



## Governor Rendell Signs Pennsylvania's Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan



Purple Loosestrife

Like most of the world, Pennsylvania struggles with costly invaders known as aquatic invasive species (AIS). However, the Commonwealth now has a plan to fight back. The Pennsylvania Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan was signed by Governor Rendell on November 3, 2006, and approved in February 2007 by the federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force.

AIS are non-native species that cause harm to the environment, human health, or the economy. They do this by modifying the environment or reducing the diversity and abundance of native species. They also impact commercial, agricultural, and recreational activities. AIS are introduced to new areas by many means. They can travel in ships' ballast water or as unintended hitchhikers in trade. They can also be moved across watersheds in bait buckets or attached to boating and recreational equipment.

Every year AIS are responsible for significant financial losses to the Commonwealth's economy. Purple loosestrife, zebra and quagga mussels, sea lamprey, Eurasian watermilfoil, and northern snakehead are just a few of the AIS causing problems in Pennsylvania. These species can interfere with recreational activities, clog drinking water intakes, and reduce the ability of lakes and streams to support native fish and wildlife.

The goal of the Pennsylvania AIS Management plan is to reduce the harmful ecological, economic, and human health impacts of AIS. Under the plan, eight key strategies were identified:

1. Provide leadership and coordination for AIS issues in Pennsylvania among local, state, and federal agencies and organizations. Ensure that state policies promote the prevention, early detection, and control of AIS in Pennsylvania.
2. Minimize the introduction and spread of AIS into and throughout Pennsylvania.
3. Detect new introductions of AIS in Pennsylvania before they have a chance to become established in the ecosystem.
4. Develop an early response system to eradicate target species before they become permanently established.
5. Monitor existing infestations of AIS in Pennsylvania.
6. Control and remove established AIS that have significant impacts in Pennsylvania. Reduce the harmful effects resulting from AIS infestations by managing those that cannot be wiped out.
7. Increase research efforts on AIS issues and impacts to support AIS management, control, and eradication in Pennsylvania.
8. Educate the general public and people involved in the business, trade, research, and government sectors about AIS issues so that they do not facilitate the introduction or spread of AIS.



Zebra Mussels



Eurasian Watermilfoil

"The plan represents a major step forward for AIS management in Pennsylvania," commented Sarah Whitney, Pennsylvania Sea Grant, who chaired the committee that drafted the plan. "And it could not have been written without the hard work of the committee members and the support of Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council."



Northern Snakehead

The Pennsylvania AIS Management Plan is available online at <http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=139310>

The Pennsylvania AIS Management Plan was created by the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council (PISC). Governor Rendell created PISC in 2004 to advise the Governor about invasive species, and to direct the development and implementation of a state invasive species management plan. PISC members include representatives from the departments of Agriculture, Transportation, Conservation and Natural Resources, Health, Environmental Protection, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association, Pennsylvania Forest Products Association, Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania Sea Grant, Penn Ag Industries, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, and the University of Pennsylvania.

*Photos credits: Purple loosestrife, [www.sgnis.org](http://www.sgnis.org); Zebra Mussels, <http://en.wikipedia.org>; Eurasian Watermilfoil, [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov); Northern Snakehead, [www.oceanservice.noaa.gov](http://www.oceanservice.noaa.gov).*



The goal of Pennsylvania Sea Grant is to promote the ecological and economic sustainability of Pennsylvania's coastal resources through research and outreach including science-based extension, education, and communication.

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