



# DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL



## 2012 MUSSEL PREVENTION PROGRAM – Informational Packet

Lakes Nacimiento and San Antonio face a serious threat – invasive mussels. Here are basic guidelines on what's at risk, what's planned for 2012, and how **YOU** can keep local lakes mussel-free.

### What's the Big Deal?

“Dreissenid mussels” (quagga and zebra mussels) are not native to the U.S.A. They infected the Great Lakes in 1988, then in 2007 made their way across the continental divide into Lake Mead. In the past five years, these invasive mussels have **infested at least 25 California water bodies** – sometimes leading to closures or boating restrictions.



But how did they get there? Mussels are transported by direct waterways (canals and pipelines) and by recreational vessel transport (trailered water boats).

Quagga and zebra mussels cause irreparable damage by:

- Reproducing at alarming rate:  
**1 million eggs/ female mussel/ spawning season**
- Littering beaches with smelly, sharp mussel shells
- Devastating lakes' ecosystem
- Polluting lakes
- Permanently altering lake's water chemistry and increasing algae growth at great depths
- Increasing drag on boats and clogging engine intakes
- Negatively impacting on economy
- Clogging water delivery pipes and increasing costs to operate/maintain lake and facilities

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services estimated the economic impact of mussels at \$5-billion (2000-2010) in the Great Lakes region alone!*

*CA Department of Fish and Game estimates the U.S. spends \$1-billion annually to address damages imposed by invasive mussels!*

Mussels start out life so small that you would need a microscope to see them. As they grow, they cluster and clog boat hulls, propellers, engines, cooling systems; can cover piers, pilings; clog water pipes and intakes; ultimately coat water's edge with sharp, smelly shells.

And they are robust. Mussels can live out of water for 3-5 days in hot, dry conditions; and up to 30+ days in humid conditions. This is why boaters are encouraged to follow the **CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY** approach to prevention.

### What would happen if Lake Nacimiento or San Antonio got infected?



The lake ecosystem may never be the same. There is no known means of eradication. In other words, once mussels get a foothold, there is no known way to get them out of our lakes. Fish and other species would be noticeably impacted, clumps and clusters of mussels would develop, and carcasses would accumulate on shore.

We would have to declare ourselves an infected water body, a deterrent to boating and a negative impact on the local economy. Boats based on an infected lake would no longer be welcome on other lakes seeking to remain mussel-free.



## How can we keep the lakes mussel-free?

Keeping infected boats out of local lakes is the key; identifying infected boats is the challenge.

Like many lakes in the Western U.S.A., an inspection program is in place to keep high-risk vessels out. The program for Lake Nacimiento and Lake San Antonio is:

### TO SCREEN/ INSPECT ALL VESSELS BEFORE LAUNCH



Mandatory screening/inspections are required:

- All vessels must be CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY.
- All vessels will be required to complete a Vessel Screening Permit.
- All vessels must be properly screened/inspected, permits must be stamped by a certified screener, and stamped permits must be carried on the vessel at all times.
- Vessels that have been on infected lakes within the past 30 days and/or are not CLEAN, DRAIN, and DRY will be required to undergo a full inspection.
- No vessels will be allowed to launch that have been on infected lakes within the past 10 days or that fail inspection.
- Properly banded vessels or those with valid Resident Vessel Certificate and Affidavits (and associated stickers) shall follow specific screening and launch requirements (see more below).

Please allow additional time for the mandatory screening/inspections. Plan ahead, contact your private ramp manager or ramp owner to schedule time for screening/inspection. Vessel Screening Permits and infected lake maps can be found on the following web sites:

[www.SLOCountyWater.org](http://www.SLOCountyWater.org) or [www.mcwra.co.monterey.ca.us](http://www.mcwra.co.monterey.ca.us) or [vivaeldragon.org](http://vivaeldragon.org)



## What does the program entail for the private ramps?

Each private ramp will be required to screen/inspect all vessels launching from their ramp and be able to keep uninspected vessels away from launching facilities. Each community has the flexibility to develop and implement a plan that will fit their ramp needs, but meet the standards set forth by Monterey and San Luis Obispo County. You will also be required to provide Vessel Screening Permits to all boaters and their guests. Your community might also enroll in the "Resident Vessel Program" (new for 2012) which is offered to eligible communities/ privately owned launch ramps.

Ramps can either provide their own certified screeners or send vessels to a public ramp for screening/inspection. Ramps must ensure that boats meet the **CLEAN DRAIN DRY** standard and are screened/inspected prior to launch.

## Tell me more about the "Resident Vessel Program".

Many people keep their boats at Lakes Nacimiento and San Antonio year-round and do not travel to other potentially infected waterways. In previous years, even these boats were subjected to renewal screenings every 14 days. This took time and diverted resources away from traffic that poses greater risks to the lake.

In recognition of this, private gated communities that participated in the mussel prevention program in previous years are eligible to enroll in a Resident Vessel Program. This involves adopting a resolution committing to the program elements, assigning a program coordinator, enrolling eligible owners, and conducting activities in order to comply with the program (e.g. banding participating vessels). Part of that enrollment means completing a mussel awareness class and providing necessary paperwork.

The Resident Vessel Program is not suited for everyone, but does recognize that unique group of boaters whose vessels never leave the watershed and do not pose a risk of infestation to the lake. To get more information about your community's potential enrollment or the community's program protocol, please contact your community's Mussel Coordinator listed below.

## What can I do?

Keep your boat **CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY** and off of infected lakes. Have your vessel screened/inspected prior to launch. Complete the Vessel Screening Permit and have it stamped and signed by a certified screener. Interested in helping your community or organization by becoming a certified screener? Training sessions are conducted throughout the summer as needed. Please contact your Mussel Coordinator or call the Mussel Prevention Program Hotline [\(805\) 788-6006](tel:8057886006) if you would like more information about upcoming training sessions.

Keep in mind that many communities now have a large base of certified screeners, so contact your Mussel Coordinator to find out who can help you check your boat.

Remember, you must carry a current **SIGNED AND STAMPED** Vessel Screening Permit on your vessel at all times, and it must be renewed every 21 days or you run the **risk of being cited and fined \$2,000.**





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## HELP KEEP INVASIVE MUSSELS OUT OF LAKE NACIMIENTO

Learn how to identify high-risk vessels and help your community play a part in the 2012 Mussel Prevention Program.

### Training for Level 1 Certified Screener Training

Attend a 2 ½ hour session to become certified. The class schedule will be updated as classes become available. Check the website at:

[www.SLOCountyWater.org](http://www.SLOCountyWater.org) (click on *Nacimiento Lake Program link*)

**Registration:** To sign up for a class or get on the interest list, call:

Robin Dickerson at (661) 831-8782 x 217 or (805) 788- 6006 or email her at [rdickerson@tjcross.com](mailto:rdickerson@tjcross.com)

The class is offered free of charge, but space is limited. Class scheduling will depend upon local needs and trainer availability.

**Official Stamp: Boaters must carry a SIGNED AND STAMPED Vessel Screening Permit with them and renew it every 21 days.** As a Certified Screener, you will use an official stamp to signify a vessel's clearance to launch. Issuance of official stamps to Certified Screeners is coordinated through the Ramp Coordinators as follows:

#### Ramp Coordinators

Cal Shasta - Phil Humfrey  
Christmas Cove – Claire Simoulis  
Happy Landing – Dennis Stinnette  
Heritage Ranch HOA - Martin Rowley  
Laguna Vista Boat Club - Bill Capps  
Northshores S & B – Ray Green

Oak Shores - Dennis Javens  
Rancho Del Lago - Russ Johnson  
Running Deer Ranch - Chuck Enterline  
South Shore Village - Debbie Kopack  
Tri Counties Club – Eric Gamble

#### Private Ramp Contacts

Don Andre  
Jay Slater  
Bart Matta

Mike McDermot  
Dave Kinman  
Tom Vaughn

Dave Dellamora  
Mike and Lina Vaughn  
Ronald Stephenson

Interested in getting involved or learning more about mussel prevention? Please contact:

**Mussel Prevention Program Hotline: (805) 788- 6006**

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(661) 831-8782 x 217  
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Carolyn Berg  
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