



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 29, 2013

Contact: Emily Marthaler
202-367-1112

**Midwestern Governors Unite to Address Aquatic Invasive Species;
Call for Lead Federal Agency**

Washington, D.C. – The Midwestern Governors Association (MGA) recently sent President Obama a letter asking that he designate the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the singular, lead federal agency for U.S. efforts to combat invasive species.

The letter, along with a series of informational documents, is part of Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton's agenda as MGA Chair to combat the spread of aquatic invasive species in the region.

"Aquatic invasive species pose serious threats to our region's environment and economy," said Governor Dayton. "By working together across state boundaries and with the federal government, we are far more likely to succeed in our fight against this invasion. I thank my fellow Midwestern Governors for their agreement to expand our combined efforts."

Invasive species know no boundaries, jurisdiction or authority. Local, state and federal governments, along with international and private sector organizations, all have significant roles to play in the introduction, containment and eradication of invasive species.

The letter to the president discusses this complexity, as well as the large number of federal agencies that play a role in the federal response. A lead federal agency would facilitate a better partnership between states and the federal government.

In June, the MGA convened a summit of state invasive species policy leaders to discuss ways in which states could increase regional cooperation, reduce duplication in state efforts and better work with regional and federal partners.

From this meeting, a policy resolution was drafted and recently approved by the MGA that lays out specific actions states can consider to reduce the impact of aquatic invasive species. These actions include working to collaborate on public awareness campaigns, requiring all state agencies to follow invasive species containment best practices, and meeting with federal counterparts to ensure productive state-federal collaboration.

Three other publications released today include:

- Scope and Size of State AIS/ANS Programs
- Statutes and Regulations Relevant to the Control and Prevention of AIS
- Meeting Summary of the June 27-28 Summit

To view the letter, policy resolution or publications, visit www.midwesterngovernors.org/chairagenda.htm. The website also includes more information on Governor Dayton's agenda, links to state agencies, regional partners and upcoming events.

###

The MGA is a nonprofit, bipartisan organization that brings together the governors of Midwestern states to work cooperatively on issues of importance to the region. Current members of the MGA are Gov. Pat Quinn (Ill.), Gov. Mike Pence (Ind.), Gov. Terry Branstad (Iowa), Gov. Sam Brownback (Kansas), Gov. Rick Snyder (Mich.), Gov. Mark Dayton (Minn.), Gov. Jay Nixon (Mo.), Gov. John Kasich (Ohio) and Gov. Scott Walker (Wis.). View the MGA's America's Smartland video by visiting <http://www.midwesterngovernors.org/AmericasSmartland.htm>.