



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2025 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2025-108

Proposal Title: Public Water Access AIS Cleaning Station Signs and Tools

Project Manager Information

Name: Nick Bluhm

Organization: Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL)

Office Telephone: (612) 747-8970

Email: Treasurer@ACCLakes.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Installation of 200 additional Self-Service AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools at Cass County public and private water accesses. Twenty-seven percent (27%) increase in watercraft cleaning when AIS tools are present.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$38,000

Proposed Project Completion: December 31, 2026

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (H)

Secondary Category: Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species (D)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

The Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) working with Cass County SWCD, ACCL Lake Association members, private resorts, and Lake Service Providers (LSP), is completing the installation of 100 Self-Service AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools at public and private Cass County water accesses and has identified 200 additional locations for Cleaning Station installation.

- AIS can be transported STATEWIDE from Cass County infested waters when watercraft owners fail to clean their watercraft
- Recent DNR field observation studies (2019 - 2023) confirm that when Cleaning Stations & Tools are present, watercraft owners:
 - 1.4 times more likely to stop and clean watercraft
 - 4 times more likely to use tools when provided AND spent an additional 2 minutes removing vegetation
 - 12% boaters observed used tools provided
 - 27% of boaters interviewed said that the absence of tools prevented their removing vegetation.
- Of the 200 locations identified, over 90% lack DNR watercraft inspectors to stop AIS.
- Cass County has destination fishing lakes infested with AIS: Leech, Winnibigoshish, Ten Mile, Gull, Woman, and Washburn.
- This project provide a MODEL pathway for the DNR and/or 82 Minnesota Counties to REDUCE New AIS infestations BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF WATERCRAFT leaving accesses with VIOLATIONS AND spurring community

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

In 2025 through 2026, the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) working with Cass County SWCD, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Lake Service Providers (LSP), private resorts, and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO) will procure, distribute and install materials for 200 additional Self-Service AIS Cleaning Stations at public and private Cass County water access locations.

ACCL provided the initial funding and managed the purchasing and distribution of materials for 52 locations in 2023 with the remaining 48 installations to occur in 2024.

SWCD committed to 50% match funding for the initial 100 stations.

ACCL will use the existing successful vendor relationships, distribution and installation operational procedures.

Cass SWCD will distribute and install materials working with 1) private resorts as part of their Adopt a Harbor initiative and 2) BLM staff.

LLBO staff will install materials on their property.

ACCL will manage the funding, purchasing, distribution and installation of the materials for 200 additional locations, securing materials in four (4) separate batches, for 50 locations in each phase, at cost of approximately \$7,600 per phase.

The required 25% non-ENRTF match will be provided by ACCL and SWCD.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

The installation of AIS Cleaning Stations will reduce the STATEWIDE spread of AIS by increasing self cleaning of watercraft.

DNR Field observational studies confirm that when AIS cleaning stations & tools existed:

- boaters are 1.4 times more likely to stop & clean watercraft
- 4 times more likely to use tools when provided AND spent an additional 2 minutes removing vegetation
- 12% boaters used tools provided

- Stations in place longer displayed increased cleaning and tool usage: 5 years (13%) / 2-3 years (12%) / 1 year (8%)

- 27% of boaters interviewed said that the absence of tools prevented their removing vegetation.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Selection of AIS Cleaning Station Locations By PHASE

Activity Budget: \$1,000

Activity Description:

Cass SWCD and ACCL have identified 200 additional locations for Self-Service AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools; many are on the infested waters of Leech and Winnibigoshish Lakes.

Refer to the Analytics Attachment regarding the 200 proposed Cleaning Stations locations; these 200 locations exclude 100 locations which ACCL has either distributed materials (52) or plans to install Stations (48).

Locations:

- a. Adopt a Harbor resort initiative; focusing on the infested waters of Leech and Winnibigoshish Lakes.
- b. BLM Locations
- c. LLBO locations
- d. Remaining private and public access locations

ACCL will use the existing successful vendor relationships, distribution and installation operational procedures. Cass SWCD and ACCL distributed and installed 52 Self-Service AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools in 2023; the remaining 48 will be installed in 2024.

Cass SWCD and ACCL Board members will distribute and install materials working with 1) private resorts as part of their Adopt a Harbor initiative and 2) BLM staff.

LLBO staff will install materials on LLBO property.

An AIS tool station should fit within the current site design, not interfere with public use of the site, and not cause any safety hazards, adjacent to the take-out pathway at the tie-down area of a water access.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
BATCH 2025 A: Selection of 50 Installation Locations	May 31, 2025
BATCH 2025 B: Selection of 50 Installation Locations	July 31, 2025
BATCH 2026 A: Selection of 50 Installation Locations	April 30, 2026
BATCH 2026 B: Selection of 50 Installation Locations	June 30, 2026

Activity 2: Purchase, Payment and Delivery or Pickup of 50 Unit Batch Materials; Total 4 batches; Total 200 Stations.

Activity Budget: \$33,000

Activity Description:

Cass SWCD and ACCL distributed and installed 52 Self-Service AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools in 2023.

ACCL will use the existing vendor relationships, distribution and installation operational procedures which have been successful.

- a. Signs; Amity Graphics;
Confirm Logos present: LCCMR and ACCL or LCCMR and LLBO
- b. Brushes and Hardware; Home Depot
- c. Aqua Sticks; MAJK Solutions
- d. Buster Wrenches; Calif
- e. Grabbers; SWCD

Using the same operating procedures, ACCL will receive and store all materials in Longville MN at a private secure location controlled by ACCL. Delivery and Installation will commence following the receipt of all batch materials in Longville.

Cass SWCD will distribute and install materials working with 1) private resorts as part of their Adopt a Harbor initiative and 2) BLM staff. LLBO staff will install materials on LLBO property.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
BATCH 2025 A:Thirty (30) days after placement of orders; Consolidation of Materials in Longville	June 30, 2025
BATCH 2025 B:Thirty (30) days after placement of orders; Consolidation of Materials in Longville	August 31, 2025
BATCH 2026 A:Thirty (30) days after placement of orders; Consolidation of Materials in Longville	May 31, 2026
BATCH 20256 B:Thirty (30) days after placement of orders; Consolidation of Materials in Longville	July 31, 2026

Activity 3: Distribution and Installation of AIS Cleaning Station Signs and Tools

Activity Budget: \$4,000

Activity Description:

In 2023, the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) working with Cass County SWCD, ACCL Lake Association members, private resorts, and Lake Service providers, distributed and installed 52 Self-Service AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools at public and private Cass County water accesses.

ACCL will use the same existing successful distribution and installation procedures for the 200 additional locations.

Cass SWCD, assisted by ACCL BOD members, will distribute and install materials working with 1) private resorts as part of their Adopt a Harbor initiative and 2) BLM staff. LLBO staff will install materials on LLBO property.

Delivery and Installation will commence following the receipt of all batch materials; installation typically occurs on the same day as delivery at the installation site. We use a fence post driver to embed post in ground and attach the sign using eyebolts and hang the tools. In some cases an existing kiosk, post or fence is used to mount the sign and tools.

ACCL will submit for reimbursement after the distribution of materials in each phase.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
BATCH 2025 A: Distribution and Installation of Materials	July 31, 2025
BATCH 2025 B: Distribution and Installation of Materials	September 30, 2025
BATCH 2026 A: Distribution and Installation of Materials	June 30, 2026
BATCH 2026 B: Distribution and Installation of Materials	July 31, 2026

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Steve Henry	AIS Technician; Cass County SWCD	Field Installation Manager; Steve Henry manages the AIS Watercraft Inspectors in Cass county and has installed and inspected the existing AIS Cleaning Station Signs and Tools. Steve Henry will coordinate the distribution and installation of AIS Cleaning Station Signs and Tools on BLM, DNR and private resort property.	No
Raining White	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Raining White manages the AIS / Plant Resources program for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. Raining White will coordinate the distribution and installation of AIS Cleaning Station Signs and Tools on LLBO land.	No

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

ACCL will compile contact information for installed AIS cleaning stations & tools and respond to inquiries regarding station damages and tool replacement: at: AISCleaningStations@ACCLakes.org.

ACCL anticipates future expenditures requests for lost and damaged tools and potential station damages; we have requested a 10% lost and damaged tool allowance in our proposal.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Nick Bluhm

Job Title: Treasurer of the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL)

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Treasurer of the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL)

Qualifications:

1. Successful Financial Experience as ACCL Treasurer
2. Existing favorable relationships with AIS Sign and Tool Vendors
3. Strong working relationship with Cass County SWCD, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), DNR Parks & Trails, Lake Service Providers (LSP), private resorts, ACCL Lake Association members and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO).
4. Successfully implemented tracking system to monitor purchasing, payment, acceptance, distribution and installation of AIS Cleaning Station and Tools
5. Has installed AIS Cleaning Stations and Tools
6. Successful implementation of the ACCL AIS Cleaning Station and Tools project distribution and installation operational procedures.

Responsibilities:

1. Work with Cass County SWCD, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), DNR Parks & Trails, Lake Service Providers (LSP), private resorts, and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO) to prioritize 200 additional locations for Self-

Service AIS Cleaning Stations

2. Coordinate purchasing vendor materials in 50 unit batches of Cleaning Station Signs & Tools
3. Coordinate vendor orders and payments
4. Monitor receipt and coordination of materials in preparation of distribution
5. Coordinate delivery and installation schedule with Cass County SWCD, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Lake Service Providers (LSP), private resorts, ACCL Lake Association members and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO).
6. Monitor distribution and installation of AIS Cleaning Station and Tools batches.
7. Provide required reporting to LCCMR
8. Submit LCCMR reimbursement request
9. Initiate next batch purchase following LCCMR reimbursement receipt

Organization: Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL)

Organization Description:

The Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) is a vital 501c3 Non-Profit organization that serves as the Managing Organization for 40 Lake Associations encompassing 85 lakes, which are home to over 12,000 unique property owners in Cass County.

ACCL is dedicated to its mission to preserve, protect and improve Cass County Lakes and waterways through proactive leadership and effective communication on various critical issues such as aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, fisheries management, loon and wildlife rescue and restoration, lakeshore management, and water quality to lake associations, property owners and recreational users.

The dedicated 12-member board of ACCL annually holds monthly board meetings and five (5) member meetings, focusing each month on one essential aspect like AIS, Water Testing, Fisheries, Lake Stewardship & Loon Restoration, and the Annual Lake Association Membership meeting.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	DNR Approved Aluminum Signs; Quantity 200 signs at \$68.00 each	18" wide x 24" tall DNR Approved Aluminum Sign with six (6) holes to mount on existing DNR signpost or mount on an existing kiosk sign station for placing the cleaning station sign & tools.					\$13,600
	Tools and Supplies	Eight (8) foot metal sign post with 1" hole spacing to mount sign; Quality 200 posts at \$26.00 each	Eight (8) foot metal sign post with 1" hole spacing to mount sign					\$5,600
	Tools and Supplies	Zinc-Plated Eye Bolts with (2) Washers and (1) Nut (3/8" diameter); quantity 4 eyebolts required for each of 200 signs	Hardware for mounting Signs and Tools					\$1,450
	Tools and Supplies	Paracord rope to hang tools from eyebolts; Quality 72" per sign to hang four (4) tools on each of 200 signs	Paracord rope to hang tools from eyebolts					\$630
	Tools and Supplies	Grabber Tool: One grabber tool required for each of 200 signs	Grabber Tool is used to grab aquatic material and remove from boat and trailer. Additional 10% for future lost/missing tools. Boater interviews listed Grabber as most preferred tool. Field observations recorded Aqua Weed Stick used most often to remove vegetation.					\$660
	Tools and Supplies	Aqua Stick Tool 48" long; One Aqua Stick Tool for each of 200 stations	Aqua Stick Tool is used to grab aquatic material and remove from boat and trailer. Additional 10% for future lost/missing tools. DNR Field Observations stated this tool was most					\$6,550

			effective for removing vegetation from trailers and watercraft.					
	Tools and Supplies	Long handle Gong Brush; One tool for each of 200 stations	Long handle Gong Brush is used to grab aquatic material and remove from boat and trailer. Additional 10% for future lost/missing tools.					\$1,750
	Tools and Supplies	Boat Plug Buster Brush; One for each of 200 stations	Boat Plug Buster Brush is used to remove and replace boat drain plug on boats. Additional 10% for future lost/missing tools. Field observations confirmed this tool used most often to remove and secure boat drain plugs.					\$1,760
	Tools and Supplies	Station Site Selection	Station Site Selection					\$1,000
							Sub Total	\$33,000
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
		Station Site Selection	Station Site Selection					\$1,000
		Station Installation	Station Installation					\$4,000

							Sub Total	\$5,000
							Grand Total	\$38,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	Cass SWCD and ACCL will contribute 100% of the Non-ENRTF Funds	Cash Payments to Vendors for posts, signs, tools and hardware	Pending	\$9,500
			Non State Sub Total	\$9,500
			Funds Total	\$9,500

Total Project Cost: \$47,500

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [311c56d7-4c5.docx](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

The Association of Cass County lakes (ACCL) Board works with the Minnesota DNR, Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), numerous Lake Associations, Resorts, Service Providers, Private and Tribal access landowners to place AIS Cleaning Station Signs & Tools at public and private Cass County water access locations....

Financial Capacity

Title	File
MN ACCL Filing	d3f69dcf-19d.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
ACCL BOD Resolution	feff633f-9b2.docx

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Thunder Lake AIS Cleaning Station	2cc5fb60-5de.jpe
Webb Lake AIS Cleaning Station	9c040c90-cb0.jpe
Long Lake; Musky House Lake Service Provider AIS Cleaning Station	9b79c038-cbb.jpe
Pine Mountain AIS Cleaning Station	c186d428-a39.jpe
DNR Field Research: Self-Serve AIS Tools Stations at Water Accesses	66321178-ea1.docx
Blackwater Lake AIS Cleaning Station	fb5328ff-4fd.jpe
Upper Trelipe Lake AIS Cleaning Station	d29a963e-5c4.jpe
Portage Lake AIS Cleaning Station	f20a080f-121.jpe
AIS Prevention Tools at Public Water Accesses	30bb8c65-648.pdf
AIS Tool Station – Interpretive Signage Specifications	cd23da32-d08.pdf
Lake Washburn AIS Cleaning Station	9a5debed-475.jpe
Lower Trelipe Lake AIS Cleaning Station	fc57baaa-ef2.jpe
Sanborn Lake AIS Cleaning Station	6df7930e-803.jpe
AIS Cleaning Tool Study Data	fb40f6d9-67a.xlsx
DNR infested-waters 02.02.2024	c05af390-017.xlsx
AIS Cleaning Station Sign and Tools Project (03.16.24)	ad017dd5-504.docx
IRS Determination Letter	efb3fdb5-717.jpe
2023 IRS Form 990-N (e-Postcard)	812fa819-c74.pdf
Cass County Proposed Tool Station Locations	d3e8293a-07d.jpe
Cass County Leech Lake Harbor Ramps	63936ec3-1e2.jpe
ACCL Cleaning Station PowerPoint Presentation	ef501436-26c.pptx
Budget, Costs, Station Proposed Station Locations in Cass County	9043c99b-10c.xlsx

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

Yes

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

Steve Henry, AIS Technician, Cass County SWCD; Raining White, AIS Technician, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwas

