

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and its 100th Meridian partners will sponsor the following Level Two trainings in the spring of 2010

Advanced Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination for quagga/zebra mussels

*On February 2-3, March 23-24 and May 4-5 (limited openings)
At Lake Mead*

This two-day, intensive, hands-on training is provided free of charge on a first-come first-served basis. Attendees will be responsible for their own travel expenses.

The course is designed for those individuals who are currently or will soon become active in setting-up or implementing watercraft inspection and decontamination programs for their respective agencies, organizations or businesses. The class size is restricted to 10-12 people and the focus is on actual inspections of various types of watercraft and the use of several decontamination systems. The course is certified by 100th Meridian member agencies and successful graduates will also be qualified as incident responders and Level One Trainers. (See attachment for more detail on this and other training opportunities)

If you are interested in attending or sending someone to this class, please contact Bill Zook as soon as possible

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Zebra Quagga Mussel Training Opportunities

Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination Training (WIT) For Zebra/Quagga Mussels

Quagga and zebra mussels are extremely harmful invasive species capable of severely degrading aquatic ecosystems, curtailing fisheries and adversely impacting all types of water delivery systems, to the tune of nearly 1 Billion dollars annually in US. Zebra mussels have been and continue to pose a threat to the western US from the mid-west and hundreds of contaminated watercraft are being trailered into and around the west each year.

In 2007 quagga mussels were discovered in the lower Colorado River Basin; the Colorado River Aqueduct system and connected waterways in Southern California; and in the Central Arizona Water Project waterworks and connected waterways in central Arizona; and most recently quagga and zebra mussel larvae have been detected in a number of reservoirs in Colorado and Utah and adults have been discovered in Pueblo Reservoir in Colorado and in San Justo Reservoir in Central California.

These newly established and rapidly expanding quagga and zebra mussel populations in Nevada, California, Colorado, Utah and Arizona, mark the first incursion of this small freshwater mollusk into the western US and have already created serious problems and expensive mitigation costs for recreation, irrigation, power production, domestic water supply, transportation and hatchery production in the Colorado Basin.

These relatively new developments have also sent shudders through the halls of state government throughout the west with new legislation being passed in most western states in the past 24 months with more to come in 2010.

Zebra and quagga mussels are spread on trailered watercraft moving from infested to uninfested waterways. A number of national, regional and local programs are now in place to educate the public on how to avoid transporting them on their watercraft and equipment. In addition over seventy jurisdictions in the western US have implemented watercraft interceptions programs in the past two years.

The only recognized and certified training programs for watercraft inspection and decontamination in the western United States are those being offered through PSMFC and by graduates of the advanced training we currently offer.

We are offering two levels of Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination training in 2010:

Level One:

This training is directed at state, federal and local natural resource and boating agency personnel, water users of all types, law makers and border/lake inspection personnel

This training program gives a good overview of the species and their impacts and includes information on outreach and education programs, basic mussel biology, distribution, transport vectors, mussel impacts and focuses on how to inspect for and decontaminated trailered watercraft suspected of having zebra or quagga mussels on board. The class

includes 4-5 hours of instruction including a "hands-on" watercraft inspection exercise and training on the newly adopted Uniform Minimum Protocols and Standards for Watercraft Interception Programs for Dreissenid Mussels in the Western United States and on-going research on decontamination efficacy.

The primary instructor for this training will be Bill Zook (See information below). As more graduates from the Level Two training become available, they will become Level One trainers.

Bill Zook:

Bill is a retired Fisheries Program Manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and now works as a contract consultant for the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission responsible for zebra/quagga mussel outreach and education in the western US. With WDFW, he established Washington's Aquatic Nuisance Species Program in the mid-1990's, a program then considered to be the model for the rest of the west. He developed the watercraft inspection and decontamination training program in 2004 and has conducted dozens of trainings since. He is co-author of the Western Regional Panel's newly adopted Uniform Minimum Protocols and Standards for Watercraft Interception Programs for Dreissenid Mussels in the Western United States. He lives and works in Olympia Washington.

Level Two:

This training is intensive and designed for professionals in all fields that expect to be actively involved in the inspection and decontamination of trailered watercraft and those who wish to become trainers within their state or work group

Level two training will be delivered over two days (14 hours) at Lake Mead located on the Nevada/Arizona Border near Las Vegas. It will focus on actual field inspection of various types of watercraft leaving the lake which may or may not be contaminated with quagga mussels and the decontamination of those watercraft requiring it. The instruction will include the use of portable (low-cost) temperature controlled power wash units and the large semi-permanent self-contained power washer operated by Callville Marina for the National Park Service.

The class is limited to 10-12 students and will be provided at no cost to qualified applicants. Travel to Las Vegas and per diem will be the responsibility of each student. PSMFC and its partners will cover the cost of providing the training and provide ground transportation to and from the hotel and training sites at Lake Mead.

Graduates of this training will be certified by the 100th Meridian Initiative as lead incident responders and Level One trainers and may be called upon to do either in their work area in the future

The primary Trainer for Level Two is Wen Baldwin

Wen Baldwin:

Wen is the long-time President of the Lake Mead Boat Owners Association and ANS Technical Representative for the Lake Mead National Recreation Area and consultant for natural resource agencies throughout the west, is generally considered to be the leading expert on the inspection and decontamination of trailered watercraft in the western US. He has inspected thousands and decontaminated hundreds of quagga mussel infested watercraft in the Colorado Basin and conducted dozens of trainings on this topic all over the west. He lives and works in Henderson Nevada.

Remember

The potential impacts of these invasive species in the west are almost unfathomable. It could severely impact fisheries of all types, greatly increase the cost of power, aggravate already difficult water supply issues and change the quality of life for western residents for all time should they become established in your waterways. Prevention is the only answer. Eradication is not an option. That's why everyone has a stake in learning how to prevent an inadvertent introduction of these mussels on trailered watercraft. ***Please join the battle!***