

Montana Invasive Mussels Update: March 2017



What is the situation?

In October 2016, Montana's first-ever invasive mussel larvae were detected in Tiber Reservoir. The discovery triggered a natural resource emergency and led to several recommended strategies to manage the threat of invasive mussels spread.

Tiber Reservoir remains the only water body with confirmed mussel larvae. There were suspect samples for Canyon Ferry Reservoir and the Milk River below Nelson Reservoir, and an inconclusive sample on the Missouri below Toston dam. Further testing will occur to determine whether mussels are present in these areas. Test results from 182 other water bodies in Montana have turned up no new detections of invasive mussels.

Temporary emergency restrictions on the launch or removal of all boats, docks and other structures (e.g. irrigation equipment) were lifted in January 2017 for Tiber and Canyon Ferry reservoirs. The emergency restrictions were necessary to prevent the potential spread of invasive aquatic mussels from the two reservoirs to other uncontaminated waterbodies. The mussel response team will reassess whether to implement other restrictions this spring.



Dave Brenner, Michigan Sea Grant

Montana Responses

The [Montana Invasive Species Strategic Framework](#) was completed and released in January 2017. It provides guidance for the coordination, prevention, detection, rapid response and control of invasive species in Montana.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) created the Aquatic Invasive Species Bureau to manage the prevention, detection and control of aquatic invasive species within state borders. The bureau will be operational in March.

Montana's Joint Mussel Response Implementation Team presented recommendations to the Legislature to manage aquatic invasive species. Recommendations include additional mandatory watercraft inspection stations; deployment of decontamination stations at Tiber and Canyon Ferry reservoirs; and doubling mussel sample collection to more than 1,500 taken from 200 waterbodies.

Additionally, Montana FWP proposed new regulations regarding decontamination, maintenance, and mandatory inspections of watercraft and water-based equipment.

Clean, Drain, Dry!

Clean all the mud and debris off your irrigation equipment and watercraft before use in another water body. Drain all water from them and make sure everything is dry. These simple steps prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Take these precautions year round.

Report any suspect infestations at <https://nas.er.usgs.gov/SightingReport.aspx>



National Park Service, Amistad National Recreation Area

Additional Resources

<http://musselresponse.mt.gov/>

<http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/species/ais/lawsRegulations.html>

Montana Invasive Species Strategic Framework: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/carrd/docs/misac-docs/misac-resources-docs/MISSF-v1-5-optimized-size.pdf>

Please contact Monica Pokorny (monica.pokorny@mt.usda.gov), Plant Materials Specialist, at 406.587.6708 with questions.

