



## Support an Aggressive and Comprehensive Approach to Dealing with Invasive Species

**POSITION:** Hospitality Minnesota supports an aggressive and comprehensive approach to dealing with invasive species. The effort should include:

- Research
- Education
- Enforcement
- Remediation and treatment of currently infested waters

**BACKGROUND:** Invasive species are plants and animals that are not native to Minnesota. They are known to cause environmental and economic harm or harm to human health. Minnesota's natural resources are threatened by several aquatic (water-based) invasive species such as zebra mussels, spiny water fleas, Asian carp, starry stonewort, flowering rush, rusty crawfish and Eurasian water milfoil. Terrestrial (land-based) threats include the emerald ash borer and gypsy moth.

Maintaining stewardship of clean and inviting lakes and rivers is critical to the success of our tourism industry. Guests expect weed-free beaches, dock posts that are free from sharp zebra mussels and shoreland areas that are not overrun by invasive plants and weeds. Maintaining healthy forests and wooded areas is also a critical priority for resorts, campgrounds, outfitters and other hospitality businesses.

- We support continued and increasingly aggressive efforts by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to prevent the spread of invasive species. We also support efforts to treat and remediate areas already infested.
- While we and other advocates have been successful in winning significant state funding to combat and mitigate AIS in recent years, sustained additional investment is required. We support the use of Legacy Amendment Funds, resources from the lottery-funded Natural Resources Trust Fund, in addition to general fund and bonding to support efforts to combat the spread of AIS and to treat areas that are currently infected.
- Our members can help by informing guests of the rules for draining boats, bait containers and live wells, as well as removing plant material from boats and trailers. Properties with public lake accesses can post reminder notices and signs. Businesses can follow and support the rules for firewood use and transportation.
- Lakeshore associations should continue to be engaged in reasonable efforts to educate residents and guests about the threat of invasive species and the work required to prevent and mitigate the spread of these invasive plants and animals.

*Updated: 02/14/2023*