

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 115-D

Project Title:

Strengthening the Frontline to Prevent Aquatic Invasive Species

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

D. Invasive Species

Total Project Budget: \$ \$199,290

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 years, 2010 - 2013

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$5,000

Summary:

Minnesota Waters will mobilize, train and equip citizens and lake/river service professionals to: detect and report aquatic invasives for rapid response, to raise awareness, and promote actions that prevent further spread.

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Sponsoring Organization: MN Waters

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Location:

Region: Statewide

County Name: Beltrami, Itasca, Cass, Crow Wing, Otter Tail, Douglas, Todd, Pope, Stearns, Benton, Wright

City / Township:

_____ Knowledge Base	_____ Broad App.	_____ Innovation
_____ Leverage	_____ Outcomes	
_____ Partnerships	_____ Urgency	_____ TOTAL

MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Strengthening the Frontline to Prevent Aquatic Invasive Species

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Aquatic invasive species have spread to an alarming number of Minnesota's lakes and rivers causing devastating and irreversible impacts to property values, tourism revenue, and the health of our waters. And aquatic invasives are winning the battle: today, they infest more than 30 percent of our primary recreational lakes. A new line of prevention is clearly needed - one that bridges the gap between agency expertise and citizen power.

Minnesota already has many effective weapons against aquatic invasives — trainings, awareness campaigns, grant opportunities and other resources provided by the DNR's Aquatic Invasive Species Program, among others. But the programs clearly limit the capacity needed to reach enough people on the frontlines: the citizens and lake/river service professionals (such as boat and watercraft dealers or rental companies, dock service installers and dealers, fishing guides and recreational outfitters, lake vegetation service and shoreline restoration professionals) who are on the water every day. Minnesota's citizens and lake and river groups are clamoring for the means to stop aquatic invasives and protect their local waters. Similarly, lake/river service professionals depend on healthy un-infested lakes and streams for their livelihood and to sustain a vibrant local economy.

Innovative action is needed now to leverage the impact of existing funds and forces. Minnesota Waters is ready to implement a statewide campaign to mobilize, train and equip citizen volunteers and lake/river service professionals to detect and report aquatic invasives to support rapid response, raise crucial local awareness, and to promote actions that prevent further spread. Minnesota Waters has a unique capacity to leverage state dollars through organizing and empowering volunteer citizen leaders. Our expertise in training and equipping citizens to take action will greatly expand the reach and effectiveness of current state-funded aquatic invasives programs.

The campaign will partner with the DNR for technical assistance and will target these areas with high watercraft activity and high aquatic invasive infestation rates: North Central, West Central, and the greater St. Cloud area.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Training Citizens to Identify and Report Aquatic Invasive Infestations to Appropriate Agencies

Budget: \$ ~~107,000~~10,650

Minnesota Waters will conduct workshops that provide hands-on training to teach volunteers how to identify the "most-wanted" aquatic invasive plants and animals. Using equipment such as GPS units and topographic maps, the workshop will train citizens how to target areas for inspection, monitor their lakes and rivers for invasives, and report accurate findings to the DNR, local governments, and community members.

Deliverable

1. Coordinate partners and roles
2. Coordinate and market trainings
3. Implement trainings
4. Provide follow up support

Completion

Nov 2010 – ongoing
Nov 2010 – ongoing
May 2011 – ongoing
June 2011 – ongoing

Result 2: Mobilizing Citizens to Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasives

Budget: \$ ~~22,400~~0,930

Minnesota Waters will equip and mobilize lake associations and river groups through *communications training* promoting prevention and rapid response. These trainings, conducted in partnership with the DNR, will empower citizens to become *one-on-one educators* about the prevention actions every watercraft user must take to stop the spread. Newly developed communications resources for engaging the media, publicizing updates on current infestations, and reporting data to optimize rapid response will also be

covered during our trainings as part of the overall prevention strategy. Minnesota Waters will also provide a **“Spotlight on Aquatic Invasives” section on our website** offering these prevention resources as well as a specialized packet of information designed for lake and stream users to provide to their service professionals.

Deliverable

1. *Coordinate partners and roles*
2. *Coordinate and market trainings*
3. *Implement trainings and website resources*
4. *Provide follow up support*

Completion

- Nov 2010 – ongoing*
Nov 2010 – ongoing
May 2011 – ongoing
June 2011 – ongoing

Result 3: Mobilizing Lake/River Service Professionals to Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasives

Budget: \$ 364,000410

Minnesota Waters will build a database of all regionally known lake/river service businesses; then conduct outreach and training to this audience advising them of the significant role they can play in preventing aquatic invasive infestations through their actions and their information-sharing with customers. The workshops will educate participants about aquatic invasives identification, current local infestations, regulations, effective cleaning procedures, reporting sightings, and how to work with regional partners to prevent the spread.

Deliverables

1. *Develop database and specialized outreach*
3. *Coordinate partners and roles*
4. *Coordinate and market trainings*
5. *Implement trainings*
6. *Provide follow up support*

Completion

- Sept 2010 – ongoing*
Nov 2010 – ongoing
Nov 2010 – ongoing
Jan 2011 – ongoing
Feb 2011 – ongoing

Result 4: Increased Statewide Awareness on Actions to Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasives

Budget: \$ 2018,190700

Throughout the campaign, Minnesota Waters will 1) include articles in our print and email newsletters; 2) launch a series of local and statewide news releases; and 3) provide citizen lake and river groups with media and community outreach news releases and other resources that promote actions to prevent the spread.

Deliverable

1. *Publish articles*
2. *Develop and submit news release*

Completion

- May 2011 – ongoing*
May 2011 – ongoing

Result 5: Program Assessment and Follow-up

Budget: \$ 13,7002,200

Participants will be contacted three months afterwards to assess their application of the skills in which they were trained and to receive reminders of key prevention strategies as well as any current aquatic invasives updates.

Deliverable

1. *Develop and implement evaluation*
2. *Compile evaluation results and incorporate enhancement*

Completion

- April 2011 - ongoing*
May 2011 – ongoing

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners: *Minnesota Waters* will lead the project including promotion; coordinating and producing workshops; conducting follow-up and evaluation; and campaign communications. *MnDNR Aquatic Invasive Species Program* staff will provide technical and training assistance throughout the project. *Lake/River Associations* in the identified regions will partner and participate in campaign promotion and implementation.

B. Timeline Requirements: This is a three-year project ending on June 30, 2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy: Following the completion of this project, at least 75 lake/stream associations and hundreds of lake/river service professionals will be trained and equipped to identify, report, prevent and communicate about aquatic invasive infestations throughout Minnesota far beyond the life of this project. Through their newly acquired knowledge as well as the resources and tools created in this project, associations and professionals will be able to train others and promote actions that prevent the spread of aquatic invasives for years to come. In addition, this pilot project can be expanded to other regions across the state in future years.

Project Budget

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET (3 years)

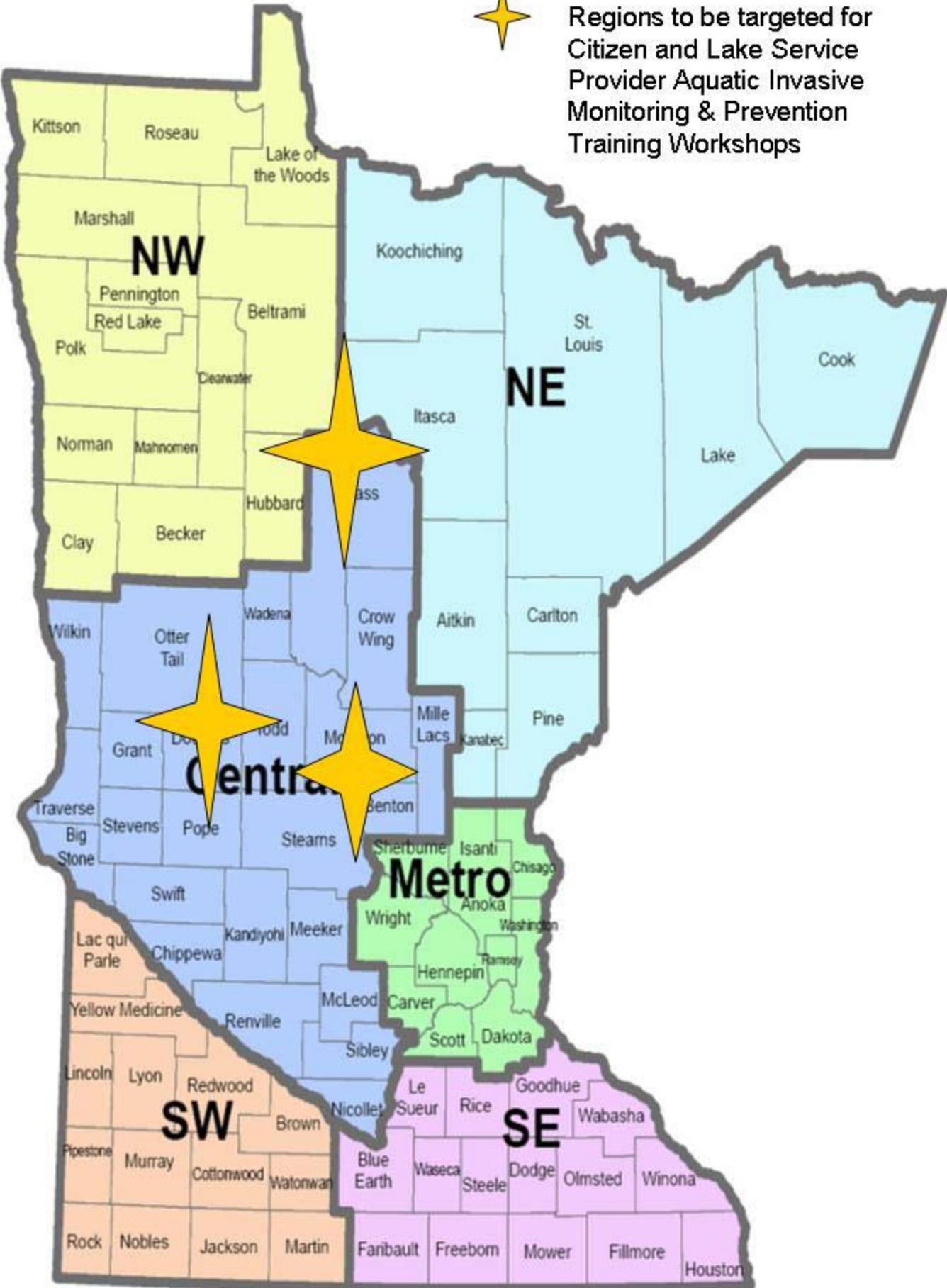
BUDGET ITEM <i>(See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 13)</i>	AMOUNT
Personnel:	
Program Coordinator 1: Manage and Implement project. (.5 FTE for 30 months. 83%Salary, 17% benefits. One person)	\$ 78,000
Program Coordinator 2: Assist Coord 1, help present workshops. (.25 FTE for 6 months. (83% salary, 17% benefits) One person)	\$ 7,800
Contracts:	
Fortin Consulting to provide Aquatic Invasive Workshop support and quality assurance for citizen AIS identification (\$800/wkshp, 18 wkshps, plus \$600 for AIS QA)	\$ 15,000
Web design- for AIS focused web page and downloadable information packets.	\$ 4,500
Media Outreach- distribution of press releases	\$ 2,500
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	
Citizen Identification & Documentation workshop materials: AIS Identification keys, hand outs	\$ 9,000
Citizen Frontline AIS Communication Workshop handouts, materials	\$ 990
Promotional mailing and advertising for all workshops	\$ 7,900
Workshop Venue Rental (\$125 venue cost per workshop for 20 workshops)	\$ 2,510
Citizen ID Workshop eqmt: bucket scopes, GPS units, Topographical maps, secchi disk, measuring tapes, cooler, white trays, artificial substrates)	\$ 52,200
Travel: Mileage (.55/mile), hotel, \$31 per diem)	\$ 12,690
Additional Budget Items: AIS-focused MN Waters Newsletter	\$ 4,200
Project Evaluation Survey mailing printing & postage	\$ 2,000
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 199,290

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: <i>MN Waters staff time for writing add'l AIS-related pieces; coverage of project in MN Waters publications</i>	\$ 5,000	Secured
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: DNR staff time to train MW trainers, explain and share existing materials, co-present workshops \$7000 Existing AIS printed materials from DNR \$2000 DNR travel costs \$2000	\$ 11,000	Secured
In-kind Services During Project Period - Local govmt units (SWCD, Counties, etc) will be assisting us in reaching citizens' citizen participants will be assisting with event logistics- dollar value difficult to determine	\$ -	
Remaining \$ from Current Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable):	n/a	
Funding History: <i>The Bush Foundation has funded MN Waters' AIS prevention work with citizens 2007 - 2009</i>	\$ 8,000	



Regions to be targeted for
 Citizen and Lake Service
 Provider Aquatic Invasive
 Monitoring & Prevention
 Training Workshops



Organization Description

Minnesota Waters is a statewide 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to empowering citizens to protect and improve our lakes and rivers. We believe the most effective water stewards and advocates are those who live near, recreate on, and enjoy the resource as the core of their local community.

Mission

The mission of Minnesota Waters is to promote responsible stewardship of our water resources by engaging citizens, local and state policymakers, and other partners in the protection and restoration of Minnesota's lakes and rivers.

Vision

Minnesota Waters envisions an engaged citizenry working to protect and restore Minnesota's irreplaceable natural assets—our clean and healthy lakes and streams—for current and future generations.

Minnesota Waters Programs

To achieve our vision, Minnesota Waters provides **training, connections**, and **support** to help citizen volunteers turn concern into action. We provide **training** in water quality monitoring, building effective citizen groups, creating a lake/river management plan, and influencing public policy. We provide **connections** among citizen groups, agencies, funders and decision-makers through workshops, regional summits, a bi-annual statewide conference, and our website. We provide **support** by administering small project grants and offering toll-free phone assistance, how-to guides, fact sheets, and informational print and e-mail newsletters. We also represent the concerns of citizen-led lake, stream and watershed associations by **advocating on statewide initiatives** such as the Shoreland Rules update, the Star Lakes and Rivers program development, the Dock Rules update and state-level clean water funding.

Project Manager Qualifications

Courtney Kowalczak is the Program Director of the Water Quality Monitoring Program at Minnesota Waters. Since 2003 our citizen water quality monitoring workshops have trained over 900 citizens on EPA approved sampling protocols, and other monitoring skills. In 2008 alone we helped citizen volunteers gather assessment data on 39 lakes and 26 streams. Courtney Kowalczak brings over 18 years of experience as a water resource researcher, environmental educator, and college volunteer program director. Courtney Kowalczak has strong facilitation, coordination and program development skills. Project management experience includes:

1991 - 1998 University of Minnesota – Duluth Stream Ecology Laboratory Assistant Scientist

1998 – 2002 EPA Toxicology Database

2002 - 2007 St. Louis River – River Watch Director, USDA Tribal Extension Grant

2007 - 2009 Final grant duties for the 2005 LCCMR grant
2006 Clean Water Legacy Surface Water Assessment Grant “ Minnesota Waters Expanding Citizen Monitoring and Assessment in Minnesota”
2007 Clean Water Legacy Training and Promotion Grant