



## 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 also known to cause economic and environmental 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 clean and inviting lakes and rivers is critical to the success of Minnesota's tourism industry. Our 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 trees and wooded areas is also a high priority.

### SUPPORTING STATEMENTS:

- 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.
- Our members can help in this effort by informing our 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 be engaged in reasonable efforts to educate residents and guests about the threat of invasive species and the work required to prevent the spread of these invasive plants and animals.

### FUNDING:

- We support the increased use of Legacy Amendment Funds, resources from the lottery-funded Natural Resources Trust Fund, and general fund bonding to support efforts to combat the spread of AIS and to treat areas that are currently infected.
- We are concerned additional increases to fishing license and boat registration fees for AIS funding will have a negative impact on business and the willingness of out-of-state guests to visit Minnesota.