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## State Agencies Encourage Best-Practice Procedures for Aquatic Nuisance Species Prevention

The North Dakota Department of Water Resources (DWR) in collaboration with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) encourages residents and tourists to help monitor, control, and prevent the spread of Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) and help preserve the state's beloved waters. Water-based activities are enjoyed by many during both the warm and cold weather months throughout North Dakota – making every season important to stopping the spread of ANS.

Over the past decade, North Dakota has seen a rise in ANS. Many nuisance species are not native to our ecosystems and introducing them causes environmental affects, 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 Department of Water Resources’ mission is to responsibly manage North Dakota’s water needs and risks for the people’s benefit.”, Andrea Travnicek, DWR Director said. “Aquatic nuisance species can put North Dakota’s water resources at risk. For that reason, we encourage everyone to take an active role in the control of ANS and to aid in preventing further spread.”

If precautions are taken and individuals demonstrate compliance, the spread can be slowed and even controlled. By following NDGFD guidance, we can help safeguard reliable water supplies, entrust our communities to take action, and limit the harsh repercussions of ANS.

The public should incorporate best practice recommendations concerning boat cleaning guidance including: **Clean, Drain, and Dry** 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. Afterwards, verify that all equipment is completely dry before utilizing it again.

The Department of Water Resources, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, and Governor Burgum acknowledge May 5 – May 11, 2024, as Aquatic Nuisance Species Awareness Week. We encourage the public to please help monitor, control, and prevent the spread of nuisance species in North Dakota.

For more information, please visit <https://gf.nd.gov/ans>.

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