

**The State of Montana's
Dreissenid Mussel
Rapid Response
Guidelines:**

**Appendix A:
Missouri River
Containment and
Quarantine Plan**

Updated: 5/21/2018

Appendix A: Missouri River Containment and Quarantine Plan

Introduction and Purpose

Montana's Dreissenid Mussel Rapid Response Guidelines outline the process of how the state of Montana would respond to a detection of dreissenid mussels in a new waterbody. The Missouri River Containment and Quarantine Plan (MRCQP) provides additional containment and quarantine information relating to waters of the Missouri River Basin. The Dreissenid Mussel Rapid Response Guidelines and MRCQP fulfill requirements outlined in MCA 80-7-1025.

Existing Efforts

The positive detection of dreissenid mussel veligers in Tiber and the suspect detection in Canyon Ferry Reservoir in late 2016 led to new rules to address the movement and introduction of AIS in the Missouri Basin and the state. ARM Rule 12.5.706(b)(c) requires all watercraft entering the state and all watercraft crossing west over the Continental Divide to be inspected for AIS prior to launching. ARM Rule 12.5.707(a) requires all watercraft exiting Tiber and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs to also be inspected and, if directed by the department, decontaminated.

To address this issue, watercraft inspection stations have been established on major routes of travel near the state border and along the Continental Divide. Stations typically operate during daylight hours during the boating season. In the event a boat enters the state when stations are closed, boaters are still required to seek out an inspection. To help accommodate this, all FWP offices provide inspections as well as at other high use locations. FWP provides updated information on watercraft inspection station locations and hours of operation at www.CleanDrainDryMT.com.

At Tiber and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs watercraft inspection stations were established at boat ramps to ensure all exiting watercraft are clean drained and dry. Exiting watercraft receive an inspection to ensure the boat is clean of any plants, animals or debris and all residual water in the motor, live wells and bilge is drained. Watercraft that are more complex with inboard motors or ballast tanks receive a hot water wash to ensure any hidden standing water is free of viable AIS.

A Certified Boater Program (CBP) was put into place at Tiber and Canyon Ferry for boaters that primarily use those waterbodies. This program helps address public access concerns while still ensuring exiting vessels are cleaned, drained and dry. Inspectors cannot staff every ramp on those waters and the CBP provides a mechanism to allow boaters to use ramps where inspectors are not present. The Certified Boater must take and pass a test illustrating they understand the issue and the requirements for

watercraft exiting Tiber and Canyon Ferry. They then receive decals for their boat and trailer that indicates they are part of the CBP and allows them to use CBP only boat ramps. Boaters in the program must always clean drain and dry their boats and equipment upon exit and stop at any inspection stations they encounter. CBP boaters are not required to be inspected upon exit unless they plan to launch in a different waterbody. If a CBP boater plans to launch in a different waterbody they must be inspected and, if necessary, decontaminated.

Additional containment restrictions exist on Tiber due to the positive its mussel positive status. On Tiber Reservoir, gated barriers were installed at lower use boat ramps where staff are not available to inspect exiting watercraft. These gates are secured with a combination lock. CBP boaters receive the code, allowing only CBP participants to launch and exit at those locations. For non CBP boaters, the Marina and VFW launches have established watercraft inspection stations.

The CBP program is established under the authority of ARM Rule 12.5.707.1(a)(i). In the event of further dreissenid detections in Tiber and Canyon Ferry, this program will be modified accordingly to continue to ensure boats are not transporting dreissenid mussels.

In the event dreissenid mussels are detected in a new location, a response would follow similar containment efforts to what was put in place for Tiber and Canyon Ferry.

Future Actions

In the event of a new dreissenid mussels detection in waters of the Missouri Basin, FWP will respond following the Dreissenid Mussel Rapid Response Guidelines. Response will follow implementation similar to the Tiber and Canyon Ferry response including:

- Waterbody closure until such time as mandatory exit inspection can be implemented.
- Enact emergency rule to require inspections for all exiting watercraft.
- Establish mandatory watercraft inspection stations to ensure all exiting watercraft are clean drained and dry.

Specific tools and resources that will be utilized for a response in the Missouri River Basin include:

- AIS Geodatabase: In cooperation with DNRC and the Montana Heritage Program, a state-wide geodatabase was developed to facilitate the identification of impacted infrastructure, resources and stakeholders at or around any given waterbody in the state. The Geodatabase will be utilized to identify boat access, infrastructure, sensitive species, stakeholders and other information pertinent to enacting waterbody quarantine / containment / treatment. Waterbody-specific resource inventory summaries are under development by the Heritage Program to help compile information for high priority waterbodies.

- Central and Eastern Mussel Response (CEMR): This is a stakeholder group consisting of conservation and watershed district representatives and other stakeholders in eastern Montana that are interested in the AIS issue. This group will be engaged to assist with communication and coordination with local community stakeholders in the event of a mussel detection.

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