

# Columbia River "Basin Watch" Newsletter

*A 100th Meridian Partnership Program between resource managers, Marinas and resorts and other water users to prevent the introduction of zebra mussels into the Columbia River Basin.*



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## The Columbia River "BASIN WATCH" Program

As part of this effort to prevent the inadvertent introduction of **ZEBRA MUSSELS** (and other aquatic invasive species) into the Columbia River Basin on trailered watercraft, all five Columbia Basin states, federal, tribal and local agencies in the basin and some of the businesses that depend on the good health of the river for their economic survival have partnered to establish a dozen traveler information radio stations on all major east-west cross-country highways, conducted public education efforts using all media outlets, developed and deployed new signs at boat ramps on the river, established a network of monitors to detect the early presence of zebra mussels. So far this effort has prevented any documented introduction of zebra mussels into the system despite the fact that they have been found on a number of trailered watercraft traveling from the eastern US.

The "**Basin Watch**" program is the partnership between government and business that establishes public outreach and education "mini-outlets" at business sites frequented by out-of-state boaters. The business partners participating are asked to prominently display informational brochures and posters and to be educated enough on the issue to answer questions from the public. Government agencies provide all of the display materials and support needed to make that happen. **PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THIS IMPORTANT PROGRAM** and help safeguard the river's future and the economic health of your business. Here is how you can become a "**Basin Watch**" partner:

Contact Bill Zook at (360) 427-7676 or [bjzook2@msn.com](mailto:bjzook2@msn.com) and express your interest. Someone will contact you on site to answer any questions you have and help you set-up a small professional display with informational brochures at your place of business. Simply e-mail any questions or requests for help in maintaining your participation to the above e-mail address and they will be promptly handled. No bureaucracy here!

***We simply can't do this without you, so please help us and yourself by participating,***



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- Bill Zook, Zebra Mussel  
Outreach Coordinator  
Pacific State Marine Fish  
Commission

## ISDA asks for Milfoil grant applications

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture announced today that it is accepting applications to receive a portion of \$4 million in grant funding aimed at eradicating Eurasian watermilfoil from Idaho's lakes and rivers.

Eurasian watermilfoil is an aggressive noxious weed that quickly roots itself in Idaho's lakes and rivers, spoiling the state's scenery, impairing wildlife and fish habitat and posing a danger to swimmers.

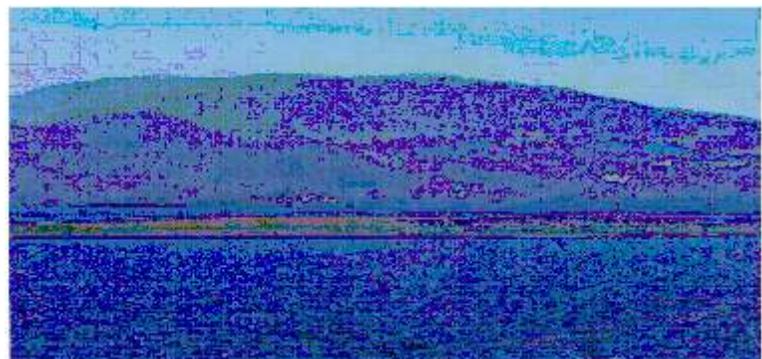
The weed has the potential to form large blooms, eventually turning into ugly brown mats that sit on the water's surface.

The blooms can easily entangle swimmers and boat props. The blooms are harmful to fish habitat, as they can starve the water of much-needed oxygen. Once disturbed and broken apart, the weed can quickly re-root and start a new infestation.

Milfoil has already infested more than 4,000 acres of Idaho's waterways. The weed continues to spread, and lakes and rivers throughout Idaho that still have no milfoil present are considered susceptible to the weed.

"The Governor and the Legislature made it clear they want to get a handle on this problem immediately, and have instructed us to begin aggressively working to eradicate this noxious weed," said Idaho State Department of Agriculture Director Pat Takasugi.

"The grant program is a significant step towards the elimination of Eurasian watermilfoil," said Roger Batt Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign. "The other significant component will come from Idahoans, who will need to be vigilant if we are to prevent Eurasian watermilfoil from infesting new lakes and rivers. During the coming months, we will be active in reminding Idahoans to check their boats, watercraft, trailers and bilge water for this noxious weed, so that we don't inadvertently carry milfoil from one lake to another." "It takes only postage stamp fragment of Eurasian watermilfoil to re-root and start a new infestation," said ISDA Noxious Weed Bureau Chief Matt Voile. "That is why we plan to begin our eradication program without delay."



## Change in Boat Registration Tax in Washington Helps ANS Prevention

The Washington State Legislature passed a bill during the 2004-2005 Session that added \$5 to the cost of boat registration. From these new funds, one dollar and fifty cents goes to the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to set-up programs to inspect recreational watercraft at various high risk launch sites, and in cooperation with the Washington State Patrol (WSP), at random check stations. Another fifty cents of this increase goes to the WSP to re-instate the inspection program for commercially hauled watercraft at ports of entry. With the high incidence of boats checked at agricultural check stations in California (100+) and at Lake Mead (10+) it's time we redoubled our efforts to educate the boating public about the importance of inspecting and thoroughly cleaning their boats and equipment when they move from one water to the next and to increase the number of boat inspections we perform.

WDFW plans to hire three technicians this boating season (2006) to conduct watercraft inspections and increase public awareness of the importance of cleaning boats. You may see them at various freshwater boat ramps throughout the state this summer.

- Pam Meacham, ANS Coordinator  
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

## Clean Marina Program Comes to Oregon!

Do you want to be recognized for doing your part to protect the marine environment? Do you want to learn about other practical methods to help keep pollution out of the waterways? Is your marine facility in Oregon?

If you answered yes to the above questions, you may be interested in participating in the new Oregon Clean Marina program. Oregon Clean Marina is a voluntary program for Oregon marinas, boatyards, yacht clubs, and floating home marinas. The program recognizes facilities that, in addition to being in compliance with environmental regulations, use a high percentage of environmentally responsible practices.

Sponsored by the Oregon State Marine Board and developed with the guidance of a stakeholders committee, the Clean Marina program recognizes these facilities by designating them as "Clean Marinas".

A "Clean Marina" receives a Clean Marina flag, a dockside spill kit, and a framed Clean Marina certificate, as well as recognition in Marine Board publications and on its website. A certified "Clean Marina" is also authorized to use the Clean Marina logo in its advertisements, publications, and letterhead.

Twenty-eight marine facilities have already pledged their intent to become certified Oregon "Clean Marinas" within one year. These pledged facilities equal approximately 20% of marina slips in Oregon.

If you are interested in the Clean Marina program but your facility is located in Washington, contact Chris Wilke (206-



297-7002 or [chris@pugetsoundkeeper.org](mailto:chris@pugetsoundkeeper.org)) for information about the Washington Clean Marina program.

To learn more about the Oregon Clean Marina program or to receive program materials, contact Oregon Clean Marina Coordinator Kristin Feindel (503-378-2625 or [Kristin.Feindel@state.or.us](mailto:Kristin.Feindel@state.or.us)) or visit [www.boatoregon.com/CleanMarina](http://www.boatoregon.com/CleanMarina).

- Kristin Feindel, Oregon Clean Marina Program  
Oregon State Marine Board

## Watercraft Inspection Training for Boating Law Enforcement Personnel

County Sheriff's, City Police, Port Districts, the National Park Service, State Fish and Wildlife agencies, State Parks and State Police are just a few of the agencies in the western US that sometimes have Marine Patrol units. Over 400 agencies in California alone have at least one boating law enforcement officer. The primary job of these professionals is to enforce boating regulations designed to maintain public safety and orderly boating on the nation's waterways. But, in recent years, the growing concern about recreational boaters being the primary unwitting carriers of a growing number of exotic plants and animals from one water to the next, has made it necessary to train these officers on how to identify high risk watercraft, how to inspect for the presence of hard to find zebra mussels and other ANS and on what to do if they find them.

Together with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and Fish and Wildlife agencies throughout the west, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission has developed a new training course for this large group of agencies and individuals. In the last 9 months, boating law enforcement officers and their supervisors from Idaho, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona and Utah have taken this live 1.5 hour certificated training course and Washington is scheduled to have their officers trained in the fall of 2006.

In addition a professional quality 50 minute video and training manual has been developed and will be mailed to Boating Law Administrators in all 19 western states for distribution to agencies with boating law enforcement responsibilities in each state. To date approximately 250 officers have been trained and it is hoped that some form of the training will reach over 1,000 officers by the end of this year.

So, as you can see, the partnership grows. Don't let others carry the entire load.

- Bill Zook, Zebra Mussel Outreach Coordinator  
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

## How to prevent zebra mussels from hitching a ride as you leave a body of water:

- **Inspect** your boat and trailer.
- **Remove** any plants and animals.
- **Drain** lake or river water from your motor, live well, and bilge while on land.
- **Dispose** of unwanted live bait in a trash receptacle.
- **Rinse** your boat, trailer, and equipment with high-pressure or hot water.
- **Dry** your boat and equipment for as long as possible (at least five days is preferable).

**Question?** We're considering sponsoring a two-half-day (afternoon day 1 and morning day 2 to facilitate travel) Workshop for our marina/resort business partners at a couple of locations in the Columbia Basin during 2007. One nights lodging (for two, so you could bring your spouse, manager, partner as long as you don't mind sharing a room) and two meals would also be provided. The Workshops would include fascinating presentations and discussions about Aquatic Nuisance Species and how to prevent their spread on recreational watercraft. Some promotional gifts and outreach materials would also be handed-out to those attending. Please e-mail your answers to the questions below to [bjzook2@msn.com](mailto:bjzook2@msn.com).

*Would you attend such a Workshop?*

*What month of the year would work best for you?*

## Power Wash Poster Available!

## New Travelers Information Radio Station for ANS in Wyoming

In June of this year the last of 10 new low power radio broadcast stations that advise traveling boaters to clean their boats and equipment before launching into western waters will be installed in the Green River area of Wyoming on I-80. Traveler Information Stations (TIS) have already been installed in Montana (5), North Dakota, South Dakota (2) and Minnesota. All of these installations are operated by the State Agencies but were funded and constructed with Federal funds generated to implement the 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian Initiative. The message is consistent and constant; Boaters and Anglers coming west from states known to have zebra mussels should clean and drain their boats and equipment before launching them into any western water to avoid inadvertently introducing zebra mussels or other ANS.

The location of this newest TIS will assure that the message is broadcast to boaters headed for the Colorado and Columbia basins and the central basin of California. Areas where over 100 trailered boats have been observed with zebra mussels attached, in most cases, unbeknownst to the owner.

- Bill Zook, Zebra Mussel Outreach Coordinator  
Pacific State Marine Fisheries Commission

## Zebra Mussels in Montana?

The vulnerability of Montana became very clear during 2005. As we reported in last years newsletter, in spring of 2005 Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was contacted by an angler who was aware of the Montana boat inspection program and wanted his boat inspected prior to launching in Canyon Ferry Reservoir. The boat was purchased in Indiana by a Montana resident who noticed what he suspected to be zebra mussels as he was trailering the boat home. He made the right choice and called Montana FWP prior to launching and the boat was cleaned thoroughly and passed a boat inspection before touching any Montana waters.

During the fall of 2005 Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks received another call about a zebra mussel threat. This time a peanut butter jar containing several zebra mussels was left on the doorstep of the Charles M. Russell Wildlife Refuge office near Fort Peck Reservoir. The jar was left anonymously, officials don't know if the jar was left as a Halloween prank or as a warning that zebra mussels were or could be placed in Fort Peck Reservoir. Fort Peck reservoir is a very large reservoir on the Missouri River with 246,000 surface acres and 1,520 miles of shoreline; it is also one of the most popular fishing areas within the state and receives boaters from over the region. If zebra mussels were established in Fort Peck they would be very difficult to detect and control due to the sheer size of the lake and would quickly spread around the state due to its popularity with boaters and anglers.

Montana contains the headwaters for the Columbia River Basin and the Missouri River Basin. Any invasive species within the state would have the potential to easily spread downstream. During 2005 the vulnerability of Montana water bodies to the introduction of zebra mussels was clearly demonstrated. If Montana waters become positive with zebra mussels then the entire Columbia River and Missouri River basins are at greater risk of introduction because the planktonic stage of zebra mussels is able to spread easily through downstream dispersal.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will continue to actively monitor for zebra mussels as well as for other invasive species and will continue to operate boat inspection stations. The agency hopes that if zebra mussels are present within the state that they will be detected early so that rapid response actions can be put in place to contain and limit their further spread. For further information on the Montana Aquatic Nuisance Species Program contact Eileen Ryce the Montana Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator at 406-444-2449.

- Eileen Ryce, Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator  
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks



Photo Credit: Marc Murrell

## Featured ANS Outreach Partner Business

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#### ***Cascade Marinas – Pasco/Moses Lake, Washington***

Owner Ron Sawyer and his partner Paul Lamb operate two marine sales, service and supply businesses in Columbia Basin area of Washington. Both Cascade Marina locations, in the Tri-Cities area and in Moses Lake, are located on the water, making it very convenient for customers to test-drive before they buy. They feature Alumaweld and Crestliner boats; Mercury, OMC and Evinrude engines; and believe that the best way to build their business is through establishing a long-term relationship with every customer. While, both operations are going strong, that doesn't keep them from being actively involved in resource conservation issues. Ron is a long-time member of the Inland Fisheries Advisory Committee in Washington and both owners have a good awareness of the zebra mussel and Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) issue. That's why they have chosen to make ANS educational material available in their stores and serve as outreach "satellites" for the Columbia River "Basin Watch" Program. Thanks guys! We need more like you.

### **Partial List of Columbia River Outreach Partners**

**(See also article on Featured Business Partner – Cascade Marina, Pasco, WA)**

**Hells Canyon Outdoor Supply - Oxbow, OR**  
**Boyer Park Marina – Colfax, WA**  
**Lyons Ferry Marina – Starbuck, WA**  
**Priest Lake Marina – Priest Lake, ID**  
**Bishop's Marina – Coolin, ID**  
**Elkin's Resort on Priest Lake – Nordman, ID**  
**Bitter End Marina – Bayview, ID**  
**Holiday Shore Resort – Hope, ID**  
**Sandpoint Marina – Sandpoint, ID**  
**Beauty Bay Resort – Coeur d' Alene, ID**

**Big Wally's – Coulee City, WA**  
**Crescent Bar Resort – Quincy, WA**  
**Mar Don Resort – Othello, WA**  
**Snug Harbor Landing – Naches, WA**  
**Hat Creek Store – Hermiston, OR**  
**Crow's Butte Marina – The Dalles, OR**  
**Camas Marina – Washougal, WA**  
**Riverplace Marina – Portland, OR**  
**St Helens Marina – St Helen's, OR**  
**Kalama Marina – Kalama, WA**

**To see your business listed here in future editions, join us today!**

For more information, contact Bill Zook at (360) 427-7676, e-mail [bjzook2@msn.com](mailto:bjzook2@msn.com).



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