

MAISRC NEWSLETTER

MINNESOTA AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES RESEARCH CENTER

JUNE 2023

ONLINE AIS COURSE WINS AWARD

Congratulations to University of Minnesota Extension and MAISRC researcher and educators **Megan Weber and Dan Larkin** for their recent **Innovative Program Achievement Award** by the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals! The Achievement Awards recognize exceptional members who exhibit outstanding leadership and program excellence individually and in teams. Megan and Dan received this award for their [Aquatic Invasive Species Management 101 course](#). You can [read more about the award here](#). If you're interested in experiencing this award-winning course, [sign up to be notified](#) when registration opens in February of 2024.



Photo: Megan Weber and Dan Larkin



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AQUATIC PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

JULY 27, 2023

8:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.



Do you wish you knew more about Minnesota's "underwater forests"? Are you a lake management professional looking to finetune your aquatic plant identification skills? This is the workshop for you! Hosted in partnership with the **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**, this workshop provides aquatic plant identification training for people of all skill levels. The day will be filled with lots of hands-on time learning how to identify lake and wetland plants using live samples. You can expect to see around 60+ species representing native and invasive, broad- and narrow-leaved pondweeds, macroalgae, submersed plants, floating-leaf plants, and emergent plants. Register today! z.umn.edu/PlantIDreg

UPCOMING EVENT



Join the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center and regional leaders in a two-day workshop about priority aquatic invasive species concerns for **North Central Minnesota**.

Register here: z.umn.edu/L2L-reg

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MAISRC has received another **two years of funding** from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). This support comes from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) - our lottery proceeds going to work for our lakes!

In addition to ongoing support for future research, MAISRC was awarded a one-time appropriation through the legislature to take what we've learned through our research in specific areas (*common carp management, zebra mussel control, and early detection of AIS*) and partner with local managers to implement several large-scale AIS projects throughout the state. We will be able to share more specifics as the projects come together.



So many people who care about our lakes and rivers helped make this support possible. This could not happen without the leadership of **Sen. Kelly Morrison and Rep. Rick Hansen**; thank you for introducing the bill. Thank you to the **Environment, Natural Resources, Climate and Energy Conference Committee**, of which **Sen. Foung Hawj and Rep. Rick Hansen** are Committee co-chairs, for your continued support for research and the implementation of science-based management for AIS.

We couldn't do this without collaboration and partnerships. Thank you to **Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates, the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations**, and many other individuals and organizations for supporting our efforts at the legislature this year. Funding for the implementation of AIS research is an investment in the future of our lakes, rivers, wetlands, and economy. **Thank you for making this possible.**



STAFF CHANGES: MEG DUHR



Photo: Meg Duhr, courtesy of Meg Duhr

When outgoing Research Outreach Specialist **Meg Duhr** first learned about MAISRC, it was in 2018 while attending a conference in Rochester. She was working in invasive species management, but not particularly involved in aquatic invasive species issues. After listening to presentations by MAISRC researchers and meeting a handful of researchers and students from the center, she was impressed with the caliber of the research and the people. More importantly, the MAISRC research talks gave her some hope. Good news and big wins do not happen frequently while working in invasive species. It takes persistence to make incremental changes, so hearing about cutting edge research that could be effective against some of the world's worst invaders was extremely memorable for Duhr.

"I spent some years working on remote island wildlife refuges where strict biosecurity protocols are in place, so I was already fairly militant about cleaning gear and vehicles before moving to new sites. Getting involved in aquatic invasives has only broadened my perspective and strengthened my resolve to not spread invasives in my activities," said Duhr.

Duhr and her wife own 40 acres of forest and beaver wetlands in a very remote area of Lake County and spend a lot of weekends managing the habitat and trails. Whether hauling carts of fencing or water, salvaging firewood, shoveling, or clearing brush, Duhr finds that stewarding the land and observing the changes over time are extremely rewarding.



STAFF CHANGES, CONT'D

At MAISRC, a key part of the mission is sharing the research lessons learned in ways that are accessible and implementable by the managers, practitioners, and community organizations who need better tools in the fight against AIS. For Duhr, working directly with these groups to incorporate research into AIS solutions was vital. Success comes from building relationships with lakeshore associations, local governments, and concerned citizens from across Minnesota. Duhr regularly consulted with stakeholders to share ways to incorporate MAISRC insights into their AIS projects and frequently spoke at lake association meetings and other community events.

"Meg Duhr is a wonderful, smart, and obvious professional, and formed meaningful relationships with our many lake associations and groups in Minnesota. We have grown to rely on Meg for help, assistance, and knowledge over these past three years.", said Tom Watson, Chair of the MAISRC community advisory board and Past President (2013-2018) & Director Emeritus of the Whitefish Area Property Owners Association (WAPOA).

When asked what she would do if she had a magic wand to solve the biggest AIS problems, Duhr said, "I would create a state office of common carp management. Currently, the work is happening across multiple scales of government (local, watershed scale, tribal, and state) and there is no coordinated framework to prioritize and align our efforts." Common carp impact waterfowl, sport fisheries, aquatic ecosystems, and have massive water quality impacts. "The impacts from the destruction span many different state agencies and communities in Minnesota and there's a massive need for an entity to bridge these gaps and provide leadership on this issue."

If you are concerned about doing the right thing for Minnesota's lakes and streams, Duhr has some thoughts for you. "It is everybody's civic duty as citizens of this state and this planet to ensure that their recreational pursuits are not introducing invasive species to the water bodies that they use. I genuinely believe the majority of Minnesotans are doing the right thing when it comes to preventing the spread of AIS, but we all need to be vigilant if we are to preserve the very thing that brings us out to the lakes - the unmatched quality!"



Duhr leaves MAISRC to take the helm of the invasive species program at Three Rivers Park District. We wish her all the best!

IN THE NEWS:

5/23/2023 Overflowing natural resources legislation passes at Minnesota Capitol, MAISRC funding (Duluth News Tribune)

5/23/2023: MN Legislature increases funding for environment, recreation; no hikes for fishing licenses or state park fees, MAISRC funding (Pioneer Press)

5/2/2023: Talking aquatic invasive species with U of M, Nick Phelps interviewed (UMN)

4/9/2023: Carp barriers proposed on Mississippi River north of Winona as part of \$17M proposal to slow invasive spread, Al Mensinger interviewed (LaCrosse Tribune)

3/4/2023: Best way to attack starry stonewort is to hunt it down and catch it early, Dan Larkin interviewed (Detroit Lakes Tribune)

MAISRC'S MISSION

Created in 2012 through funds from the Minnesota legislature, the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species



MINNESOTA AQUATIC INVASIVE
SPECIES RESEARCH CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM

Research Center's mission is to develop research-based solutions that can reduce the impacts of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota by preventing spread, controlling populations, and managing ecosystems; and to advance knowledge to inspire action by others.

Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center

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