

# 2015 WATER SUCCESS STORY

## Bureau of Water Quality



### Surface water grants awarded to 245 groups in 47 counties and actions to control aquatic invasives

By Shelly Thomsen, Wisconsin DNR and Tim Campbell, UW Extension

#### Grants Help Create Healthier Lakes and Rivers

Healthier lakes and rivers and improved control of aquatic invasive species will result from over \$6 million in [surface water grants](#) awarded to 245 groups in 47 counties by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 2015.

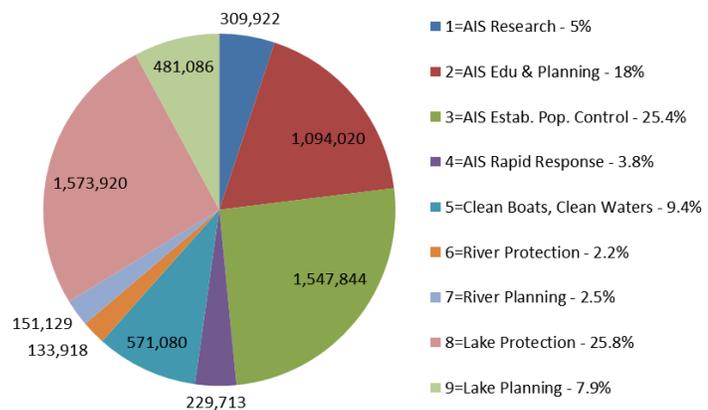
The surface water grants, which originate from a tax on fuel used by watercraft, will leverage an additional \$5 million in matching funds from lake and river associations, local governments and nonprofit groups to implement the projects. The DNR money supports control of aquatic invasive species, lake and river protection and clean-up efforts and other management activities.

"We are pleased that the DNR surface water grants help leverage significant private and community funds to expand the scope of work that can be done," said Shelly Thomsen, lakes and rivers team leader with the DNR. "This round of grants will help restore habitat, support the battle against [Eurasian water-milfoil](#), acquire conservation easements and improve water quality, among other projects. These collaborative efforts combine the technical expertise of the DNR with the ideas and drive of local organizations, enabling citizens to improve and protect our valuable water resources in Wisconsin."

#### Types of Grant Awards

[Aquatic Invasive Species \(AIS\)](#) grants comprise 61.6% of the surface water grant award commitments in 2015. The DNR is part of a strong partnership of public and private stakeholders in Wisconsin committed to an effective [strategy of prevention](#), containment and [control](#) of AIS.

#### Wisconsin DNR 2015 Surface Water Grants = \$6,092,632



- AIS Research and Education and Planning grants help to create plans to identify measures to prevent the spread of AIS and broaden the public's awareness and understanding of AIS threats.
- AIS Established Population Control grants defray the costs of controlling existing AIS and restoring habitat. The grants will help 18 lakes in 15 counties battle Eurasian water-milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed while helping to manage wetland invasive species in five counties statewide.

# 2015 Surface Grant Awards (continued)

## Types of Grant Awards Continued

- AIS Rapid Response grants provide funds for the early detection and control of pioneer populations before those invasive species become established.
- Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) grants help fund boat and trailer inspections at boat-landings and information sharing on how to prevent the spread of AIS. Prevention is the first step in a strategic AIS management strategy.



Eurasian water-milfoil has been found in 715 Wisconsin lakes and rivers. Photo by Laura Felda.



Curly-leaf pondweed has been found in 535 Wisconsin lakes and rivers. DNR photo.

River Planning and Protection grants comprise 4.7% of the surface water grant award commitments in 2015. These grants help river groups develop management plans to protect and restore rivers and their watershed. River Protection grants share the cost on projects to implement management activities that protect or restore the river system.

A major project includes an effort by the Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Division to restore fish passage on Mineral Springs Creek by replacing outdated culverts. By remediating one large-scale fish passage impediment on the creek, the project will restore aquatic life access to existing high quality spawning and rearing habitat upstream, improve genetic and biologic diversity of desirable fish species, and help reduce the need for artificial stocking or habitat manipulation in undesirable areas.



The shallow depth of this culvert impedes the upstream movement of a rainbow trout. Photo by Jon Simonsen.

Lake Planning and Protection grants comprise 33.7% of the surface water grant award commitments in 2015. Lake Planning grants help lake groups develop management plans to protect and restore lakes and their watersheds. Counties often use Lake Protection grant funds to study lakes and assign them to different management classifications in order to guide plans for protection of the lakes and their watershed.

# 2015 Surface Grant Awards (continued)

## Types of Grant Awards Continued

The Lake Planning and Protection grants also help implement projects that protect or improve water quality, habitat or the lake ecosystem. Among the key 2015 projects, [Bone Lake Management District](#) in Polk County will use grant funding to implement waterfront best management practices, develop a no-wake ordinance to protect sensitive areas, and install fish sticks to improve fish and aquatic life habitat and protect shorelines.



A small musky cruises among "fish sticks," one of the types of projects being funded to improve habitat. DNR Photo.

Also in Polk County, [Deer Lake Conservancy](#) is receiving funds to purchase conservation easements on 90 acres of undeveloped hardwood, fields, ephemeral wetlands, and ponds in Johnson Preserve.

## Grants Help Install Healthy Lakes Program Practices



The grants also include funding for [Healthy Lakes](#) [exit DNR] projects that support installation of fish sticks to improve habitat, native plantings or diversion practices along the shoreline to slow runoff, and upland practices that manage runoff from structures and impervious surfaces. The 2015 grant cycle will fund implementation of 100 best management practices for 48 properties on 15 lakes in nine counties for \$81,540.54. See <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/> for more information on the Healthy Lakes Initiative.



Replacing grass with native plantings along shorelines is a Health Lakes best management practice eligible for grant funding. DNR Photo.

For a complete list of [grant recipients](#), search the DNR website, [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) for "surface water grants." Watch a video on how to apply for a surface water grant at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXWYOB9xCwM>.

*Shelly Thomsen is a Water Resources Management Specialist in the Bureau of Water Quality.*

# 2015 Surface Grant Awards/Find AIS

## Find Information on AIS

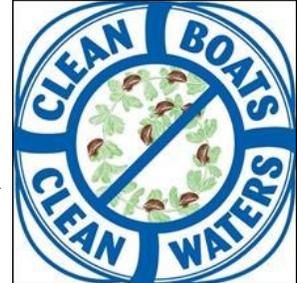
The DNR maintains information on its website on the detection of AIS across the state.

- **Look-up a waterbody by county for AIS at:** <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/invasives/aisbywaterbody.aspx> Species currently tracked on these lists are: Asiatic Clam (Corbicula), Banded Mystery Snail, Bighead Carp, Brittle Water-nymph, Chinese Mystery Snail, Curly-Leaf Pondweed, Eurasian Water-Milfoil, Faucet Snail, Fishhook Waterflea, Flowering Rush, Freshwater Jellyfish, Giant Hogweed, Grass Carp, Hybrid Eurasian / Northern Water-Milfoil, Japanese Hops, Japanese Knotweed, Japanese Mystery Snail, Java Waterdrop / Vietnamese Water Celery, New Zealand Mudsnail, Phragmites (non-native), Purple Loosestrife, Quagga Mussel, Rainbow Smelt, Red Swamp Crayfish, Reed Manna Grass, Round Goby, Rusty Crayfish, Silver Carp, Spiny Naiad, Spiny Waterflea, Starry Stonewort, Water Hyacinth, Water Lettuce, Western Mosquitofish, Yellow Floating Heart, and Zebra Mussel.
- **Use the Lakes and AIS Mapping Tool at:** <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/viewer/> This tool allows users to search and map AIS and lakes monitoring locations, watercraft inspection sites, and grants projects across the state as well as view the geographical distribution of invasive plants, fish, and invertebrates and so much more.
- **Find photos and fact sheets on AIS plants and animals at:** <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/species.asp?> Also see the fact sheet on 16 regulated AIS plants at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/documents/NR40Aquatics.pdf>.

Report an invasive species at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/report.html>.

## New Videos for Clean Boats, Clean Waters Available

Some of Wisconsin's worst AIS such as zebra mussel larvae or spiny water fleas – too small to readily see – can survive to the next lake when water is left in a boat's livewells, buckets, bilge, motor or equipment. Watercraft inspectors come across many different situations while protecting Wisconsin's waters from AIS. In order to help them feel more confident in these varied situations, the DNR partnered with UWEX to produce a series of videos covering common inspection scenarios. These videos show what a watercraft inspector looks for when helping boaters prevent the spread of AIS and are available at the DNR Lakes Blog at: <http://goo.gl/3mITPh>.



Know the laws and follow the AIS prevention steps every time you leave the water:

- **INSPECT** boats, trailers and equipment.
- **REMOVE** all attached aquatic plants and animals.
- **DRAIN** all water from boats, vehicles, equipment including livewells and buckets containing fish.
- **NEVER MOVE** plants or live fish away from a waterbody.
- **DISPOSE** of unwanted bait in the trash
- **BUY** minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer. Use leftover minnows only under certain conditions\*

\*You may take leftover minnows away from any state water and use them again on that same water. You may use leftover minnows on other waters only if no lake or river water or other fish were added to their container.

Read more on efforts to control, contain and prevent AIS at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/invasives/>.

*Tim Campbell is UW-Extension's AIS Communications Specialist. Layout by Julia Riley, Bureau of Water Quality.*

