



Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are organisms that are not native to Montana. AIS can include aquatic plants, snails, clams, mussels, crayfish, fish or pathogens. AIS can reproduce quickly and spread rapidly because there are no natural predators or competitors to keep them in check.

AIS cause serious damage to Montana's natural resources, economy and recreational opportunities. AIS can create significant, long-term ecological harm that may impact everyday life for current and future generations.

- Invasive plants grow into dense mats that block sunlight and starve aquatic life of oxygen. They **crowd out native vegetation** which provide food, shelter, and nesting areas for fish and other wildlife.
- Invasive mussels filter plankton out of the water, which are a vital part of the food chain that our native fish eat. **Fish populations decline** when invasive mussels take hold.
- Invasive mussels **attach to boat motors** and boat hulls, reducing performance and efficiency. The sharp shells cover ladders, rocks, and shorelines – creating a safety hazard to unprotected feet.
- Invasive mussels form dense colonies that **clog water intakes**, forcing power plants, utilities and irrigators to use costly control methods to maintain their systems.
- Aquatic invasive species can **kill native species**. They may prey upon them, compete with them for food and space, interbreed with them, or introduce harmful pathogens and parasites.

Prevention is Our Best Defense!

Once established, there are few if any means to control AIS in natural waterbodies. Control efforts are very expensive and total eradication is very unlikely.

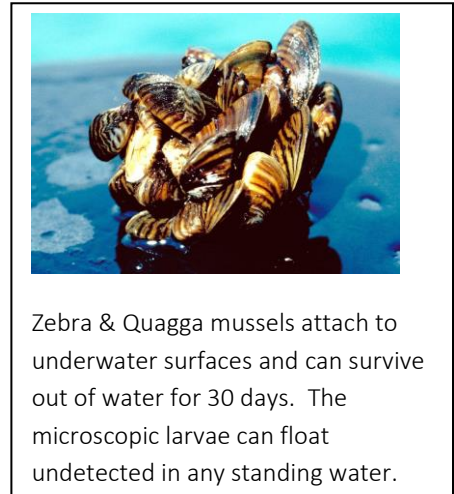
AIS move to new locations as a result of human activity. Just one organism, or in some cases a piece of a plant, is enough to start a new invasion.

Watercraft are the main vector for moving AIS from one waterbody to another. AIS can:

- attach to watercraft hulls, motors or trailers
- hide in ballast water, bilges, pumps, live wells, bait buckets and other water containing devices
- cling to fishing gear, waders, nets and downriggers



Eurasian Watermilfoil grow in dense mats displacing native plants. Just one fragment can start a new infestation.



Zebra & Quagga mussels attach to underwater surfaces and can survive out of water for 30 days. The microscopic larvae can float undetected in any standing water.

Learn more at www.CleanDrainDryMT.com