



STOP MUSSEL PAIN!



Protect Saskatchewan waterways from Zebra and Quagga mussels, invasive critters with detrimental consequences.

Zebra mussels, to which quagga mussels are closely related, are already found in most waterways in Quebec, Ontario and most states in the eastern USA. They are now found in Lake Winnipeg as well. Quagga mussels are very small but breed quickly and adhere to practically any surface. They threaten native fish habitat by consuming phytoplankton, clarifying the water and changing the subsurface ecosystem, meaning native fish may starve. As with zebra mussels, they can clog water intakes, screens and pipes and cause damage to hydroelectric dams, irrigation equipment and marine engine cooling systems. Quagga mussels are hardy, capable of surviving out of water for a month and tolerant of a wide range of temperatures and water conditions. Some have already infested the Colorado River system and are spreading north and across the western USA and throughout the Pacific Northwest.

How are they coming to Saskatchewan?

On (or in) recreational boats, motors and boat trailers as well as on industrial equipment. Anything that has been in an infested body of water will likely spread the mussels when moved, unless precautions are taken. Fishing enthusiasts coming north across the USA/Canada border, or Saskatchewan folk coming back home after a winter in Arizona pulling their favourite boat and trailer can also bring them here. Even seashells collected while on holiday in affected areas, or introduced through carelessly disposed-of aquarium materials, can result in an accidental contamination.

How do we stop the spread of these critters?

We engage our Saskatchewan boating enthusiasts to inform each other and the public at large about making sure people who could possibly be transporting invasive mussels to properly clean their boats, motors, bait wells and related equipment when moving to a Saskatchewan waterway from an area which may be infested. It's like washing your hands to stop the spread of bacteria – it's simple,

and it works! We also use educational tools like this guide and flyer to further share information.



Prairie Waters Working Group

The Prairie Waters Working Group (PWWG) will ensure some important first steps right away, through public service announcements and producing handouts for distribution at boat dealerships and fishing equipment retailers.

Downloads:

AIS Working Group Backgrounder
Media Release, April 22, 2014
Flyer AIS Working Group (Saskatchewan)