

Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid Funding 2026

Request For Proposals - RFPs Due March 6, 2026, at 4:30 pm

Introduction

Todd County is the recipient of County Program Aid grant funds for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention from the state of Minnesota as a result of 2014 Session Law Chapter 308. The purpose of these funds is to “prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species” at selected lake accesses within the Todd County” (MN Statutes 477A.19).

The purpose of this request for proposal (RFP) is to allocate these funds to parties interested in conducting activities to achieve this goal.

Funding is available for work in two categories.

1. AIS Inspection Services

Watercraft inspections will take place at selected lake accesses across the county, as outlined in the scope of work. Contractors submitting proposals for this project must provide inspectors who have completed the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) Watercraft Inspector Level I training. Inspectors will operate within the designated zones specified in the scope of work.

Send completed RFP Cover Page and requested information, as specified in the Scope of Work found attached to this notice to:

Attention: Deja Anton, SWCD District Manager
Todd Soil and Water Conservation District
215 1st Avenue South, Suite 104
Long Prairie, MN 56347

Email submission: Deja.anton@co.todd.mn.us; Sarah.Katterhagen@co.todd.mn.us

Questions: [320-732-2644](tel:320-732-2644)

2. Cost-Share

Cost-share means that the lake association or proposing entity will split or “share” the costs of an activity at a designated ratio (**entity:county**) or rate with Todd County. Four activity subcategories are open for cost-share:

- Aquatic Plant Surveys at a 50% cost-share rate or **50:50** ratio,
- Education & Outreach at a 50% cost-share rate or **50:50** ratio,
- AIS Control at a 25% cost-share rate or **75:25** ratio, and
- Access Control at a 25% cost-share rate or **75:25** ratio.

SUB-CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS:

- **AIS Aquatic Plant/Species Surveys**

Only Todd County Lake Associations are eligible to submit Request for Proposals (RFPs) for this category. This category includes aquatic plant/species surveys that lake associations need in order to help determine the extent of potential spread of AIS or to inventory species in their respective water bodies. Lake Associations are responsible for obtaining permits and implementing all phases of these projects. Management actions cost shared must be for the purposes of AIS prevention. Survey requests will be considered at cost-share rates up to 50%.

- **AIS Public Outreach and Education**

Lake Associations, educators, participating lake resorts, lake volunteers & related organizations are encouraged to apply. All innovative ways to disseminate AIS information or educate both the public and public water users will be considered for cost-share up to 50%. Pre-approved training for AIS Detection or education efforts will be reimbursed by up to 100% as long as funds remain. **Training requests pre-approved by Todd SWCD may receive up to 100% reimbursement.**

- **AIS Control Projects**

Only Todd County Lake Associations are eligible to submit an RFP for this category. This category covers various forms of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) control, including chemical or biological treatments and mechanical harvesting or removal, with a cost-share of up to 25%. Lake Associations are responsible for obtaining the necessary permits and implementing all phases of these projects. If a control project cannot be completed due to weather or other factors, there are no negative consequences to the organization.

- **AIS Watercraft Landing Improvement**

Any Local Government Units (LGUs) Cities, townships, etc. or Lake Associations with Todd County public water accesses are eligible for this category. Projects that improve the ability of public water users to clean, detect, identify and control AIS at landings will be considered at cost share rates up to 25%. Some proposals that also address erosion or stormwater runoff issues at the accesses may be able to be combined with 75% water quality cost-share with application to Todd SWCD. Please indicate on RFP if erosion, stormwater runoff, or other water quality issues are additional issues at the access. Applicants are responsible for obtaining permits and implementing all phases of these projects.

Proposals:

Soft proposals for cost-share submitted prior to **February 15, 2026 (the Early Bird Deadline)** will receive priority consideration. Submit the form entitled, Request for Cost Share, found at <https://toddcountymn.gov>Soil and Water Conservation District>Riparian and Water Related Programs>Aquatic Invasive Species>. Click Additional Information. Click Todd County AIS Program.

Or copy and paste into your search engine:

https://www.toddcountymn.gov/government/departments/soil_and_water_conservation_district/residential_riparian_and_water_related_programs/programs/aquatic_invasive_species.php#collapse8630b2

Cost-share requests will be considered until the category budget is expended. Additional work may be proposed during 2026, but funding is not guaranteed.

Under no circumstances may an applicant be compensated for the same work or material purchased more than once in any given year.

Recipients

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is being distributed to the following groups within Todd County: members of the AIS Prevention Committee, all active lake associations, and representatives from all cities, townships, and watershed districts. The RFP will also be posted on the county website under the Soil and Water Conservation and Development Division. Additionally, companies that have expressed interest in conducting AIS inspections in Todd County will receive a mailed copy of this RFP.

Submission

All proposals are due by 4:30 pm on March 6, 2026, for guaranteed consideration.

Email your completed form to

Deja.anton@co.todd.mn.us Cc: Sarah.Katterhagen@co.todd.mn.us,

or via USPS to:

Todd SWCD AIS, 215 1st Ave S, Suite 104, Long Prairie, MN 56347

Applicant Guidelines for AIS Inspection Services

- 1) Applicants must submit application in the format specified on the following page.
- 2) The applicant is responsible for carrying out all activities, materials, and management related to their proposal except as specified in the scope of work.
- 3) A report of completed work funded through this program is due no later than **November 3 of any year contracted** to Todd SWCD.
- 4) All proposals must comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and ordinances.

RFP Cover Page

Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Todd County Inspection Services 2026

Company or Organization Submitting Proposal

Contact information (address etc.) will be used for billing information

Company or Organization Name	
Address (for billing)	
Contact Person	
Contact Person email	
Contact Person Phone	
Tax ID #	

Process

- 1) Submit RFP cover page and additional information outlined to Todd County SWCD.
- 2) RFP's will be reviewed and compared to budgeted funds available.
- 3) Contract Requests submitted by March 6, 2026, deadline will be reviewed and contracts prepared on Monday, March 9, 2026.
- 4) Unsuccessful applicants will be notified.

AIS Inspection Services Scope of Work

LGU's or contractors submitting proposals for this work will provide inspectors that have completed the MN DNR's Watercraft Inspector Level I training. Inspectors will move around between landings to give approximate coverage of projected hours in each of the zones as outlined below.

Lake Accesses for AIS Inspection (only landings in Todd County)	<u>Minimum</u> Number of Inspection Hours per Zone
High Traffic Accesses - Big Birch- North Bay, Osakis- Battle Point, Little Birch, Big Swan- 18 hrs. per weekend Friday, Saturday, Sunday- all season	1600
Mid-Traffic Accesses – Big Birch- Hunter's Bay, Big Birch- State Park*, Osakis- Stowe's Landing, Fairy Lake*, Sauk Lake- Diamond Point*, Mound Lake* (<i>not Sundays</i>), Little Sauk Lake- 12 hours per weekend- all season- with the exception of Lake Charlotte -any day after 4 or Saturdays during day. * Concentration of hours shall be placed on lakes with asterisks.	1400
Low Traffic Protection Accesses: Beauty, Long, Maple, and Moose- four hours each- one weekend per month	64
Rake Zone – Little Swan, Mill, Big, and Dower- 2x per season- beginning and end	16
Total Hours	3080

Todd County budget for AIS inspection services is < \$80,000.

- Funding provides for AIS Inspector coverage at DNR accesses on the lakes indicated. Inspectors can expect to begin the inspection season on High Traffic Zone Lakes on **May 9, 2026**, Fishing Opener. Inspectors can plan to end the inspection season on the following dates: **September 7, 2026**, for all lakes with the exception of Big Birch, Little Birch, and Lake Osakis* which will end on **October 26, 2026****
 - *Lake associations will be expected to provide portable toilets at any access for inspection services that occur after the normal inspection contract end date of September 7, 2026.*
 - **Inspection season is based on seasonal weather conditions and may fluctuate inside of these dates. These high-traffic lakes are susceptible via proximity to Starry Stonewort which remains an active threat through October.*
- A plan for Hours Worked should incorporate the following:
 - The Inspection Season will start **May 9, 2026** (Fishing Opener)
 - Inspection hours should primarily target the busiest accesses at the busiest times on all “Traffic Lakes”. Inspections take place on weekends in as much as able, including some evenings until no later than 10 PM, at specific access points like Big Birch Lake. On High-Traffic lakes, inspections can begin as early as 8 AM, all other lakes could begin at 11-noon. Additionally, inspections should be scheduled on days with organized events, such as fishing tournaments and the 2026 Fourth of July celebration. This includes events on Beauty Lake, Big Birch Lake, Osakis Lake, and Mound Lake, as well as during the "Bob Show" at Big Birch Lake. Todd County/SWCD requires that lakes needing inspections late into the evening for events must provide hired security at the access points where inspectors are stationed. With prior approval, Todd County will also cover double wages for inspectors willing to work additional late evening shifts for the specified holidays/events. These hours will not exceed 8 hours per inspector. Additionally, no more than two inspectors can be assigned to each access during the aforementioned holidays/events.
 - No 10 hour days, unless it is a special event or holiday.
 - Weekends, for the purpose of this schedule, are defined as Friday through Sunday evenings. However, additional inspections on weekdays leading up to the holidays will be supported if activity justifies the need.
 - **From May 15 to September 7**, a minimum of 18 hours of inspection will be required each weekend, including holiday weekends (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day) at all high-traffic lakes and a minimum of 12 hours at all medium -traffic lakes.

- In between inspection activities, inspectors will distribute any education information and materials if provided, clean and throw rakes for Starry Stonewort monitoring, teach visitors how to utilize weed stick stations at applicable landings, and rake and neaten landings in between inspections.
- Lake Associations, **with a minimum of 30 days advance notice** within the inspection contract period may purchase *additional* inspection hours by the contractor. These requests will come to the Todd Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), first. Todd SWCD will negotiate with the contractor.
- Contractor will provide trained inspectors with current year AIS level one inspector status. Contractor will hire, manage, and compensate inspectors and provide insurance to cover the inspectors.
It is important to note that inspector training in public discourse and conflict resolution should be emphasized. **Todd County law enforcement may not be immediately available. Todd County law enforcement advises inspectors to avoid raising conflict with access users.**
- The LGU contact for this proposal is designated by Todd County as **Todd Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)**.
- Contractor will designate a coordinator which will serve as the party responsible for maintaining communications. The designated coordinator is responsible for:
 - Ensuring that all inspectors can properly identify the access they are at when entering in data. Sharing of Todd County equipment across county boundaries requires Todd County/ SWCD approval.
 - Ensuring draft schedules for inspectors are delivered at least two weeks in advance of the start of the season to Todd County SWCD for review and to be shared with lake associations.
 - Communicating any and all issues (new AIS infestations, **technology issues**, enforcement issues, etc.) as they arise to Todd County SWCD.
 - Educating all Level I inspectors throughout the season, ensuring they are apprised of the most recent AIS regulations, laws and infestations.
 - Corresponding, as needed, with Lake Associations and Todd County SWCD during the season to ensure optimum scheduling at accesses.
 - Submitting monthly invoices indicating all inspection hours for lakes within each inspection zone, and an end of the year annual report on or before **November 3, 2026**.
 - Attending the Todd County End of Year AIS Meeting to present the annual report. Date TBD.
 - Submitting detailed reports that include the total number of inspections conducted, inspection rates, and any Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) data obtained through inspections or raking. These reports should list the associated access name and may include, but are not limited to, the following data: AIS detections, boat plug conditions, feedback from boaters, the needs of inspectors, weather or site conditions, and other noteworthy observations.

NOTE: Todd County /SWCD may also take photos or videos, request photos, or gather one oral statement or a brief written article of approximately 300 words for a news release. Additionally, there is an open invitation to join Todd SWCD on the local KEYL radio show to promote public outreach efforts related to AIS.

Watercraft inspection will follow MN DNR protocol and data will be uploaded **daily to MN DNR** using either their personal phones, or tablets provided by Todd County. Any faulty or damaged tablets need to be reported immediately to Todd County SWCD for assessment and repair.

Contractors with the intent to respond to the watercraft inspection RFP should include in the response the answers to the following four questions/ topics of discussion:

- 1. Professional Scope, Qualifications, and Knowledge of Todd County:** Briefly outline your organization’s professional scope: experience, credentials, internal resources, references and performance with conducting watercraft inspections for AIS. Share what you know about culture and recreation within Todd County.
- 2. Proposal Plan & Budget:** Provide at minimum, a draft budget. Be sure to provide the total bid. The bid (total expected cost) should include a breakdown of coverage for each **Access Responsibility** and the expected number of inspections anticipated to deliver over the season, based on professional estimates.
- 3. Unique Services:** Detail any unique training, guidance, communication and work standards or services that your organization provides for inspectors, if any, and your plan for continuous service to meet the conditions of the contract - *via employee retention or alternative plan throughout the season*. **Detail how your organization addresses the following: employee shortages; changing lake activity over the inspection season; requests by lake associations for evening, holiday, and extra hours; and employee safety.**
- 4. Last:** Briefly describe or outline your final report template and how you would like to present information in the final meeting. Do you have days, months that are better for you to attend meetings?

Proposals will be ranked on how effectively and efficiently the needs outlined in the AIS Proposal and proposed Budget are met. Additionally, points will be assigned for degree of detail outlined in the response to the topics above.

Points Associated with Ranking – 100 points possible

✓ Professional Scope, Qualifications, & Knowledge of Todd County	20
✓ Proposal Plan & Cost Effectiveness- <i>how closely it aligns with the budget</i> .	50
✓ Unique Services: <i>response to highlighted topics</i>	20
✓ Thoroughness in explaining format of detailed reports	10

Submission:

All proposals are due by **4:30 pm on March 6, 2026.**

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