,000
2013 Proposed:	\$113,300

The District entered into an agreement with EnviroScience, Inc., to fund the first year of a proposed three-year study for biocontrol of Eurasian watermilfoil using a native weevil. Blue Water Science is a subcontractor to provide third-party verification of results throughout the process. The project was severely curtailed in 2012 due to conditions caused by unusually mild winter and spring weather. Estimated funding in 2012 reflects a limited number of weevils stocked in Christmas Lake by EnviroScience and associated services rendered by Blue Water Science, and a survey to be conducted in the fall to assess predation of weevils by fish. Funding proposed for 2013 would allow the project as planned for 2012 to begin anew.

Flowering Rush Pilot Program

Fund 3111 – Special Projects

2012 Funding:	\$ 45,000
2012 Estimate:	\$ 15,000
2013 Proposed:	\$ 35,000

The MCWD conducted a pilot project in 2011 for the manual extraction (aka hand-pulling) of flowering rush. Follow-up evaluation in 2012 indicated it was highly effective in areas with soft soil substrate, and had little change in cobble/gravel/rock substrate. The revised estimate for 2012 would continue the project for two sites, and to conduct a survey for the extent of flowering rush in Lake Minnetonka. Activity proposed for 2013 is to continue removal of flowering rush from selected sites at a \$30,000 cost-level. Also proposed is a \$5,000 contribution (which would be repeated in 2014) for research project for biocontrol of flowering rush. Support for this effort has been solicited by the informal interagency Flowering Rush Control group, in which the MCWD staff participates; one of the members, Washington State University, has committed \$10,000/year for the next two years.

Zequanox Study (NEW)

Fund 3111 – Special Projects

2012 Proposed:	\$?
2013 Proposed:	\$ 30,000

“Zequanox” is the trade name for a new control treatment that is to-date species-specific to zebra and quagga mussels. It uses dead bacteria (a type commonly found in soil) to be ingested by these mussels, and it then destroys their digestive systems. It has been federally approved for “closed water” applications. The company with rights to Zequanox is looking to conduct small-scale trials in open-water environments. In the trials, the company provides Zequanox at no charge, and the public cost is to conduct evaluation after Zequanox has been applied. It may be possible for the project to get underway in 2012; more likely it may take place in 2013. The funding shown assumes that the District may bear the total cost of evaluation; other entities, possibly with access to grant funds, may be able to perform the evaluation and thus reduce or remove the cost to the District.

Carp Program

Fund 2205 – Carp Program

2012 Funding: \$ 56,000

2013 Funding: \$ 0**

This program is for the removal of carp as an invasive/nuisance species by DNR-licensed commercial fish harvesters. It is the intent to suspend the removal of carp in this manner until *research is completed by Dr. Peter Sorensen. This research is a three-year research project to be conducted on Pierson, Marsh, and Wasserman lakes, which are interconnected by stretches of Six-Mile Creek. This activity is included in the Six-Mile Creek Planning Project, which is being managed by the Planning Department.*



MEMORANDUM

TO: AIS Plan Task Force
FROM: Craig Dawson, AIS Program Director
DATE: August 15, 2012, Task Force Meeting
SUBJECT: Things To Consider in Discussions about Priorities

At the first Task Force meeting, members were asked to identify topics that they thought would be important in the development of the Management Plan. Establishing priorities among AIS was one of them put on the list. At the August 1 meeting, there was discussion about whether other priorities should exist, and came up when looking at language in other plans about “priority waters” or “key ____”. Some members commented that the finitude of financial resources will necessarily limit choices and, from at least a risk management consideration, would push decisions toward priorities. It was suggested that the Task Force have some longer discussion about priorities generally, and this item has been placed on the agenda of the August 15 meeting.

For purposes of starting discussions, what follows are a number of things—and by no means a comprehensive overview—of ways at looking at or setting priorities (while trying to keep it on one page).

Priority-setting should be defined by guiding principles. It may be difficult to make a decision among competing choices. What factors should be considered and how should they be weighted?

- Prevention of introduction
- Ability to contain, possibly eradicate, infestation
- Cost to manage (short- and long-term)
- Maintenance of access to waters
- Use of waterbody
 - High public recreational use
 - High quality natural environment
 - Economic impact on businesses and residents along or near particular waterbodies
- Connectedness to other waters; how much downstream is there that can be impacted
- Public & District-wide benefit vs. private benefit of management activities
- Relative importance/threat of particular species
- Ability to leverage other public and private resources

Undoubtedly, you will have other considerations to add.

Craig Dawson

From: Joseph N.Shneider <jshneider@visi.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 12:44 PM
To: Tom Casey; Lee Keeley; Steve Gunther; Joseph N. Shneider; Kurt Zuppke; dmoltmans@comcast.net; tfracm@mediacombb.net; Richard Glidewell; Marjorie@mbiusmodel.com; Ken Gothberg; Louis Smith; Anglers for Habitat; mpdredging@qwestoffice.net; Gabe Jabbour; bob fine (yorkfines@gmail.com); Craig Dawson; Sara Wyatt (sarawyatt@usfamily.net); j.moja@mchsi.com
Cc: JNS JNS; Eric Evenson; James Calkins
Subject: Follow-up to our 9/5/12 MCWD AIS Task Force meeting

To the members of the MCWD AIS Task Force -

I took advantage of my time at our 9/5/12 meeting to get your commitment to develop a plan for using the additional \$250,000 in stop-gap monies for AIS in 2013 teed up by the Hydrodata Committee. I am pleased that most of us voted in favor. That was an important "message" to send to the Board of Managers who approved the levee increase of \$250,000 on a contingent basis the following night.

I did not take the time at that meeting to voice my opinion on the specifics of what I would support in stop-gap measures, and am using the rest of this email to do just that.

I recommend that we take a leadership role and be the first in the State to leverage some of the MN AIS statute changes that became effective on July 1, 2012. Specifically, I suggest that the MCWD run a "pilot project" in 2013 of multi-lake inspection and decontamination. Not only would this provide significant additional cost-effective, protection against the spread of AIS (addressing the "stop-gap" intention of this funding), but it would allow for the testing of several elements to address the convenience concerns with a multi-lake inspection model... wait times, dawn fishing outings, pre-inspections, etc. Three small to medium sized accesses would probably be the minimum for a pilot, but 4 or 5 would be better if the money could be spread that far. There are lots of options that could be considered. For example... it would be even better still if one of the marinas on Minnetonka wanted to participate in the pilot, as more ideas could be tested. Likewise, private-sector decontamination could also be a part of the test.

Lot's of details would need to be worked out, but it could move along quickly as I and others have done significant work on this model already. And perhaps most importantly, this would move us from our camps of believing in one idea or another and rejecting others, to actually trying some things on a smaller scale to evaluate what works and what doesn't. In the worst case, I believe that it would be far more effective and cost-effective than inspecting at each access.

I know the MCWD staff is very capable to take the ideas we came up with and run with them, but I am also offering to collaborate with them to help craft a workable multi-lake pilot if that is where they are going. As you can imagine, I will continue to spend effort fleshing out just such a pilot.

Craig, if I have missed anyone who should have been on the distribution please forward this note to them.

Thanks for your consideration.

Joe Shneider
Christmas Lake