



Aquatic Invasive Species Newsletter

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February 2020

Note from the AIS Bureau:

Thank you to everyone who participated in the AIS Summit in December. It was a great group of people working together to improve how we address AIS in Montana. A summary of the Summit can be found under the [Montana AIS Summit](#) tab or read it here. [AIS Summit Summary](#)



The 2020 Field season is now underway. AIS staff did a great job this winter updating protocols and plans for the upcoming season. Seasonal staff are being hired and trained and watercraft inspection stations are opening for the season. Partner involvement also continues to increase, strengthening the program state-wide. It is a lot of work getting the AIS program off the ground for the season, but with great staff and great partners we are on track for the most effective and successful year yet protecting our waters from AIS.

Please contact us if you have questions or need any further information.

Tom Woolf, AIS Bureau Chief.

Watercraft Inspections

- Stations opened in February and March, starting with the Ravalli and Dillon stations. Early openings are intended to intercept snowbird traffic returning from the lower Colorado River area. More information on watercraft inspection operations can be found here: [Watercraft Inspection](#).
- Over 113,000 watercraft were inspected by partners and FWP staff during the 2019 season.
 - Intercepted 16 watercraft transporting zebra/quagga mussels into the state.
 - Decontaminated more than 300 watercraft transporting aquatic weeds.
 - Glacier National Park inspected more than 11,000 watercraft.

- 2019 Watercraft inspection data can be found on the [AIS Dashboard](#). (Does not include Glacier National Park data.)
- 2019 Watercraft Inspection end of year report can be found under Reports here: [2019 Inspection Report](#)
- Inspection and launch restrictions have been lifted from Canyon Ferry this season due to no further detection of invasive mussels. Read more here: [Canyon Ferry](#)
 - Tiber Reservoir will continue to have mandatory exit inspections. Removal of the mandatory exit inspections will be evaluated following the 2021 season if no further evidence of invasive mussels is found.



Early Detection Monitoring

- In 2019, more than 2,300 mussel veliger early detection samples were collected in Montana and analyzed by the FWP AIS Lab.
 - Over 1,200 early detection samples from Missouri Basin states were also analyzed by the FWP AIS Lab. New mussel positive waters were identified in Kansas.
- **No evidence of invasive mussels found in Montana in 2019.**
- 2019 Early Detection Monitoring end of year report can be found under Reports here: [2019 Monitoring Report](#)
- AIS early detection surveys will begin in May.

Outreach and Education

- Non-resident watercraft launching in Montana must purchase a Vessel AIS Prevention Pass (AISPP) at FWP regional offices or online here.
 - Motorized watercraft fee is \$30. Required for all watercraft that have a motor.
 - Nonmotorized watercraft fee is \$10. Required for rafts, kayaks, drift boats, catamarans and sailboat.
 - Proof of purchase can be electronic (cell phone) or paper receipt, there is no decal.
 - The Vessel AISPP expires on December 31. And is not transferable between vessels.
- AIS outreach efforts for 2020 include: social media, print, radio, television, geo targeted media, booths at events, workshops, outreach materials, partner delivered outreach, and outreach delivered at watercraft inspection stations.

BRINGING A BOAT TO MONTANA?

Help protect Montana waters from aquatic invasive species.

Find watercraft inspection stations at CleanDrainDryMT.com
Stop at all open watercraft inspection stations you encounter in Montana.
All out-of-state watercraft must be inspected before launching.

Non-resident watercraft using Montana waters must purchase a Vessel AIS Prevention Pass.

Motorized vessel fee = \$30

Non-motorized vessel fee = \$10

Purchase online at fwp.mt.gov



License: Buy/Apply

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MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

- FWP staff and partners have been traveling around the state to share AIS information at boat shows, outdoor sports shows, and agriculture shows (Maggie, MATE and GATE).



LEFT: Wendy Jones and Monica Boyer at the MATE show in Billings.
ABOVE: Brant Dupree and Cassidy Bender at a boat show in Kalispell.

- Boaters who renew their [boat validation decal](#) will see an AIS message on their Validation Receipt this year.
- FWP Parks AmeriCorps and Big Sky Watershed Corps members attended training in Helena to learn about aquatic invasive species and how they can use AIS resources in their work.



- Watercraft Inspector job openings: [Anaconda](#), [Tongue River](#), [Sula](#), [Hardin](#)

Events

- Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Summit: AIS Session July 21, Big Sky MT. [PNWER](#)
- Western Regional Panel for aquatic invasive species: September 16-18, Anchorage, AK. [WRP 2020](#)
- North American Invasive Species Management Assoc. (NAISMA): October 6-8, Whitefish, MT. [NAISMA](#)

In the News

- AIS out of state boat fees for 2020: [Out of state boat fees](#)
- Planning for clam eradication in Billings: [Lake Elmo](#)
- Montana Senator proposes \$10,000 fine for transporting AIS: [Fine for Boats](#)
- Inspections resume in NW Montana: [Clean Drain Dry](#)
- Hatcheries, fish and New Zealand mudsnails: [Mudsnail](#)
- Senate hearing discussing mussels and tamarisk in Congress: [Senate Energy AIS Hearing](#)
- AIS bill advancing in South Dakota: [New SD Law](#)
- Bill introduced in DC to strengthen AIS prevention: [Bennett Bill](#)
- Austin spends \$4 million to combat mussels: [Austin Mussels](#)
- Outdoor Life: 8 Invasive species threatening fisheries: [Invasives](#)
- Mussels = smaller fish in MN: [Minnesota Study](#)
- New species of giant invasive mussels found in New Jersey: [Giant mussels](#)
- Shocking Asian carp in Kentucky: [Jumping Fish](#)
- Aquatic Invasive hippopotamus? [Columbian Hippos](#)