

Fisheries Division Summary

Access Goal Examples from Other States

Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/conservationagenda/index.html>

Public Access to Lakes and Rivers

Indicator: Number of access sites acquired and/or developed along high-priority lakes and rivers

Why Is This Important?

Minnesota ranks second in the nation in number of licensed boats (809,000) and first in boats per capita, with one for every six people. DNR provides and maintains a statewide system of free public water access facilities which give the public the means to enter and enjoy the state's lakes and rivers. Public accesses are essential for Minnesotans to access public waters. Boaters, anglers, lakeshore owners, resort users and hunters all create demand for professionally developed facilities. Opportunities to acquire new sites are becoming scarce due to fully developed lots and the high cost of lake shore property. Partnerships with local governments to acquire, develop and maintain access sites are essential to the continued success of the program.

What Is DNR Doing?

Throughout the state, DNR field managers are actively seeking to acquire land. DNR is establishing partnerships with local governments, lake associations, angling clubs, and others to improve and increase the quantity and quality of public access for boaters. The DNR is continuously improving site design with the objective of environmentally sustainable development.

Target: Acquire 8-12 new or expanded access sites and rehabilitate 30-35 existing sites in FY2012 - 2013

In FY 2010-2011 the DNR acquired 5 new and expanded 11 Public Water Access Sites including sites on Upper Comorant, Big Detroit and Sugar Lake. DNR also completed significant rehabilitation of 21 public water access sites and constructed 5 new sites including Leech Lake, Sucker Bay and Lake Bemidji, Nymore Beach. CCooperative projects include Douglas, Marshall, Otter Tail, and Ramsey counties and the cities of Lake City and Bemidji.

Learn More: www.mndnr.gov/wateraccess

Current As Of: 09/21/2012

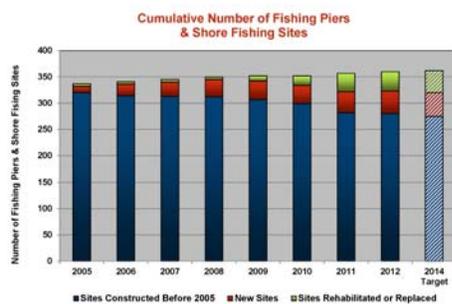
Fishing Piers and Shore Fishing Sites

Indicator: Number of sites developed and maintained on lakes and rivers in partnership with local units of government

Why Is This Important?

Fishing piers and shore fishing sites expand angling opportunities for all people, especially persons with disabilities, the elderly, children and those without a boat. Fishing is one of the top activities enjoyed by Minnesotans, yet many water bodies lack pier and shore-fishing facilities for the public. These facilities provide a safe and convenient place to fish, instead of from bridges, steep/rocky embankments or fragile shore land areas.

Fishing piers and shore-fishing sites are great locations for introducing fishing to new participants. Fishing is a life-long activity that connects people with the outdoors. This connection encourages environmental stewardship and support of Minnesota's natural resource programs.



What Is DNR Doing?

The DNR is establishing successful partnerships with local governments and community organizations all over the state in order to provide the public with fishing piers and shorefishing sites on lakes and rivers. DNR provides funding and technical expertise for site location and fishing potential, while the local unit of government provides the land and a commitment to ongoing maintenance. Community organizations help in a variety of ways, including monetary and in kind donations.

DNR is balancing the need for replacement piers and the requests for new piers with available funding. There are 360 fishing pier and shore- fishing sites in Minnesota. An increasing need for replacement and rehabilitation of aging piers exists. A stable funding source is desired in order to meet the current and future needs.

Target: FY 2012 and FY2013 the DNR will replace/rehabilitate 5 to 10 fishing piers and continue working with partners to maintain existing facilities. Rehabilitation and replacement of existing piers is still a higher priority than introducing new

facilities. Up to 4 new facilities may be completed depending upon available funding/donations.

Learn More: www.mndnr.gov/fishing_piers

Water Trails

Indicator: Development of reliable information enhancing water trail opportunity, safety and satisfaction

Why Is This Important?

Minnesota has the most registered boats per capita of any state in the nation. Recreational boating is one of the most popular outdoor activities in Minnesota. Contrary to a general downward national trend in outdoor recreation participation, canoe and kayak registrations continue their steady growth in Minnesota, including a 48% increase in kayak registrations from 2007-2011.

Minnesota DNR manages 33 State Water Trails including 32 rivers and the North Shore of Lake Superior – totaling over 4,400 miles of mapped routes. These Water Trails offer unparalleled canoeing, kayaking, boating and camping opportunities. Minnesota leads the nation with the first and largest State Water Trails system. The DNR provides outstanding free maps, river level reporting and trip-planning resources. Maintaining high visitor satisfaction benefits communities and local economies. Developing and providing reliable maps and river level information helps boaters stay safe and enjoy the State Water Trails system.

What Is DNR Doing?

DNR has developed an online, interactive map of the entire Water Trails system that enables the public to customize and print their own maps at home. The online river level reporting system provides recreational interpretations of river levels statewide, which is useful in trip planning. A citizen Water Trails Advisory Committee is assisting DNR in efforts to develop a statewide network of Water Trail user groups, provide advocacy for water recreation and stewardship, and promote best management practices on Water Trails.

Target: Increase use of State Water Trails through promotions and improved public information efforts.

In CY 2012, sponsor “State Water Trails Day” – an event intended to raise awareness of the State Water Trails system. In CY 2013, sponsor a 50 year anniversary celebration for the State Water Trails program. In FY 2013, coordinate the efforts of the Water Trails Advisory Committee with the efforts of other DNR citizen advisory groups. In FY 2013-2014, interpret ten additional automated river level gauges. In FY 2014, complete a survey of user groups to determine their capacity building needs, and to measure satisfaction and demographics of Water Trail users.

Learn More: www.mndnr.gov/watertrails

Minnesota's Aquatic Management Area Acquisition Plan 2008–2033

<http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/strategic-documents/ama-acquisition-report.pdf>

The statewide goal for protection of Minnesota's 5,508 miles of coldwater stream habitat through public ownership should increase from the current 46% to 72 % by 2032. These public lands include federal, state, county, and municipal ownership. To achieve this goal, the vision for the AMA Acquisition Program is to acquire 1,500 miles of cold-water stream habitat in the next 25 years from willing sellers to provide sustainable populations of trout and greater opportunities for angling recreation for future generations. This vision would increase the portion of cold-water designated trout streams protected as AMAs from 11% (618 miles) in 2007 to 38% (2,118 miles) by 2032. Due to increasing land costs and habitat loss, acquisition efforts should be accelerated over the next ten years by purchasing approximately 66% of the 25 year long-term goal or 1,000 miles in ten years at a rate of 100 miles per year. This may require approximately \$10 million per year from 2008–2017 and \$3.3 million per year between 2018–2032. Acquisitions should be concentrated in the southeast and northeast portions of the state where development and land use pressures, habitat fragmentation, and increased demand for outdoor recreation continue to expand.

This vision would increase trout stream AMAs from just over ½ foot of shoreland for each of Minnesota's 5.1 million citizens (2007) to nearly 2 feet for each of Minnesota's projected 6.3 million citizens (2030). Accessibility for Minnesota's growing urban populations would be tremendously increased.

The statewide goal for protection of Minnesota's 64,000 plus miles of lake and warmwater stream shorelands through public ownership should increase from the current 34% to 39 % by 2032. These public lands include federal, state, county, and municipal ownership. These goals are based on the assumption that there will be no loss of shoreland that is currently under public protection. To achieve this goal, the vision for the AMA Acquisition Program is to acquire 1,100 miles of lake and warm-water stream habitat in the next 25 years from willing sellers to provide sustainable populations of fish and other aquatic species and greater opportunities for angling recreation for future generations. This vision would increase the portion of lake and warm-water streams and rivers protected as AMAs from 0.3% (216 miles) in 2007 to 2% (1,316 miles) by 2032.

Due to increasing land costs and habitat loss, acquisition efforts should be accelerated over the next ten years by purchasing approximately 70% of the 25 year long-term goal or 750 miles in ten years at a rate of approximately 75 miles per year. This may require approximately \$25 million per year from 2008–2017 and \$7.7 million per year between 2018–2032. Acquisitions should be concentrated in the north central lakes and transition area between the prairie/grassland and forested portions of the state where development and land use pressures, habitat fragmentation, and increased demand for outdoor water-based recreation continue to expand.

This vision would increase warm-water AMAs from the current 2.6 inches of shoreland for each of Minnesota's 5.1 million citizens (2007) to approximately just over 1 foot for each of Minnesota's projected 6.3 million citizens (2030). Accessibility for Minnesota's growing urban populations would be tremendously increased.

The Committee recognizes that the need to protect and better manage aquatic resources in Minnesota is huge. Public ownership and protection of these resources is currently accomplished through state

ownership (AMAs, state parks, wildlife management areas, state forests, Board of Water and Soil Resources [BWSR] Reinvest In Minnesota [RIM] easements), federal ownership (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS] easements, U.S. Forest Service lands), and local government units (Metropolitan Council, county and municipal parks, watershed districts, lake improvement districts) employing fee title acquisition and conservation easements. A holistic and comprehensive approach is needed using a suite of tools including best management practice (BMP) guidelines, shoreland regulations and incentives, zoning ordinances, conservation development, technical guidance for lakeshore owners, expansion of “lake improvement districts” and lake associations, donation of lands, expanded acquisition of fee title and conservation easements by non-profits. We need to refine and expand these tools by looking for new funding and partnership opportunities (state wildlife grants, revised estate tax structures, etc.). Our future tools need to be complimentary and must reflect the broad range of interests in shoreland protection and management.

Shoreland habitat protection is an essential component in preserving the cleanwater legacy that Minnesota’s citizens and visitors are used to experiencing. Aquatic management area acquisitions continue to provide a critical foundation for shoreland protection and management while providing public access to Minnesotans who fish, boat, observe wildlife, and recreate on this state’s waters. These goals and visions should be considered “floating caps” so that as new and progressive funding opportunities are created, these goals and visions can not only be met but ideally exceeded by 2032.

Indiana DNR

<http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/5498.htm>

Goal to provide river access approximately every ten river miles