

July 11, 2014

Becker County Commissioners
Becker County AIS Panel
915 Lake Avenue
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

RE: Becker Coalition of Lake Associations – AIS County Funding Allocation

Dear Commissioners and Panel members:

At the July 8th Board of Commissioners' meeting, the Becker County Commissioners' requested public input from the Becker Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA) regarding priorities for the allocation of state funding for the prevention and management of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in our County.

Becker COLA held an informational meeting on July 10th, and solicited ideas and recommendations from its members. Over 75 citizens were in attendance and the following items are considered high priorities for the next two years (2014-15):

- 1. Decontamination Program in 2014/15 – purchase and operation (Level II inspectors) of 3 units.**
Budget: \$145,000 +/-
 - Urged to have at least one unit operational this summer.
 - Subsidized program - consider charging fee or resident pass (rates for different types of watercraft, docks/lifts)
 - Investigate private sector subsidization, but do not wait to purchase units
- 2. Level I Access Inspectors (State, County, City) – ability to deny launch. *Budget: \$125,000 +/-***
 - Urged to greatly expand program
 - Adequately fund; shift other budgeted funds if necessary.
- 3. Becker Sheriff AIS seasonal deputies. *Budget: \$50,000 +/-***
 - Maintain current program; rather spend funding on increasing Level I inspectors
 - Citations – start issuing citations – MN DNR is stepping up enforcement actions; Level I more cost effective if not issuing fines.
 - Stagger deputy shifts to cover more week-end, holiday hours - do not have two deputies working at the same access at the same time.
- 4. Access Signage, Education/Outreach/Media, Administration, Research/Rapid Response were considered lower priorities than the above.**
 - Printed materials are not stopping AIS spread;
 - Concerned funding will be “wasted” on administrative activities – need action at the accesses
 - Not interested in testing or rapid response monitoring

Other comments and viewpoints include:

- a. Pilot Project – Access Arm technology at launch sites (Floyd Lake, Detroit Lake, etc).**
 - Christmas Lake or other similar technology
- b. Dock and Lift Movement - high risk vector**
 - Ideas for monitoring private sales and movement to other water bodies.
 - Use of technology/tags, etc.
- c. Accountability/Transparency/Outcomes for how funds are used**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and to those who attended our meeting.
Sincerely,

Becker COLA Executive Team