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ND Residents and Tourists Can Curb Rise of Aquatic Nuisance Species

Over the past decade, North Dakota has seen a rise in Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS). Nuisance species are not native to North Dakota's ecosystems and introducing them causes environmental effects, economic impacts and public health concerns. ANS can cause harm to established habitats, endanger recreational fisheries, destroy infrastructure, and negatively impact communities that rely on lakes and rivers for their water supplies.

The North Dakota Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) encourage residents and tourists to help monitor, control and prevent the spread of ANS to help preserve the state's waters.

The public should incorporate best practice recommendations concerning boat, dock, machinery and other equipment cleaning guidance. That includes cleaning, draining and drying all equipment, every time you use it. Clean and remove all plants or animals from your watercraft or equipment prior to leaving any recreational area you are using. Drain and remove water from all equipment prior to exiting designated access points. Not draining water can be extremely hazardous and may cause negligent transportation of ANS to various locations. Afterward, verify that all equipment is completely dry before utilizing it again.

"The Department of Water Resources' mission is to responsibly manage North Dakota's water needs and risks for the people's benefit," said DWR Director Andrea Travnicek. "Further spread of ANS in North Dakota's waters is most certainly a risk to the well-being of our citizens, environment and economy. For that reason, DWR continues to be supportive and active in efforts to minimize ANS impacts and encourage the public to be vigilant as well."

If precautions are taken and individuals demonstrate compliance, the spread can be controlled. By following NDGFD guidance, North Dakotans can help safeguard a reliable water supply, entrust our communities to take action, and limit the harsh repercussions of nuisance species.

The DWR, NDGFD and Governor Burgum acknowledge May 14-21, 2023, as Aquatic Nuisance Species Awareness Week. We all encourage the public to help monitor, control and prevent the spread of nuisance species in North Dakota.

For more information, please visit www.dwr.nd.gov and www.gf.nd.gov.

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