



Title: 2020 AIS Cost Share Agreements

Resolution number: 20-031

Prepared by: Name: Tom Langer
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Reviewed by: Name/Title: Brian Beck, R&M Program Manager

Recommended action: Authorization to Execute Agreements for 2020 AIS Cost Share Partnerships

Schedule: Date: 4/10/2020
Date: 12/31/2020

Budget considerations: Fund name and code: 500-5005
Fund budget: \$80,000
Expenditures to date: \$0
Requested amount of funding: \$79,355

Past Board action:

Res # 12-042	Title: Approval of AIS Management Plan development process and establishment of AIS Plan Task Force
Res # 13-076	Title: Adoption of AIS Management Program as an amendment to the District's 2007 Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan
Res # 17-007	Title: Adoption of 2017 Strategic Alignment Plan, including proposal to reduce direct AIS prevention spending
Res # 19-044	Title: Authorization to execute agreements for 2019 watercraft inspection cost-share partnerships

Summary:

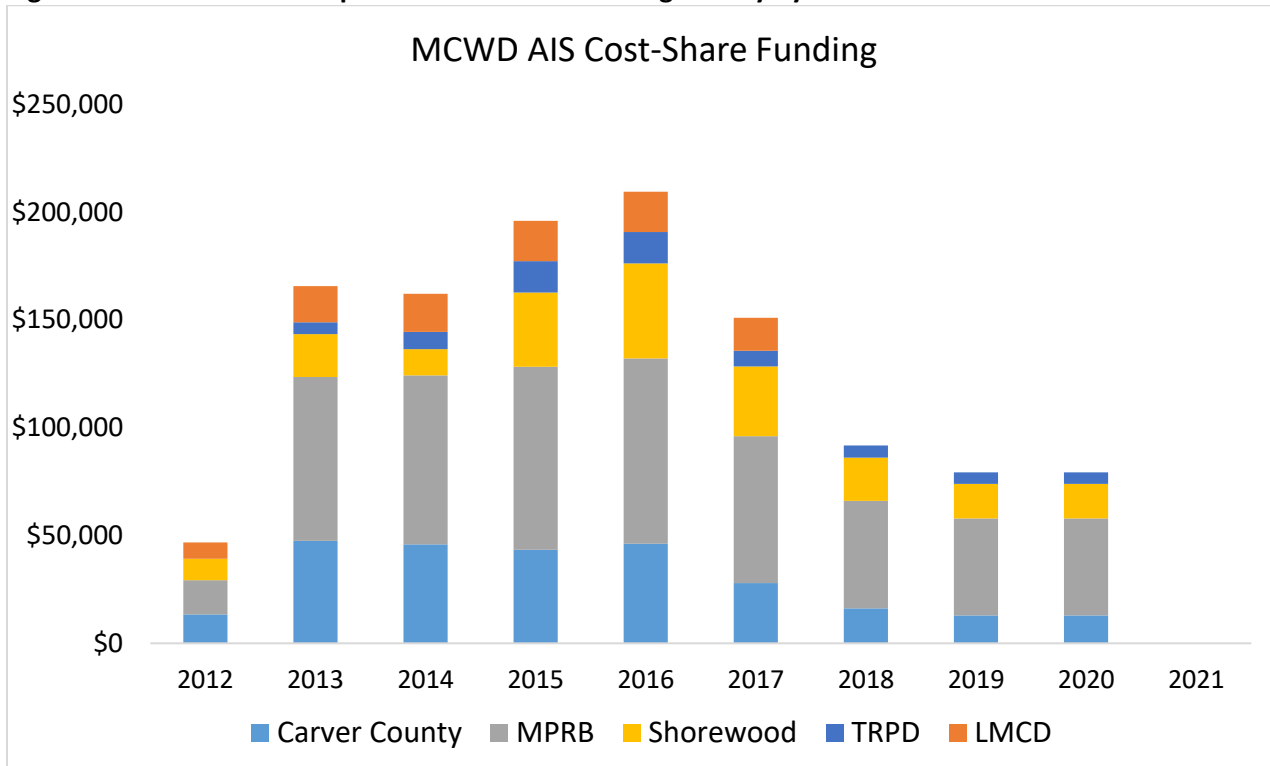
In 2012, the MCWD established an aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention and management program due to the threat AIS pose to aquatic ecological health, the absence of a statewide framework for AIS, and the need for consistent AIS prevention funding. MCWD's program included research about the spread and impact of AIS, early detection monitoring, rapid response to infestations, education, and funding for inspectors at boat launches.

Over time, local partners' involvement in AIS prevention surpassed MCWD's limited ability to fund this work across the watershed's large number of public accesses, lakes, and streams. In 2014, the State of Minnesota began allocating funding and delegating authority to counties for AIS prevention activities, which reinforced the need for MCWD to change its funding strategy.

In 2017, the MCWD realigned its programming, financial, and human resources to focus on implementing high-impact capital projects and changing policy to integrate land use and water planning based on the MCWD Strategic Alignment

Plan. In 2017, District staff began to implement the Strategic Alignment Plan by gradually reducing AIS watercraft inspection funding to accomplish the strategic priority of decreasing the District’s direct prevention costs (Figure 1 & 2). MCWD’s shift in resources between 2016 and 2019 has allowed District staff to identify high impact AIS management projects such as carp management in the Six Mile Creek – Halsted Bay subwatershed to further align programming with the District’s Strategic Alignment Plan and 2017 Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

Figure 1. AIS Watercraft Inspection Cost-Share Funding History by Partner



Today, the MCWD prioritizes AIS management strategies that align with partnership opportunities for improving water quality and ecological health in our areas of focus. It uses a multi-pronged approach:

- Direct management of AIS that degrade water quality or ecological integrity with proven, cost-effective management options that integrate with District priorities in priority geographies. This includes the Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Habitat Restoration Program, which focuses on management of common carp.
- Leading diagnostic assessments to identify the impact of AIS on ecosystem functions. An example is the partnership between the District, the City of Long Lake, City of Medina, City of Orono, and the Long Lake Waters Association to assess the impacts of common carp and other drivers of poor water quality in the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed. This study will outline scientifically sound management techniques for improving ecological health and water quality conditions.
- Being responsive to regional and local partnership opportunities outside focal areas that align with the District’s focus on management of AIS to improve ecological health and water quality conditions of our lakes and streams. MCWD will continue to work with its partners to improve ecological health and water quality throughout the watershed with high impact AIS management projects.
- Partnering with the Minnesota AIS Research Center (MAISRC) on several research projects to develop new AIS prevention and management techniques. MCWD staff have served on MAISRC’s technical committee, helping prioritize, and recommend research that provides the greatest benefit for prevention and management of AIS.

MCWD’s 2020 approved budget identified \$80,000 for funding support to our partners for the operation of watercraft inspection programs, which is a no change from MWCD’s 2019 watercraft inspection cost-share budget (Figure 1 & 2). The flat change in funding from 2019 to 2020 reflects MCWD’s continued effort to implement its strategic priorities

outlined in the 2017 Watershed Management Plan. MCWD staff have reached out to each partner to communicate MCWD's strategic shift in programming and the elimination of the AIS Boat Launch Inspection Cost-Share Program. This strategic communication and messaging to partners has been occurring and is allowing them time to adjust their programs and finances for 2021 and beyond.

Table 1 is a summary of the proposed cost-share amounts for each partner. Each partner will be required to submit a report and proof of final inspection hours and cost at the end of the season, at which point MCWD will provide its cost-share reimbursement to each partner for a not-to-exceed amount as listed in the table below.

Table 1. Summary of Proposed 2020 MCWD AIS Cost-Share Partnerships

Partner	Lakes Included	Partner Program Cost	MCWD's Proposed Cost-Share Amount
MPRB	Bde Maka Ska, Harriet & Nokomis	\$204,620	\$45,000
TRPD	Zumbra, Steiger, Auburn & Minnetonka Reg. Park	\$18,000	\$5,355
City of Shorewood	Christmas Lake	\$67,400	\$16,000
Carver County	Minnewashta, Piersons	\$48,795	\$13,000
Total			\$79,355

Supporting documents (list attachments):

- 1) Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 2020 Cost Share Proposal
- 2) Three River Park District 2020 Cost Share Proposal
- 3) City of Shorewood 2020 Cost Share Proposal
- 4) Carver County WMO 2020 Cost Share Proposal



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 20-031

Title: Authorization to Execute Agreements for 2019 Watercraft Inspection Cost-Share Partnerships

WHEREAS, the District’s mission is to collaborate with public and private partners to protect and improve land and water for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the District established an AIS program recognizing the ecological threat AIS provide, and addressing the lack of a statewide framework and consistent funding source for AIS; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the State of Minnesota identified counties as the appropriate local government unit to direct AIS prevention activities, and began allocating dedicated funding for AIS prevention to counties; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the District realigned its programming, financial and human resources to focus on building high-impact capital projects and changing policy to integrate land use and water planning; and

WHEREAS, through this strategic realignment, the District’s AIS program was repositioned to focus on improving water quality and ecological integrity in areas of high need in the watershed; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the District began communicating to our partners this strategic shift in AIS programming, and begun reducing its contributions to our partners AIS watercraft inspection programs over a few years, allowing time for our partners build more capacity to operate independently; and

WHEREAS, 2020 was the fourth year of reduced funding support to our partners for their AIS watercraft inspection programs; and

WHEREAS, the District will discuss the long-term plan for these funds through its 2021 budget process; and

WHEREAS, the District has approved in its 2020 budget up to \$80,000 to support our partners’ watercraft inspection programs; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers: authorize the execution of an agreement with Carver County, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, City of Shorewood, Three Rivers Park District to provide funding support for its watercraft inspection program at a cost not to exceed \$13,000, \$45,000, \$16,000, and \$5,355, respectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Managers authorize the District Administrator, upon advice of counsel and with such further minor revisions as may be necessary to effect the intent of the parties, to enter into these agreements.

Resolution Number 20- **031** was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: 4/9/2020

 Secretary Date: _____

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2020 Aquatic Invasive Species Cost-Share Proposal

3-5-2020

The mission of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) is to permanently preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations.

Description of Program

In 2012, the MPRB created an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Inspection and Education Program that includes AIS-focused education for park visitors and mandatory inspection of all watercraft using MPRB's boat landings. Education efforts are designed to create knowledgeable stewards of the lakes who take action to prevent the spread of AIS. The program has continued to operate at Bde Maka Ska, Lake Harriet, and Lake Nokomis every year since 2012. Inspectors are on-site or on-call ready to provide an inspection any time a user wants to use the lake within designated launch hours. When inspectors are not present the boat launches are closed. The program season typically runs from May 1 to December 1 but the daily boat launch hours change slightly from year to year in response to usage data from the previous year, public comments, and staff safety.

Unfortunately, Lake Harriet and Bde Maka Ska were designated as infested with zebra mussels in 2017 and 2018, respectively. That said, MPRB believes that continued operation of the AIS Inspection and Education Program is more important than ever for several reasons:

- First, although the three largest lakes in Minneapolis (Bde Maka Ska, Lake Harriet, and Lake Nokomis) are all designated as infested with zebra mussels, reproducing populations cannot be located in any of those lakes using traditional survey methods. Since the zebra mussel populations in each of these lakes appear to be suppressed, MPRB wants to prevent additional introductions that might aid in the growth of nuisance populations.
- Second, there are additional AIS, such as spiny water fleas and starry stonewort, that are not yet established in Minneapolis lakes. If introduced, both spiny water fleas and starry stonewort could significantly diminish the ecological and recreational value of Minneapolis lakes. Fortunately, the watercraft inspection process utilizes a clean, drain, and dispose approach that is effective in preventing the spread of all AIS, not just zebra mussels.
- Third, MPRB wants to limit the potential that AIS are spread from Minneapolis lakes into other lakes. In 2019, MPRB watercraft inspectors performed 2,476 exiting inspections. For each inspection, the Inspector asked the boater which lake they planned to visit next. While a majority (59%) of boaters said that they planned to visit a Minneapolis lake next, many boaters planned to visit other metro-area lakes or lakes in outstate Minnesota. Each of those outgoing watercraft, if uninspected, may carry AIS to a previously-uninfested lake.

MPRB has enjoyed the financial and technical support of Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) throughout its AIS program history. Other partner organizations during the history of MPRB's AIS program include Hennepin County Environmental Services through education and inspection grants, and the Minnesota DNR through inspection grants.

Though the DNR's inspection grant program is currently unfunded, the DNR continues to be a valuable staff training and technical resource.

2020 Boat Launch Hours

May 1 to September 7, 6am to 10pm: each boat launch is open 112 hours per week

When boat launches are open there will be at least one inspector on duty, with two inspectors working during targeted busy times (like special events) or after dark in the evenings.

September 8 to October 12, 6am to 9pm: each boat launch is open 105 hours per week

Boat launches close one hour earlier during this timeframe. The staffing structure listed above remains the same.

October 13 to November 1, 7am to 8pm: each boat launch is available 91 hours per week

The seasonal on-call inspection program is in effect. AIS staff work from a central location and are available for inspections on an on-call basis. This structure allows two inspectors to cover three boat launches and eliminates the need to have extra staff during evening hours. The primary responsibility of staff during the seasonal on-call program is still the inspection program. The on-call inspection program significantly reduces program cost without decreasing user access. Boaters call the phone number posted at the boat launch for an inspection. Wait time is generally less than 10 minutes.

November 2 to December 1, 8am to 6pm: each boat launch is available 70 hours per week

The same seasonal on-call inspection program outlined above is followed with the added flexibility of dropping to one inspector on the slowest days, often due to poor weather.

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board's Comprehensive Approach to Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention

The MPRB's AIS program includes much more than watercraft inspections. The MPRB coordinates a wide array of AIS prevention, early detection, response, and management activities. In May 2018, MPRB hired a full-time, year-round Aquatic Invasive Species Program Administrator who oversees these activities and ensures that MPRB continues to have a proactive and well-rounded AIS program.

While many of the MPRB's AIS activities are coordinated through its Environmental Management department, an inter-departmental AIS Work Group meets periodically to ensure that all MPRB staff are following best practices for AIS. The AIS Work Group contains members from a variety of work groups including: Environmental Management, Park Police, Aquatics, Asset Management, Planning, Permitting, and Communications & Marketing. All of these work groups carry out activities on or near MPRB water bodies and their involvement in the AIS Work Group ensures that all MPRB staff share a unified vision with regard to AIS prevention.

2020 Budget

Inspector Wages	\$204,620
	6.01 FTE budgeted. Actual costs vary as returning staff earn more than first year inspectors. Final staff make up will determine actual staff wages.
Cost-Share Amount	\$204,620

MCWD Cost-Share	\$45,000
Hennepin County	\$40,000

Proposal Summary

The MPRB proposes to enter into an agreement with MCWD to receive \$45,000 to help cover the costs associated with the AIS Inspection and Education Program as outlined above. The total amount requested (\$45,000) is under the assumption that program expenses will be comparable or higher than the final expenses of previous years. Final 2020 program expenses, inspection data, and the program report will be given to MCWD in early January 2021.

Prepared by
Mike Sorensen
Aquatic Invasive Species Program Administrator
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board



March 17, 2020

Tom Langer
Aquatic Ecologist
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
15320 Minnetonka Bld.
Minnetonka, MN 55345

Re: Watercraft Inspection grant request for 2020

Dear Tom:

Three Rivers Park District is requesting a grant of \$5,355 to supplement our watercraft inspection program at Carver Park Reserve and Lake Minnetonka Regional Park for 2020. The grant would cover the time period between May 25 and September 7 for the Carver Park Reserve effort and May 25 through September 20 for the Lake Minnetonka Regional Park effort. The sites to be covered under the supplemental inspection effort as well as the estimated number of MCWD grant-funded inspection hours at each site are outlined below.

Site:	Zumbra Lake access-Carver Park Reserve
Total Inspector cost anticipated	\$2,000 (200 hours of inspector time)
MCWD grant-covered inspector cost requested	\$735 (70 hours of inspector time)

Site:	Auburn Lake (West) access-Carver Park Reserve
Total Inspector cost anticipated	\$2,000 (200 hours of inspector time)
MCWD grant-covered inspector cost requested	\$735 (70 hours of inspector time)

Site:	Steiger Lake access-Carver Park Reserve
Total Inspector cost anticipated	\$2,000 (200 hours of inspector time)
MCWD grant-covered inspector cost requested	\$735 (70 hours of inspector time)

Site:	Lake Minnetonka Regional Park access
Total Inspector cost anticipated	\$12,000 (1,200 hours of inspector time)
MCWD grant-covered inspector cost requested	\$3,150 (300 hours of inspector time)

The requested supplemental funding will ensure the same level of watercraft inspection effort that has been maintained the past 4 years. There has been a total of at least 200 hours dedicated to watercraft inspections at each of the Carver Park Reserve locations and at least 1,200 hours allocated for the Lake Minnetonka Regional Park access. The Three Rivers Park District average hourly rate for all Level 1 inspectors in 2020 will remain the same as the 2018 rates at \$10.50/hour. Grant funded hours would be used to support an inspection presence at the Carver Park Reserve lakes, which will reinforce that watercraft inspections can occur at any time that boaters use the accesses.

Grant funded hours allocated for Lake Minnetonka Regional Park will allow the District to continue the higher efficiency deployment of inspectors (started in 2015) to maximize our effectiveness at covering both incoming and outgoing watercraft at the access itself.

Thanks for your willingness to consider this request. Contact me anytime via e-mail (Brian.Vlach@threeriversparks.org) or phone (763-694-7846) if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Brian Vlach

Brian Vlach
Senior Manager of Water Resources
Three Rivers Park District

cc. Darren Dummer, TRPD Park Operations Supervisor-Carver/Lake Minnetonka
Angie Smith, TRPD Director of Natural resources Management

Christmas Lake - AIS Prevention costs for 2020 (Projected)

Item	2020 Projections	2019 Expenses	2018 Expenses
Inspection fees	\$67,400.00	\$72,744.37	\$69,729.50
Inspection & decontamination unit operating supplies & maintenance	\$2,000.00	\$2,518.27	\$2,006.34
Replacement tablets		\$430.04	
WiFi operation & maintenance	\$720.00	\$699.40	\$680.58
Security camera & maintenance	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total expense	\$71,120.00	\$76,392.08	\$72,416.42
	-\$1,000.00		
Total claimed expense	\$70,120.00	\$76,392.08	\$72,416.42

Cost Share breakdown			
	2020 P	2019 A	2018 A
Hennepin County	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
City of Shorewood	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	\$16,000.00	\$16,000.00	\$20,095.75
Christmas Lake Homeowner's Association	\$40,120.00	\$45,392.08	\$37,320.68
	\$71,120.00	\$76,392.08	\$72,416.42



Carver County Planning & Water Management
Government Center Administration Building
600 E 4th St, Chaska, MN 55318-2102

Feb. 3, 2020

Tom Langer
Aquatic Ecologist
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
15320 Minnetonka Boulevard
Minnetonka, MN 55345

RE: AIS Cost-Share for Lakes Minnewashta and Piersons

Dear Mr. Langer:

The Carver County Planning and Water Management Department would like to request AIS watercraft inspection cost-share funding for Lakes Minnewashta and Pierson. The proposed 2020 watercraft inspection program for both lakes are included with this letter.

A priority necessity for the AIS program at these lakes, which would operate mid-May through October, is funding for seasonal/part-time watercraft inspector labor and program supplies. The cost of supplies has been incorporated into a flat rate of \$16.28 per inspection hour.

The County is requesting **\$13,000** from MCWD to support this program which is a key component of the County's efforts to stop the spread of invasive species. We thank you for the opportunity to continue this partnership.

Sincerely,

Andrew Dickhart
Carver County AIS Coordinator

