

Clean. Drain. Dry. Dispose.

Development of an Evaluation Plan for the Carver County Water Management Organization's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Inspection Program



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What are Aquatic Invasive Species?

AIS are non-native species, such as Zebra Mussels and Eurasian Water Milfoil. These pose a threat because they reproduce very fast and can take over lakes and rivers causing economic, environmental and ecosystem damages. The Carver County Water Management Organization (CCWMO) conducts boat inspections at public water accesses in order to help prevent the spread of AIS and increase public understanding about the damage that these invasive species do to lakes and rivers.

Evaluation Questions:

1. How do boaters feel about the inspection process?
2. What are boaters' perceptions of the inspection process' ability to slow the spread of AIS?
3. What changes can be made to improve the inspection process for the boaters?
4. What changes can be made to improve the inspection process for the inspectors?

These questions will be answered using:

- Boater surveys at the inspection point
- Boater focus groups
- Web-based surveys with inspectors

Survey for Inspectors to Administer at Public Water Accesses via iPads

Gender: Male Female
Age: 18-25 years 25-35 years 35-60 years 60+ years
Why are you here today? Family outing Fishing Water recreation

For questions 3-5 and 7 please select the response that most accurately reflects your experience today.

4. **I feel the inspection process was completed quickly today.**
Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

5. **I am satisfied with my interaction with the inspector today.**
Strongly agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

6. **Boat inspections are an effective measure to prevent the spread of AIS.**
Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neutral Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

7. **Briefly share why or why not:**

8. **After going through the AIS inspection process, I feel more knowledgeable about:**
What AIS are: Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neutral Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree
How AIS spread in MN: Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neutral Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree
What I can do to prevent the spread of AIS:
Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neutral Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

9. **If you had \$10,000 to improve this program how would you use it?**

10. **Would you be willing to be contacted about participation in a focus group to improve the inspection process?** Yes ___ No ___
If yes, please share your name, phone number, and email.
Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____

Considerations:

- The CCWMO may want to include or exclude the use of "neutral" as a possible survey question response depending on the desire for stronger statistical versus informative data about the specific question. As shown on the survey above it was added to certain questions and excluded from others
- The CCWMO is interested in discovering how boaters are using the lake. A question was added at the beginning of the survey to differentiate between boaters that are fishing, recreating, or on a family outing.
- The AIS program has limited capacity and resources. Given this, the evaluation plan must be feasible to implement.



Photo by www.zillow.com

Moving Forward:

The CCWMO plans to implement the evaluation plan this summer and use the results to inform the 2017 season. This plan has potential implications for all counties in Minnesota. Many counties have AIS inspection programs that are currently not being evaluated. If Carver County establishes an effective system of evaluation, it can share with other counties wanting to implement evaluation but that do not have the time or resources to develop a plan.

This project was completed as part of **PA 5311: Program Evaluation**, a course at the University of Minnesota, with support from the **Resilient Communities Project (RCP)**. RCP is a program of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA). To learn more about RCP or this year's partnership with Carver County, visit rcp.umn.edu. **Those involved in this project include: Adjunct Professor Leah Goldstein Moses, students Diego Villagra Mostaceros, Natalie Loots, Rebecca Mino, and Kaylee Myhre-Errecaborde, in partnership with Madeline Seveland at the CCWMO.**

To read our full report and survey, please visit the RCP website. Poster designed by Natalie Loots.