

**COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action**

MEETING DATE: January 27, 2025
AGENDA NUMBER: 11
ITEM: Annual AIS Update

AGENDA: Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED

Receive annual aquatic invasive species (AIS) update

PURPOSE & SCOPE OF ITEM

Annually evaluate and update list of priority AIS that are at high risk for introduction and spread within the District. Provide update of any ongoing AIS management activities.

BACKGROUND

Each year, the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) at the University of Minnesota evaluates the numerous AIS posing threats to the state and publishes a list of priority species for research and management based on those that are likely to survive in Minnesota and cause significant ecological and economic damage. The current [list](#) for 2025 contains 40 AIS designated as high priority with roughly equal numbers of invasive fishes, invertebrates, plants, and microbes.

Annually, District staff review the statewide priority list to identify those species that are at high risk for introduction and spread within CCWD. High risk is defined as a species on the current statewide priority list with a documented occurrence in Anoka County or one of the seven adjacent counties (based on local and [MN DNR Records](#) [updated Nov 08, 2024]).

ISSUES/CONCERNS

Proposed 2025 List of AIS at High Risk of Introduction to District Waters

There is one new addition to the 2025 list, invasive mystery snails (Chinese and Banded), which have long been present within CCWD at multiple sites, but were newly added to the MAISRC priority list. These snails compete with native invertebrates for food and habitat, serve as intermediate hosts for parasites that can be transmitted to other species, and interfere with reproductive success of largemouth bass by preying on eggs.

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Life Form	Trend in MN	Nearest Occurrence	
					County	Site
Present in CCWD	Curlyleaf Pondweed	<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	Plant	Established	Anoka	Crooked, Ham, Several ditches
	Eurasian/ Hybrid Watermilfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i> , x <i>M. sibiricum</i>	Plant	Established	Anoka	Crooked, Ham, Cenaiko, Springbrook
	Purple Loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Plant	Established	Anoka	Multiple sites

	Narrow leaf/ Hybrid Cattail	<i>Typha angustifolia</i> , <i>Typha x glauca</i>	Plant	Established	Anoka	Multiple sites
	Common carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>	Fish	Established	Anoka	Multiple sites
	Rusty Crayfish	<i>Orconectes rusticus</i>	Invertebrate	Established	Anoka	Ditch 41, Coon Cr
	Nonnative Phragmites	<i>Phragmites australis</i> European haplotype	Plant	Invading	Anoka	Multiple sites
	Goldfish	<i>Carassius auratus</i>	Fish	Established	Anoka	Sand/Coon Cr
	Golden Clam	<i>Corbicula fluminea</i>	Invertebrate	Invading	Anoka	Cenaiko
	Pale Yellow Iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Plant	Established	Anoka	Ditch 39 Pond
	Chinese and Banded Mystery Snails	<i>Cipangopaludina chinensis malleata</i> , <i>Viviparus georgianus</i>	Invertebrate	Established	Anoka	Crooked, Ham, Cenaiko, other
Present in Anoka Co. or Adjacent Counties	Flowering Rush	<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>	Plant	Established	Anoka	Amelia, Bass
	Zebra Mussel	<i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>	Invertebrate	Established	Anoka	Miss/Rum Rv
	Starry Stonewort	<i>Nitellopsis obtusa</i>	Macroalgae	Invading	Hennepin	Medicine
	Silver carp	<i>Hypophthalmichthys molitrix</i>	Fish	Invading	Ramsey, Hennepin	Mississippi River
	Bighead carp	<i>Hypophthalmichthys nobilis</i>	Fish	Invading	Ramsey, Hennepin	Miss. & MN Rivers
	Largemouth Bass Virus	LMBV	Microbe	Invading	Chisago, Wash.	Green, Forest

New Infestations

In 2024, three new infestations of priority species were detected within the District. During routine semiannual AIS early detection surveys on all District lakes, staff discovered Pale Yellow Iris growing on private property in the shoreland buffer of Sunrise Lake. One additional infestation of Pale Yellow Iris was also reported along a stormwater pond in the Ditch 39 subwatershed via iNaturalist by a citizen observer. Lastly, CCWD O&M staff reported a new infestation of invasive phragmites along a stormwater pond owned by MnDOT in Blaine. Control activities for all three sites are planned for 2025.

Growing AIS threats

In 2024, 31 new waterbodies were listed as infested with zebra mussels throughout the state, including 7 located in counties immediately adjacent to Anoka County. There are now 643 documented infestations in MN. Zebra mussels remain one of the highest risk AIS threats to District waters.

Starry stonewort, an invasive plant-like algae, was found in a metro lake for the first time in 2018, elevating its risk of spread and establishment in District waters. No new metro infestations of starry stonewort have been observed since 2018 although the statewide count of infestations has grown to 31, including two lakes in nearby Wright county.

Ongoing Control Efforts

In 2022, one control effort was undertaken in an attempt to eradicate a newly discovered population of Pale Yellow Iris in Ditch 39 via manual removal. Follow-up monitoring in

2023 indicated this effort was successful as no live plants were observed. Two additional populations of Pale Yellow Iris have now been identified within the District, one on public land in close proximity to the original infestation, so this site will be added to annual AIS monitoring list with follow up manual removal as needed. Control of the site discovered at Sunrise Lake will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Sunrise Lake Management Plan which is currently being drafted. This site is at lower risk of spread because it is located above the normal water level. Timing of the Sunrise Lake AIS survey will be adjusted in 2025 to align with the peak flowering period of Pale Yellow Iris in an attempt to detect additional occurrences for planning of future control efforts.

Control efforts continued for all known populations of invasive phragmites within the District. Live phragmites was found at 11 of the 18 sites under active management despite 1-5 years of herbicide applications (up one site from 2023). Most sites however only had a handful of scattered individual live stems that were spot treated by Anoka Conservation District staff. All control efforts were funded by the Anoka Cooperative Weed Management Area program or MN DNR control grants.

Efforts to control invasive hybrid Eurasian watermilfoil and curlyleaf pondweed in Crooked and Ham Lakes continue. This work is led by local lake associations with technical assistance by District staff and cost share by the Cities of Andover and Coon Rapids. After a very successful whole lake treatment in Crooked Lake in 2016, a repeat treatment was conducted in fall-spring 2023-24. A whole lake plant survey in August 2024 did not detect any hybrid Eurasian watermilfoil, indicating another very successful treatment. A similar treatment is currently underway in Ham Lake with the initial application in fall of 2024 and bump doses planned for spring 2025.

CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

As of 2024, there are 17 high priority aquatic invasive species that pose a risk to District waters, 11 of which have already been documented within the District. The District may play a role in managing these species on a case-by-case basis depending on extent and severity of impacts and feasibility, efficacy, and cost of control efforts. Presently, District staff largely provide technical assistance with treatment planning and permitting, grant applications, and monitoring. The District also holds contingency funds to enable rapid response to new infestations for situations where infestations can be contained before they spread.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive annual AIS update