



# Request for Proposals to Prevent and Manage Aquatic Invasive Species in 2023

## Contents:

1. General Information
  2. Project Eligibility
  3. Content and Questions
  4. Evaluation and Grant Awards
  - 5 Grant Terms
  6. Grant Agreement
  7. Submission of Proposal
  8. FAQ & Terms
- Reference Materials for Grantees included in the appendix

## 1. General Information

**Purpose:** Meeker County is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to disburse funds from the state of Minnesota's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention aid of approximately \$ 103,500.

1.1 Eligibility: Those eligible to propose projects and compete for available funds include community organizations, townships, watershed organizations, lake associations, consultants' firms, and county departments. End-of-year reporting is required to remain eligible. Failure to disclose the use of funds from another grantor in a reimbursement request or end-of-year report may result in loss of eligibility.

1.2 Partnerships: A project proposer may want to partner with another; Meeker County accepts and encourages proposals that include more than one entity. Additionally, it is encouraged to seek letters of support from communities impacted by the said project.

1.3 Limits: Total Grant for those requesting more than one grant type remains \$12,500. Treatment Grants have a limit of \$12,500 for Eurasian Milfoil and \$8,000 for Curlyleaf Pondweed, and Inspection Grants have a limit of \$12,500. Educational Grants have a limit of \$4,000.00. The lifetime limit for the funding of machinery is \$36,000.

**Deadline: All submissions are due November 2nd, 2022**

1.4 Proposers Transparency and experience: If Meeker County requests, the proposer shall produce current information and data regarding its financial resources and organization within five (5) days and before grant fulfillment. To remain eligible, a proposer needs to provide the requested information. Meeker County reserves the right to reject a proposal if it is not confident in the proposer's ability to carry out the said project or grant agreement terms.

1.5 Amendments: Meeker County reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time.

## 2. Project Eligibility

2.1 Collaborative proposals strengthen the county AIS program's overall outcomes and are encouraged. However, to remain eligible, a proposer must promptly provide any requested information.

2.2 Educational grants must be highly complex projects focusing on training or community-based social marketing to address AIS Clean Drain Dry Dispose (CDDD) behavior change. In-kind eligible would be identification/ monitoring materials. Passive efforts such as the cost of publications and association meetings are not eligible for reimbursement.

2.3 Inspection projects must include a service quote if not utilizing the County's contractor. Includes additional hours on a lake already staffed by the County.

2.4 Chemical or mechanical treatment projects must show evidence that the selected method is most effective or financially viable. A third-party survey is required for any grantees who have not had one within two years of treatment or for any treatment grants exceeding \$7,000.00. Terms of treatment grants are negotiable to secure improved long-term control and the best use of funds. Depreciation of equipment is not an eligible expense. Additionally, treatment projects utilizing any equipment funded in part with county prevention aid must provide the itemized cost of use to ensure only the costs of operation and maintenance are claimed.

2.5 End-of-year report forms must be completed and are required to remain eligible for active grantees. Visit the Meeker County's AIS Grants webpage to access the online form; a report copy is sent as a receipt once submitted. **The deadline for 2022 project reports is October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

2.6 In-Kind Hours and Services must be related to the grant type. For example, AIS monitoring of docks and lifts and shoreline or zebra mussel settling plates or meandering surveys inclusion in the treatment of AIS would be appropriate; buying materials to send out information to association members and postage- are not appropriate ( unless technical in nature, e.g., Identification guides for MN AIS). The rate for In-Kind is 25\$/hour. Association meetings, time spent on newsletters, and time spent on the grant application and fulfillment requests are not eligible for in-kind; cost-sharing for inspections up to \$400 may be claimed as in-kind.

### 3. Content and Questions

Projects proposed for funding address the following in the completion of an application:

3.1. Profile of service provider: All projects must provide a statement of expertise of the firm, organization, or entity providing services or subcontracting. Provide the name and qualifications of the primary person in charge of fulfilling the obligations of this agreement. If additional information is requested, this is the County's point of contact for your project.

3.2 Description: A clear articulation of the implementation plan and scope of work to be undertaken, including goals and expected completion date.

3.3 Outcome: A clear articulation of the proposed project(s) outcomes and how you will evaluate the project

3.4 Timeline: Include a timeline of planned activities, goals, related meetings, and actions related to the execution of the proposed plan(s)

3.5 Outreach/Collaborations/Letters of Support: Please include any outreach collaboration or partnerships in the proposed project(s). Letters of support from affected entities such as townships, municipalities, and watersheds are especially encouraged for any chemical treatment projects.

3.6 Evidence of approach: Please cite evidence of the efficacy of the proposed method. In chemical or mechanical treatment, declare your treatment method and how large an area you expect to treat.

3.7 Declaration of hardship: To pay for treatment that benefits the prevention or management of AIS in the County, a direct-to-provider payment may be approved as

an exception in cases of financial hardship. Send proof of hardship to support the request to the Coordinator.

If you have questions, contact the Coordinator at:  
[Ariana.Richardson@co.meeker.mn.us](mailto:Ariana.Richardson@co.meeker.mn.us)

#### 4. Proposal Evaluation and Grant Award

4.1 Meeker County prioritizes these grants to those likely to have the most significant impact on the County. The county reviews applications, and the AIS advisory committee recommends awards. The budget for a proposal is not the sole determining factor.

4.2 The County considers all proposals meeting the content requirements in section 3.

4.3 Meeker County reserves the right to request additional information from all proposers and negotiate with successful proposers.

4.4 Ranking of application criteria will be implemented only if there is a greater need for funds than available.

4.5 Notice of Award: After the AIS Coordinator and Advisory Committee reviews the proposals, the Coordinator presents them to the county board. The County sends notice of award within 15 business days from the date of final approval by the county board.

#### 5. Terms and Conditions

5.1 The County reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the grant to be executed. If the Proposer and the County cannot mutually agree upon the project scope and agreement, we reserve the right to discontinue negotiations, select another proposer or reject a proposal. Upon agreement, the proposal is allocated funds and approved by the AIS Taskforce of Meeker County.

5.2 Grants are fulfilled as a reimbursement once an itemized invoice for services detailed in the approved project proposal, proof of payment, and a written request for fulfillment are received. The deadline for fulfillment requests in the grant approval letter applies to all grantees.

5.3 Grant fulfillment under this hardship exception maintains a 1:1 match. The amount requested must equal the amount spent and documented by the proposer (up to 50% in-kind hours or services). This fulfillment is a payment made to a service provider, *not* the proposer.

5.4 Meeker county shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the proposer, including but not limited to the costs associated with the preparation of the proposal, attendance to AIS meetings, and costs related to contract negotiations.

##### Fulfillment Terms

5.5 All AIS Grants have a 1:1 match requirement and are fulfilled as a reimbursement. If an applicant has never received AIS Grant Funds, the first \$2,000.00 of a match is not required unless the grant is awarded for an inspection project. A 1:1 match is required even in cases of declared financial hardship.

5.6 Financial Hardship Exception: If the LSP balance is less than the total grant applied for, the grantee is not entitled to the remaining funds directly but may submit other eligible expenses for standard grant fulfillment as a reimbursement up to the total remaining funds.

5.7 Reallocation of award grants: educational grants are eligible for reallocation to AIS treatment or inspection grants upon the Coordinator's approval.

5.8. Grant funds provided by other agencies such as MN DNR or agencies distributing AIS State Prevention AID are not eligible for reimbursement under the Meeker County

Grant Program. Grantees must disclose the use of such funds before seeking county grant fulfillment.

5.9 Fulfillment is contingent upon required proofs; these may differ based on the project type. Standard proofs include: Copy of the check paid, itemized invoice for services, a ledger of in-kind (if awarded), receipts, treatment maps and permits for AIS Treatment.

## 6. Grant Agreement

This proposal shall affirmatively state that the proposer accepts all the general proposal requirements and Grant Agreement Terms; any alterations must be fully described and justified. In addition, if applicants seek the assistance of Meeker County for any project, the proposal must clearly explain how their contribution is needed and whether the proposer allocates any funds for said assistance.

## 7. Submission of Proposal

7.1 Each grant type has a separate application. Online application forms are available on the County AIS Grants Web page. Project proposers are encouraged to utilize the online application. In addition, copies of applications are sent as a receipt via email after submission. Grantees acknowledge the general terms and conditions of this RFP in the application. The forms are also available for download to be mailed to the Coordinator.

7.2 If a proposer wishes to include separate information, documents should be emailed or mailed to the Coordinator.

7.3 Proposals become the property of the County upon submission. By submitting a proposal, the proposer agrees that Meeker County may copy the proposal to facilitate evaluation or respond to requests for public data and warrants and is not violating any third party's rights, including copyrights.

7.4 If submitting applications or supporting documents, deliver them to

Ariana Richardson  
AIS Coordinator  
325 North Sibley Ave  
Litchfield, Mn 55355  
320-221-0614

**[Ariana.richardson@co.meeker.mn.us](mailto:Ariana.richardson@co.meeker.mn.us)**

## 8. Frequently Asked Questions and Terms:

AIS: Aquatic Invasive Species

LSP: Lake Service Provider

GAN: Grant Award Notice, aka Notice of Award

**Financial Hardship:** This is when there are not enough funds available to the applicant ( proof is a statement of account) to cover the cost of their recommended or planned treatment of AIS.

Q: If I apply for DNR AIS Grants, may I use that towards my match?

A: No, as Grant funds provided by other agencies such as MN DNR or agencies distributing AIS State Prevention AID are not eligible for reimbursement (Section 5.8)

Q: How do we best decide where to treat what holds the most weight?

A: Grantees are advised to work with their permitting specialist to determine this. However, it is strongly recommended that treatment is approached for whole lake benefit as that is how we assess applications. For example, suppose the choice is between treating EWM and CLP. In that case, it is recommended that EWM is prioritized, having a better chance of control carryover and a more significant environmental impact and human health risk. EWM is less prevalent in area lakes, has a longer growing season, and hybridizes with native milfoil.

Q: What if I don't know how to write a grant?

A: The county switched to an online application with the understanding that the presentation of a project matters less than its merits and possible impact. We have received positive feedback since making a move.

Q: What if I still need help?

A: The AIS Coordinator can answer your questions and hosts a Grant clinic online where tutorials of the applications are given

Q: Where do I include a request for water testing, and who do I send it to?

A: If your lake is participating in water quality monitoring, that is great! However, we may only reimburse costs associated directly with the management and prevention of AIS. MCAL Grants are separate from AIS Grants and allow for the reimbursement of water testing (RMB Lakes Package). Please include such a request on your MCAL Grant, do not send it to the AIS Coordinator.

Appendix A: Additional resources for AIS Project Proposers

1. The [Behavior-Barrier-Benefit](#) matrix contains insight for proposers of educational or outreach focus projects. For example, Lake Associations may be particularly interested in the Angler or Shoreline owner survey results if they plan to launch a local campaign. Such campaigns would move from an informative approach to an action & commitment approach to promote safe equipment movement or bait disposal on the lake.

Project Focus	Target Audience	Desired Behavior of the Target Audience	Strategy to Achieve Behavior Adoption by the Target Audience
1	Lakeshore Residents	Dry docks, lifts and associated equipment for 21 days	Partner with lake associations to communicate with residents
2	Lakeshore Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry docks, lifts and associated equipment for 21 days</li> <li>• Remove visible debris from docks, lifts and associated equipment</li> </ul>	Identify and have lake associations promote credible Lake Service Providers
3	Anglers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dispose of unwanted live bait in the garbage</li> <li>• Clean and drain boats</li> </ul>	Partner with fishing clubs and organizations to communicate with participants and members
4	Anglers	Dispose of unwanted live bait in the garbage	Partner with bait retailers to distribute bait disposal bags
5	Anglers	Dispose of unwanted live bait in the garbage on-site	Designated bait and bait water disposal zones at water accesses

Figure A: Table of Target behaviors from the DNR CBSM AIS Grant Template. These are just a few examples of the type of outreach projects proposing organizations may consider. Please note that Focus #4 is a county-led project in 2022.

2. There is a list of Licensed Applicators on Page 6.
3. [List of Third Party Surveyors](#) – It is NOT required that grantees use a provider from this list; it is only provided as a reference.
4. [For information on Permits or Training](#) the DNRs webpage
5. [AIS detectors training](#)

## Commercial Aquatic Pesticide Companies Licensed by the MN Department of Agriculture



**Aquatic Solutions of MN**  
**Craig Mueller**  
 P.O. Box 8  
 Buffalo, MN 55313  
 Phone: 763-463-0365  
 Email: craig@aquaticsolutionsmn.com

**Lake Improvement Consulting, Inc.**  
**Paul Kaari**  
 13787 40th Street North  
 Stillwater, MN 55082  
 Phone: 952-944-2565  
 Email: paul@lakeimprovementconsulting.com

**Lakescape Enterprises, LLC**  
**Cory Culbert**  
 721 River Street  
 Waterville, MN 56096  
 Phone: 507-271-3727  
 Email: cory.culbert@gmail.com

**Central Minnesota Aquatics**  
**Ronald Duy Jr.**  
 26735 Middle Cullen Road  
 Nisswa, MN 56468  
 Phone: 218-963-7345  
 Email: centralmnaquatics@q.com

**Lake Management**  
**Mike O'Connell**  
 10400 185th Street N  
 Marine St. Croix, MN 55047  
 Phone: 651-433-3283  
 Email: mike@lakemanagementinc.com

**Limnopro Aquatic Science, Inc.**  
**Daniel McEwen**  
 4108 200th Street  
 South Haven, MN 55382  
 Phone: 320-8287685  
 Email: dan@limnopro.com

**Clarke Environmental Mosquito Management, Inc**  
**Brian Erickson**  
 20061 Edison Circle E  
 Clearwater, MN 55320  
 Phone: 320-558-9005  
 Email: berickson@clarke.com

**Lake Region Aquatic Harvesting**  
**Steve Gordon**  
 PO Box 972  
 Detroit Lakes, MN 56501  
 Phone: 218-784-8067  
 Email: sgordon2010.sg@gmail.com

**Midwest AquaCare, Inc**  
**Kevin Ekstam**  
 10001 Great Plains Boulevard  
 Chaska, MN 55318  
 Phone: 952-403-6879  
 Email: kevin@midwestaquacare.com

**Jacobson Environmental, PLLC**  
**Wayne Jacobson**  
 5821 Humboldt Avenue N  
 Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
 Phone: 612-802-6619  
 Email: jacobsonenv@msn.com

**Lake Restoration, Inc.**  
**Chad Hadler**  
 12425 Ironwood Circle  
 Rogers, MN 55374  
 Phone: 763-428-9777  
 Email: chad@lakerestoration.com

**PLM Lake & Land**  
**Patrick Selter**  
 2509 Highway 371  
 Brainerd, MN 56401  
 Phone: 218-270-3338  
 Email: patricks@plmcorp.net

*The companies on this list are included at their own request.  
 Inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement by the MN DNR.*

Go to <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/licensing/license-lookup.aspx> to search for other licensed pesticide applicators.