

Accomplishments Report
AEPP-559-18
La Crosse Area AIS Partnership
1 March 2020-30 September 2020

The following is a summary of the activities performed as part of River Alliance's La Crosse Area AIS Partnership grant, AEPP-559-18, from 1 March 2020 to 30 September 2020. Rather than being a comprehensive list, this report is meant to serve as a summary of the more noteworthy accomplishments that occurred during the time period. For more information, please contact Ellen Voss, Aquatic Invasive Species Program Director with River Alliance of Wisconsin, at 608-257-2424 x 111 or evoss@wisconsinrivers.org.

- **Grant administration for River Alliance's La Crosse Area AIS Partnership grant, AEPP-559-18:**
 - Tracked all expenditures and match, prepared partial payment requests, and performed other grant administration duties as necessary.
 - Partial payment request #1
 - 16 November 2018 to 30 September 2019
 - Current status: approved; payment was received in the amount of \$3,000.27
 - Grant balance remaining: \$98,249.73
 - Partial payment request #2
 - 1 October 2019 to 29 February 2020
 - Current status: approved; payment was received in the amount of \$18,755.15
 - Grant balance remaining: \$79,494.58
 - Partial payment request #3
 - 1 March 2020 – 30 September 2020
 - Current status: submitted
 - Grant balance remaining: \$42,510.13
- **Coordinate the La Crosse Area AIS Partnership**
 - Maintained frequent contact with partnership members and provided updates when they became available
 - Held a virtual meeting for the partnership and other interested parties to discuss the upcoming AIS grant program changes associated with NR-193: 29 April 2020
 - The summer AIS partnership meeting was held on 23 June 2020. The meeting minutes are included in this report.
 - Attendees: Erin Adams, Randy Hines, Fritz Funk, Matt Hanewall, Gregg Wavrunek, Randy Mell, Alex Selle, and Tim Wucherer
 - Found replacement member to represent UW-Division of Extension, as Randy Mell has retired: Kaitlyn Davis

- **AIS programs, projects, events, and coordination:**
 - Aquatic Invasive Species Strategic Plan for the Mississippi River and Major Tributaries in La Crosse, Trempealeau and Buffalo Counties
 - Implementation continues
 - Bait Dealer Initiative: 25 June 2020
 - Visited 13 bait dealers in the 3-county area and restocked AIS outreach materials
 - Identified 3 locations that were no longer selling bait and updated contact list
 - Identified a new bait shop location in La Crosse County and dropped off materials
 - Youth Outdoor Fest: 11 July 2020 – Cancelled
 - This event was determined by the Partnership to be the permanent replacement for an annual public workshop.
 - Due to Covid-19, Youth Outdoor Fest 2020 was cancelled by the program lead, Gretchen Newberry.
 - AIS intern hire
 - Interviewees were chosen for the summer internship in March 2020. Sawyer Rubeck, a recent graduate with a Biology/Environmental Science Degree from UW-La Crosse, was chosen. Due to uncertainty in programming related to the pandemic, Sawyer’s role focused on conducting Clean Boats Clean Waters watercraft inspections, with less emphasis on other outreach activities involving the public.
 - Clean Boats Clean Waters
 - 18 June 2020: A training was held for Sawyer Rubeck and Andrew Schneyer (WDNR)
 - Sawyer Rubeck conducted watercraft inspections in the 3-county area. Adhering to guidance from WDNR and UW-Division of Extension, no outreach materials were handed out.
 - Major focus was placed on heavily used landings; however, there was a greater emphasis this year on landings in Buffalo and Trempealeau Counties to reach new audiences and to lower exposure possibilities due to the pandemic.
 - Grand totals:
 - 1,392 boats inspected
 - 3,187 people contacted
 - 336 hours spent
 - Totals by county:
 - La Crosse
 - 1,119 boats inspected
 - 2,582 people contacted
 - 248 hours spent
 - Buffalo

- 127 boats inspected
 - 278 people contacted
 - 47 hours spent
 - Trempealeau
 - 146 boats inspected
 - 327 people contacted
 - 41 hours spent
 - All data were uploaded into SWIMS
- Drain Campaign/Landing Blitz: 28 June – 5 July 2020
 - These two events were combined in 2020. Adhering to guidance from WDNR and UW-Division of Extension, no towels or ice packs were handed out.
 - Four locations were chosen:
 - Brice Prairie Channel Landing (Fred Funk)
 - Lake Onalaska Ramp
 - Veterans Freedom Park Landing
 - Green Island Ramp
- Tournament angler AIS outreach
 - Due to the pandemic, attendance at large events was not advised. As an alternative, educational pamphlets and other materials were distributed to tournament organizers prior to the events to be handed out registration. All decontamination stations in La Crosse were locked for the summer.
 - Tournaments at which materials were provided:
 - 30 July 2020: Dropped off supplies in Prairie du Chien for the Wisconsin Bowfishing Association tournament; 30 each of keychains, towels, Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers brochures, "Protect our water" brochures, and business cards with my contact information.
 - 20 August 2020: Dropped off supplies at the Hampton Inn in La Crosse for the Abu Garcia College Fishing League Worldwide fishing tournament (held in Stoddard); 50 each of keychains, "Protect our water" brochures, tournament angling-size business cards, "Clean boats, clean tournament" brochures, and business cards with my contact information.
 - 29-30 August 2020: Sawyer conducted CBCW watercraft inspections during the Phoenix Bass Fishing tournament.
- Snapshot Day: 15 August 2020
 - Ten bridge locations were selected in the La Crosse area
 - On Snapshot Day, six participants monitored 9 sites
 - No new discoveries were made
 - All data were uploaded into SWIMS
- Project RED: ongoing

- Reached out to local groups to determine interest in holding virtual events. Events were planned with Viterbo University (in-person) and Sierra Club (virtual) for October.
 - AIS monitoring: 16 July 2020
 - Water hyacinth: As instructed by Sean Giblin with WDNR, a site with previously documented water hyacinth was investigated via canoe. No plants were found.
 - Flowering rush: A report of flowering rush around Dresbach Island was investigated via canoe. Countless plants were found, and the findings were reported to Alex Selle and online using EDDmaps.
- **Noteworthy events, trainings, meetings and activities:**
 - Promoted AIS happenings in the project area via River Alliance social media outlets and newsletters
 - Wrote pieces for Wisconsin Trout about the trout fishing opener and stopping the spread of New Zealand mudsnail
 - Attended WI Rivers and Lakes Convention: April 1-3 2020
 - Started discussions with Midwest Conservation Dogs, Inc. about the possibility of training dogs for early detection of New Zealand mudsnails
 - Interviewed by Dan Small with Outdoor Radio about New Zealand mudsnail prevention: 12 May 2020
 - Attended Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District meeting to discuss future volunteer opportunities and gauge interest in reinitiating purple loosestrife biocontrol efforts: 20 May 2020
 - Led Snapshot Day and Project RED portions of the Train the Trainer monitoring webinar to AIS groups: 27 May 2020
 - Attended plant ID workshop led by UW-Division of Extension: 24 June 2020
 - Attended MAISRC showcase: 22-24 September 2020
 - Attended many AIS webinars online throughout the pandemic