



# PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## COUNTY WATERCRAFT INSPECTION PROGRAM READY FOR MAY 15<sup>TH</sup> FISHING OPENER

The Crow Wing County Land Services Department's 2021 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program is ramping up to coincide with this year's fishing opener on Saturday, May 15th. To celebrate Minnesota's fishing opener, Governor Tim Walz declares May 15<sup>th</sup> to be **Clean Drain Dry Day!** Watercraft inspectors will be active on boat landings within the county beginning Friday, May 14<sup>TH</sup>. Just over 17,000 inspections hours are scheduled for the 2021 season.

The 2021 AIS plan focuses on the top priorities identified by area lake associations, citizens, and business interests which include boat landing inspections, decontamination units, education, awareness and innovative special projects. Invasive species are a direct serious threat to local economies and recreationists accessing public waters. Preventing and managing the spread of harmful invasive species is up to everyone.

"Crow Wing County is home to some of Minnesota's best fishing and boating waters. By presenting the Clean Drain Dry proclamation at the 2021 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener, we are all reminded to take action and become part of the solution for protecting our waters," stated Jessica Shea, Business Manager. "With our 2021 AIS plan, Crow Wing County is leading Minnesota counties in the effort to limit and prevent the spread AIS in our waters."

Draining all water, removing plants, mud and other debris, and inspecting trailers and watercraft as you move from lake to lake can minimize the risk of spreading AIS. Additionally, 21 days of drying time is needed before relocating docks, lifts, or swim rafts into a different water body.

For more information please visit [www.crowwing.us/ais](http://www.crowwing.us/ais) This page includes interactive maps showing data on water quality, AIS, and county efforts to protect our water resources.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service while helping landowners make wise choices that protect Crow Wing County's extraordinary natural resources. Citizens are encouraged to contact the Environmental Services Office at (218) 824-1010 or [land.services@crowwing.us](mailto:land.services@crowwing.us) to discuss AIS or other land use related activities.

**Our Vision:** Being Minnesota's favorite place.

**Our Mission:** Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.

**Our Values:** Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.