



Public perceptions of aquatic invasive species management

Findings from a survey of Minnesota residents

2022

The purpose of this study was to assess Minnesota residents' beliefs about aquatic invasive species (AIS), AIS management, and their engagement in the prevention and control of AIS. We conducted a mail survey of 2000 Minnesota residents from April to June 2021. We received 298 completed surveys for an adjusted response rate of 19%. More than half of the respondents were male (52%). A vast majority report their race/ethnicity as white, not of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (88%). Respondents' age ranged from 22 to 96. Most respondents have at least a college bachelor's degree (60%), and most reported annual household income of less than \$100,000 (51%).



88% of respondents believed that AIS are a ***moderate to severe problem*** in Minnesota



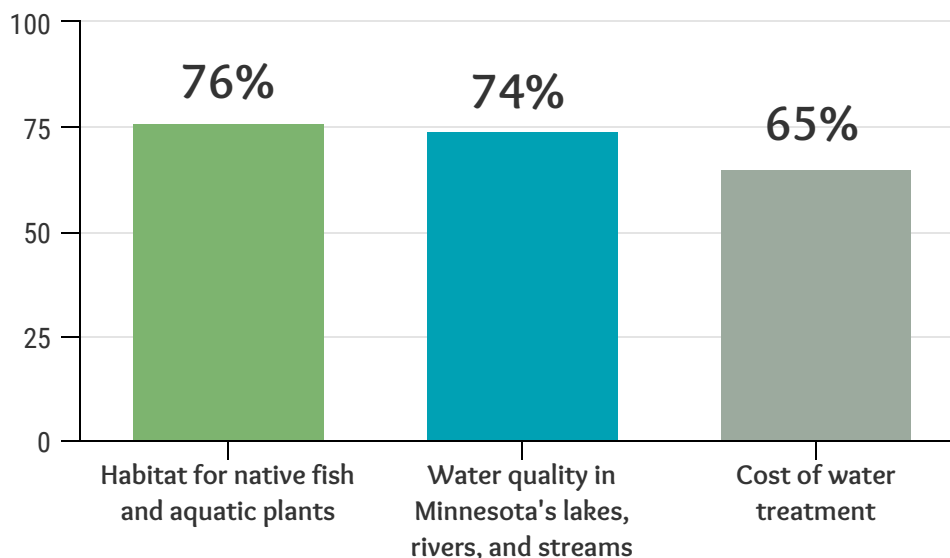
72% of respondents believed that AIS are ***very to extremely common*** in Minnesota



66% of respondents reported that they have ***personally observed*** AIS in Minnesota's waters

To what extent did respondents believe AIS threaten ecosystem services?

(Percentage of respondents that believed AIS pose ***high to extreme risk*** to the resource)

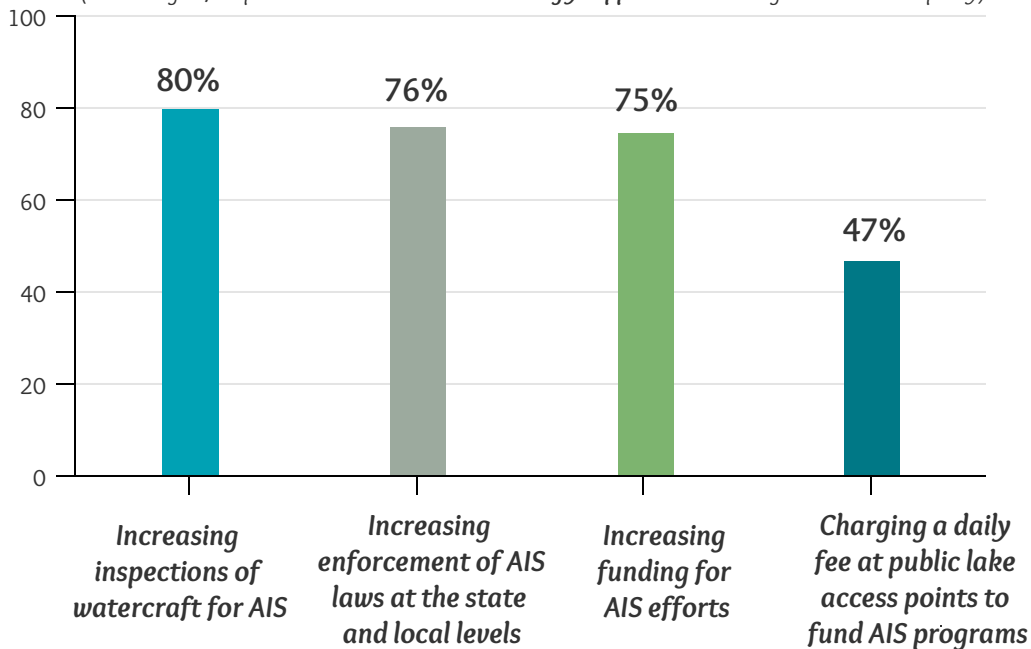


Respondents reported generally low engagement in AIS control and prevention

- 31% of respondents reported talking to others about AIS in the past 12 months.
- 11% reported donating money to an organization that works to control or prevent the spread of AIS
- Only 5% of respondents have an organization that works to control or prevent the spread of AIS
- Only 4% reported volunteering to improve habitat affected by AIS

To what extent did respondents support AIS management actions and policies?

(Percentage of respondents that *somewhat to strongly* supported the management action or policy)



Only **25%** of respondents were very to extremely confident that their personal actions can help reduce the spread of AIS in Minnesota.

57% of respondents somewhat to strongly agreed that they do not personally know enough about how to prevent the spread of AIS



Only **19%** of respondents reported that they were very to extremely confident

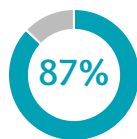
that the residents in their community can solve the problem of AIS, and only **9%** were very to extremely confident that everyone is working together when it comes to AIS control in their communities.



86% of respondents either disagreed or were unsure that their community has the

financial resources it needs to manage AIS.

Where did respondents turn for information about AIS?



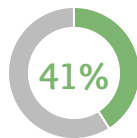
87% of respondents somewhat to strongly trust **MN Department of Natural Resources**



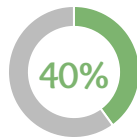
86% of respondents somewhat to strongly trust **university researchers/Extension**



68% of respondents somewhat to strongly trust **environmental organizations**



Only 41% of respondents trust **fishing, boating, or sporting organizations**



Only 40% of respondents trust **bait shops and sporting goods stores**



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