

## **New Boating Regulations and Mandatory Inspections in Effect for 2009 Boating Season**

**April 30, 2009 press release** - Boaters should anticipate being inspected this year as new regulations designed to prevent the spread of zebra and quagga mussels take effect for the 2009 boating season. These regulations, drafted by Colorado State Parks in collaboration with the DOW and the boating community, are integral to the statewide effort to prevent the further spread of zebra/quagga mussels and other Aquatic Nuisance Species in Colorado's lakes and reservoirs.

All out-of-state boats and resident boats that go out-of-state and return to Colorado must pass a state-certified inspection for ANS prior to launching in any Colorado lake, reservoir or waterway. In addition, boats that have launched on any of the Colorado lakes or reservoirs where mussels have been detected are required to pass an inspection before launching at a new location.

Boaters who have successfully passed a state-certified inspection will receive a green seal and receipt. Boaters must have both the seal and receipt in their possession before they may launch at a new location.

The Division of Wildlife, Colorado State Parks, county and municipal reservoirs and a variety of private marine dealers and marinas will offer state-certified inspection and decontamination services throughout the state beginning in May. All DOW and State Parks inspection sites are free-of-charge. However, park entrance fees will apply on all State Parks' managed properties. Privately operated inspection and decontamination services will be fee-based, and prices may vary among providers. The new regulations limit inspections to trailered watercraft. Hand-launched crafts, including kayaks, rafts, canoes and belly boats are not considered high risk for spreading ANS and may launch without an inspection.

Boaters should be prepared to have their boats inspected prior to launching at any lake or reservoir, and should check with reservoir managers for the latest boating regulations, boat ramp closures and updates on local conditions.

Public awareness and participation is the best weapon in the containment of invasive species. Boaters are reminded to take the simple precaution of making sure that they **Clean, Drain, and Dry** their boat when they leave the lake and before arriving to inspection sites. All boaters should remember the following steps to ensure they are not spreading mussels or other ANS to clean waters:

- **CLEAN** the hull of the vessel.
- **DRAIN** the water from the vessel, live well and the lower unit of the engine.
- **DRY** the vessel, fishing gear and other equipment.
- **INSPECT** all exposed surfaces.

- **REMOVE** all plant and animal material.

Colorado law prohibits the possession or transport of any ANS in Colorado. Wildlife officers, parks officials and other qualified peace officers may stop, inspect, decontaminate and, if necessary, detain watercraft upon a “reasonable belief” that mussels or other ANS are present.

ANS are defined as any exotic or nonnative aquatic wildlife or plant species that have been determined to pose a significant threat to Colorado’s aquatic resources or water infrastructure.

Zebra and quagga mussels, two particularly destructive ANS, were discovered in Lake Pueblo in January 2008. Subsequent sampling confirmed the presence of zebra and or quagga mussel larvae in six other locations, including Lake Granby, Shadow Mountain Reservoir, Willow Creek Reservoir, Grand Lake, Jumbo Reservoir State Wildlife Area (Logan County) and Tarryall Reservoir State Wildlife Area.

If allowed to spread further, zebra and quagga mussels could have devastating environmental and economic effects on Colorado.

For more information on zebra and quagga mussels and how to prevent their spread, please visit the Colorado Division of Wildlife's Web site at:

<http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/Profiles/InvasiveSpecies/ZebraandQuaggaMussels.htm>

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