

Hello Farm Island Lake,

1/24/2025

### **County AIS Prevention Aid**

In Governor Walz's proposed budget he proposes cutting the County AIS Prevention Aid formula by 50%.

Attached is a letter urging Governor Walz to reconsider this budget recommendation. Please feel free to use it for your own personal letter and mail it to Governor Walz. I have mailed a letter on behalf of FILIA. Letters are a powerful tool for influencing government decisions. The collective weight of many letters on the same subject can strengthen their impact.

The AIS Prevention Aid supports critical initiatives such as public education, early detection, rapid response, and ongoing management efforts. FILIA works closely with Aitkin County to utilize these AIS prevention initiatives. These programs are vital in equipping communities with the knowledge and tools they need to protect their local waters. Cutting funding to this program would undermine the progress we have made and put our state's aquatic resources at greater risk.

AIS funding helps to pay for inspections, decontamination, education, outreach and support of local volunteers. I have observed that it does make a difference when people are made aware of ways to manage, detect, and respond to aquatic invasive species discovered on their personal property.

If you'd like to make an impact you can download or copy the attached letter and print and mail it. Be sure to add your contact information at the top and be sure to sign it.

Contact information to include is: name, address, phone number, email address.

Content of lobby letter is below.

### **Membership Update**

Annual membership dues can be paid online at [FarmlandLake.org](http://FarmlandLake.org), or you can mail a check to the address below. Dues are still only \$25. Membership is off to a good start, with 12 folks having already paid their dues.

### **Annual Meeting June 14**

Mark your calendars for the annual meeting on June 14 from 9-11:00 AM at the Hazelton Town Hall. Be on the lookout for the spring newsletter which will include the 2024 creel survey results!

### **Minnesota DNR looking to fill 200 paid summer internships- applications accepted through Jan. 31**

The MNDNR is looking for students interested in learning more about natural resource careers through paid summer internships. Internship applications will be accepted through Jan. 31. Positions will start in May and June.

The DNR has a wide variety of internship opportunities throughout the state, including in fisheries, forestry, park operations, watercraft inspections, communications and more. Interns work 20 to 40 hours per week and receive a competitive wage of \$19 per hour.

To review the internship opportunities and apply, visit the state of Minnesota careers website ([mn.gov/mmb/careers/](http://mn.gov/mmb/careers/)).

- Select “Search for jobs” from the toolbar.
- In the External Applicants box, select “Search for jobs now” and select “View all jobs.”
- Filter by “Natural Resources Dept” in the Agency category and “Student Worker and Internships” in the Job Family category.

Have a wonderful winter!

Sincerely,  
Cheryl McDonough  
Secretary, FILIA  
218 851 7026  
FILIAlake@gmail.com

FarmIslandLake.org

FILIA  
PO Box 135  
Aitkin, MN 56431

**Lobby letter Content:**

Office of Governor Tim Walz  
130 State Capitol  
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Proposed budget cut to the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Aid

Dear Governor Walz,

I am contacting you as a concerned citizen of Minnesota who deeply values the natural beauty and ecological health of our state's waters. I have recently become aware of potential budget cuts to the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Aid, and I am writing to express my strong opposition to this measure.

Minnesota's lakes, rivers, and streams are more than just bodies of water; they are vital ecosystems that support a diverse array of wildlife and contribute significantly to our state's economy and cultural heritage. The AIS Prevention Aid has been instrumental in protecting these precious resources from the threat of invasive species, which can cause irreparable harm to our environment, recreational opportunities, and local economies.

The work funded by the AIS Prevention Aid is essential in preventing the spread of invasive species such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, and starry stonewort, to name just a few. These species have the potential to devastate aquatic habitats, outcompeting native species and disrupting the delicate balance of our ecosystems. Moreover, the economic impact of invasive species infestations can be severe, affecting tourism, property values, and the fishing industry.

The AIS Prevention Aid supports critical initiatives such as public education, early detection, rapid response, and ongoing management efforts. These programs are vital in equipping communities with the knowledge and

tools they need to protect their local waters. Cutting funding to this program would undermine the progress we have made and put our state's aquatic resources at greater risk.

I own property on Farm Island Lake, and our lake association works closely with Aitkin County to utilize these AIS prevention initiatives. I have observed that it does make a difference when people are made aware of ways to manage, detect and respond to aquatic invasive species discovered on their personal property.

Governor Walz, I respectfully ask that you prioritize the protection of our state's invaluable water resources, and to consider the long-term consequences of reducing or eliminating the AIS Prevention Aid. The cost of addressing invasive species after they have established themselves far exceeds the investment in prevention. By maintaining and even enhancing this funding, we can continue to safeguard Minnesota's waters for future generations.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and for your ongoing commitment to preserving Minnesota's natural heritage.

Sincerely,