

Press Release

Governor Tim Walz Proclaims: Clean Drain Dry Day for the Minnesota Fishing Opener

For Immediate Release

May 11, 2019

To celebrate Minnesota's fishing opener, Governor Tim Walz declares, Clean Drain Dry Day spotlighting invasive species and how all boaters and anglers can help preserve a robust fishing pastime and state economy. Home to 1.4 million anglers, fishing in Minnesota generates over \$2.6 billion of economic activity and supports over 26,000 jobs. That's right, 26,000 jobs. Invasive species are a direct serious threat now to local economies and recreationists accessing public waters. Preventing and managing the spread of harmful invasive species is up to everyone.

Koochiching SWCD, along with Wildlife Forever applauds the many partners combating invasive species from soil and watershed conservation districts, lake associations, county, state and federal agencies along with non-governmental organizations united under a common theme of Clean Drain Dry. Here's one simple directive for all bait anglers; Trash Unused Bait! If keeping minnows and leeches, bring fresh water from home to transport. Nonnative minnows and worms can do serious harm on land and in the water. Working with partners across the state, Wildlife Forever coordinates statewide public outreach and educational efforts to prevent the spread of invasive species.



"Clean Drain Dry Day is a great opportunity and reminder for people to follow the steps of cleaning all equipment and gear to prevent accidental spread of invasive species," said Sam Soderman, Koochiching SWCD Water Resource Specialist.

"I'm happy to see Governor Walz recognizing the treasure our lakes and rivers are in supporting Koochiching County and the Minnesota way of life," said Pat Conzemius, President and CEO of Wildlife Forever.

This year, Albert Lea is host for the 2019 Governor's Fishing Opener. From Albert Lea, to Lake of the Woods, partners across the state plan to send a strong Clean Drain Dry message this spring with highway billboards, sidewalk boards, posters and handouts to the public. Wildlife Forever would like to remind all boaters, anglers, property owners and businesses to spread the Clean Drain Dry message and protect our local waters from invasive species. Do your part this fishing and boating season: Clean. Drain. Dry. all boats, trailers and gear.

The **Clean Drain Dry Initiative™** is a national campaign to educate outdoor recreational users on how to prevent the spread of invasive species. Coordinated messaging focuses on strategic content, marketing communications and outreach tools on how to prevent. To learn how you can participate, visit www.CleanDrainDry.org and contact: Dane Huinker: DHuinker@WildlifeForever.org

About Wildlife Forever (WF): Wildlife Forever's mission is to conserve America's wildlife heritage through conservation education, preservation of habitat and management of fish and wildlife. For over 30 years, WF members have helped fund thousands of fish, game and habitat conservation projects across the country. To join or learn about the award-winning programs, including work to engage America's youth in our nation's outdoor heritage and stewardship, visit [#](http://www.WildlifeForever.org)