



Invasive Mussel Awareness and Prevention

Prevention and Awareness

Because of the invasive golden mussel, the Bureau of Reclamation, along with our partners that manage recreation, is implementing a watercraft self-certification program to enable boating access to reservoirs and provide information about how best to protect our waterways.

- We encourage the public to practice the "Clean, Drain, Dry" method to help protect our water, power and recreational resources. Prior to launching on North State reservoirs, boaters are asked to self-certify. To ensure your boat does not threaten our waterways with invasive mussels please follow these three options:
 - The boat was not used in counties or waterbodies with known Golden Mussel Infestations ([see list of infected waters here](#)). If the boat was used in any other waterbody outside of the reservoir the boater intends to launch in, the boat and trailer has been washed, drained, flushed, and allowed to completely dry for at least 5 days.
 - The boat has been used in a county or waterbody with Golden Mussel infestations, but the boat and trailer has been washed, drained, flushed, and allowed to completely dry for at least 30 days.
 - The boat was professionally decontaminated at an approved Mussel Decontamination Station.
- List of places with confirmed Golden Mussels:
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Invasives/Species/Golden-Mussel>
- Invasive Mussel Prevention Self-Certification Forms can be found at this time at the following locations:
 - Whiskeytown National Recreation Area Visitor Center at Whiskeytown, CA; the Reclamation office in Willows, CA; and Stony Gorge and East Park Boat Launches.
 - We intend to have the forms available at the Shasta Dam Visitor's Center in Shasta, CA as well.
 - [Online self-inspection form](#)

History of Invasive Golden Mussels (from National Park Service)



In October 2024 the highly invasive golden mussel was documented near the Port of Stockton in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. This is the first documented case of this exotic mollusk in North America and the introduction was likely a result of ballast water from shipping being discharged into the Delta. The golden mussel is native to Asia and since being introduced has spread throughout much of the Delta and south into the O'Neill Forebay, the San Luis Reservoir, and waters associated with the California Aqueduct.

The potential impacts to water infrastructure, boats, beaches, and aquatic ecosystems are severe; this organism can grow in dense colonies containing as many as 80,000 to 200,000 organisms per square meter. These dense colonies can clog water pipes, encrust beaches with sharp shells, plug water intakes on boats, impede power plant operation, and filter out large quantities of microscopic animals and plants that fish and other species depend on for food.

This threat is new but similar to the threat posed by quagga and zebra mussels in many areas of the nation. However, the primary difference between golden mussels and other aquatic invasive species (such as quagga/zebra mussels) is the golden mussel's ability to tolerate a wider range of ecological conditions, namely very low calcium levels as well as having the ability to tolerate brackish waters. This is an immediate threat locally as all indicators point to this species being able to readily colonize Whiskeytown and other north state reservoirs if introduced.

You can do your part to keep our reservoirs from being infested with these mussels by following the state's "clean, drain and dry" practices whenever you move boats, kayaks, or fishing equipment between water bodies.

All watercraft must be cleaned, drained, and completely dried prior to being launched at Whiskeytown, Shasta, Trinity, and Lewiston Lakes.

You should also clean, drain and start to dry your vessel in the parking lot upon trailering your vessel. The primary way that these organisms can move between water bodies is through direct transfer of adult mussels or from the microscopic veligers that live within the water prior to settling and developing into adult mussels. Expect to see National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation and partner staff inspecting boats at our public launch ramps this summer. Please help us keep your North State reservoirs free of this emerging threat. Thank you for recreating responsibly.