

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

Boater's Guide to Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Inspections



Why Inspect Boats?

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

—Benjamin Franklin

Preventing the introduction and spread of Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) is critical to protect water resources! ANS are a significant and rapidly growing threat to Colorado's water supply and to boating and fishing recreation. ANS are invasive animals, plants, and disease-causing pathogens that are "out of place" in Colorado's reservoirs, lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. They are introduced accidentally or intentionally outside of their native range. Because they are not native to Colorado habitats, they have no natural competitors and predators. Without these checks and balances, the invaders are able to reproduce rapidly and out-compete native species. Once introduced, most invasive species cannot be eradicated and cost billions of dollars to manage.

Because ANS are primarily spread by recreational boating and angling, Colorado has implemented a large-scale watercraft-inspection program to contain existing ANS and prevent the introduction of others.



PHOTO BY MICHIGAN SEA GRANT

When does my boat need to be inspected?

You should inspect your own boat between every use and make sure it is clean, drained, and dry. The State of Colorado **REQUIRES** your boat to be professionally inspected if:

- The boat has been in any water body that is positive or suspect for ANS.
- The boat has been in any water body outside of Colorado.
- The boat will be entering any water body where inspections are required.



PHOTO BY BRAD HENLEY

Where are watercraft inspection and decontamination stations located?

Please check the Colorado Parks and Wildlife web site or call ahead for important details, including hours of operation, ramp closures, fees for access or services, and reservoir-specific boating policies:

<http://cpw.state.co.us>



PHOTO BY 100TH MERIDIAN



Which ANS Are We Most Concerned About?

QUAGGA PHOTO BY
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Zebra and Quagga Mussels

Zebra and quagga mussels grow and reproduce quickly resulting in significant economic, ecological and recreation impacts. Boating and fishing in infested waters is severely impaired. Invasive mussels can encrust engines and cause costly damage to watercraft. They reproduce quickly and can litter shorelines and beaches with sharp shells.

They attach to most underwater structures, clog water supply pipes and infrastructure. They make it very difficult and expensive to store and supply water for municipal, industrial and agricultural use. They completely alter the ecosystem by encrusting

and smothering native species. In addition, they are filter feeders and eat most of the food at the bottom of the food chain, leaving little or nothing for native aquatic species. They also severely degrade water quality. They are transported to uninfested waters on trailered watercraft, and in bait buckets, live wells, bilge water, anchors, ropes, engines/motors, gear, and equipment.



ZEBRA PHOTO BY
LAUREN LIVO AND
STEVE WILCOX

New Zealand Mudsnail

New Zealand mudsnails (NZMS) compete with native invertebrates—native mussels, mayflies, caddisflies, and other aquatic insects—for space and food. NZMS reduce these prey sources for fish and are not a good food source themselves. Their hard shell allows them to pass through a fish gut unharmed. Fish tend to be smaller in size and weight in infested waters. NZMS



are females that clone themselves, so it only takes one to start a new infestation. NZMS are carried to uninfested waters on fishing gear. They can survive up to 50 days on a damp surface and several days on a dry surface.



Eurasian Watermilfoil

Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) is an aquatic noxious weed that forms dense mats which restrict swimming, fishing, and boating. The mats shade and choke out native aquatic plants that are needed by aquatic fish and animals for shelter, habitat and food. The decaying plants foul beaches and decrease oxygen levels



in the water, destroying habitat and food needed by fish and birds. The mats slow the flow of water in ditches, rivers, and streams and create ideal mosquito habitat. EWM clogs water intakes and alters water chemistry changing the taste and smell of drinking water. EWM reproduces by seeds, fragmentation and winter buds. Any plant fragment can start a new infestation.

Rusty Crayfish

Rusty crayfish eat small fish, insects, and fish eggs. They also eat aquatic vegetation, damaging underwater habitat that is important for fish spawning, cover, and food. They are aggressive and displace native crayfish.

They have been introduced to uninfested water by anglers who use the crayfish as bait and throw unused bait into the water or illegally stock them as a prey base for fish.



PHOTO BY PHIL MYERS, MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Go Green!

Boat Inspection Seals Explained

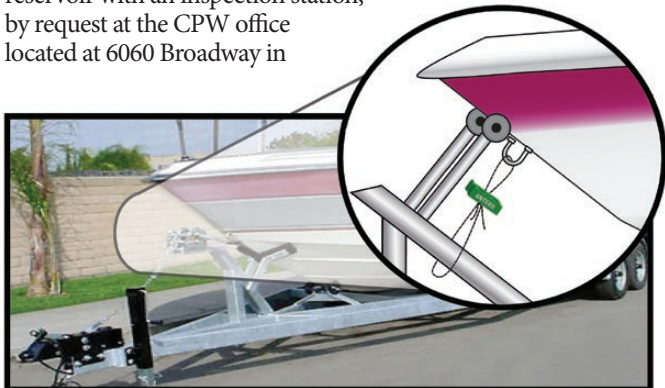
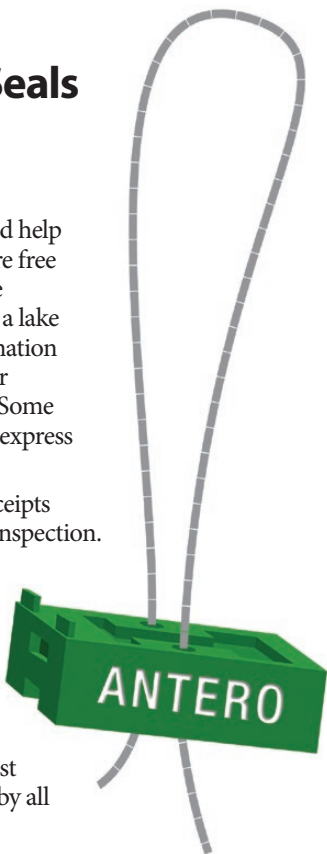
Green Seals

Green seals can save you time and help you get on the water fast! Seals are free to boaters and are available at the inspection station when you exit a lake or reservoir. Seals provide information to the inspector that reduces your time waiting in inspection lines. Some inspection stations even have an express lane for green sealed boats.

Boat inspection seals and seal receipts together are your proof of prior inspection. The seal and receipt provide information about the last water your boat was at and the type of inspection performed there. Boat seals temporarily attach the boat to the trailer so that the inspector knows the boat has not launched since its last inspection. Green seals are used by all jurisdictions in Colorado.

If you have a green seal, you must still stop at the inspection station to have the seal and receipt verified. In order for the seal to be valid, it must have a fully filled out receipt with a matching serial number. You will quickly be granted access if you are returning to the same location. If you are not returning to the same location the inspector may give your boat a quick check to ensure it is clean and dry. If the boat is not clean and dry, you will get re-inspected. Keep your boat clean and dry and get on the water fast!

Boats are given green seals following an inspection or decontamination upon exiting a lake or reservoir with an inspection station, by request at the CPW office located at 6060 Broadway in



Denver, or one of the many marinas or marine dealers certified to do inspections. If one is not offered to you when you leave the lake or reservoir, be sure to ask for it!

What do white and blue receipts mean?

White paper receipts are given at negative waters with no aquatic nuisance species. If you have a valid seal with a white receipt, your next launch will be expedited and decontamination will not be required.

Blue paper receipts are from a positive water in which an ANS has been detected. If you have a blue receipt from a positive water and are entering a water that is negative for that particular ANS, your boat will be quickly re-inspected to ensure it is clean, drained and dry.



If it is not clean, drained and dry, it will be decontaminated to prevent the introduction of ANS into negative waters. Keep in mind that ballast tanks, inboard engines and inboard/outboard engines can not be fully drained. Therefore, they will require decontamination when moving from a positive water to a negative water, or if the boat does not have a seal and receipt proving the boat was last in a negative water. Boats moving from positive waters with blue receipts to negative waters will most likely be decontaminated.

State of Colorado
INSPECTION AND DECONTAMINATION SEAL RECEIPT

For use when applying green seals to boats at Negative Prevention locations. Provide original to watercraft owner (white) and keep carbon copy (yellow).

| | |
|---|--|
| W/D Location: _____ | |
| Date: _____ | Time: _____ |
| Inspector's ID #: _____ | Boat Type: _____ |
| Vessel Registration (CL #): _____ | Seal Serial #: _____ |
| Trailer Plate #: _____ | Seal Serial #: _____ |
| PROCEDURES PERFORMED (Every line must be checked to be valid) | |
| Exit (HEAD) Inspection: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Standing Water Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Full Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Plant Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Bait Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| HOW TO TREAT A BOAT WITH A GREEN SEAL | |
| Always ask about live aquatic bait and follow bait protocol. Cut off seal and let boat launch if one of the following are true: | NOTES: _____ |
| 1.) Boat is returning to the same location; or | |
| 2.) Boat has been decontaminated; or | |
| 3.) Boat is clean and fully drained. | |
| If not, perform an inspection prior to launch. | |
| CLEAN, DRAINED, AND DRY BOATS GET ON THE WATER FAST! | |
| <small>Distribution: White—Owner/Operator Yellow—Inspection Location</small> | |
| <small>1 - 3/2022 - 88,000</small> | <small>RW3-15/22830-22</small> |

State of Colorado
INSPECTION AND DECONTAMINATION SEAL RECEIPT

For use when applying green seals to boats at ANS Containment waters. This receipt valid for State Park preinspection only at the location where it was issued.

| | |
|---|--|
| W/D Location: _____ | |
| Date: _____ | Time: _____ |
| Inspector's ID #: _____ | Boat Type: _____ |
| Vessel Registration (CL #): _____ | Seal Serial #: _____ |
| Trailer Plate #: _____ | Seal Serial #: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EWM | <input type="checkbox"/> N2MS <input type="checkbox"/> Quagga |
| RETURNING BOAT | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| PROCEDURES PERFORMED (Every line must be checked to be valid) | |
| Exit (HEAD) Inspection: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Standing Water Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Full Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Plant Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| Bait Decontamination: | <input type="checkbox"/> Performed or <input type="checkbox"/> Not Performed |
| HOW TO TREAT A BOAT WITH A GREEN SEAL FROM A CONTAINMENT WATER | |
| Always ask about live aquatic bait and follow bait protocol. Cut off seal and let boat launch if one of the following are true: | NOTES: _____ |
| 1.) Boat is returning to the same location; or | |
| 2.) Boat has been decontaminated. | |
| If not, perform an inspection to check for standing water. | |
| • If there is no standing water and the boat is clean and dried, allow launch. | |
| • If any standing water is found, a standing water decontamination is required before allowing launch. | |
| CLEAN, DRAINED, AND DRY BOATS GET ON THE WATER FAST! | |
| <small>Distribution: Blue—Owner/Operator Yellow—Inspection Location</small> | |
| <small>2 - 3/2022 - 31,000</small> | <small>RW3-15/22830-22</small> |

Tips for a Speedy Boat Inspection



The better prepared you and your boat are for an inspection, the faster it will go!

What can you do to help make the *entrance* inspection go faster at the ramp?

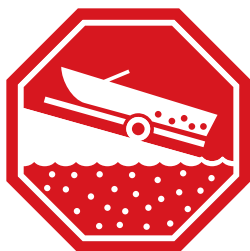
- Have a green seal receipt ready to present to the inspector.
- Make sure the bilge plug is removed and available to be replaced at the end of the inspection.
- Remove any tarps and straps prior to entering the inspection site.
- At the inspection site, **turn off the vehicle**, set the parking brake, get out of the vehicle and assist the inspector with the inspection.
- Open all compartment hatches including but not limited to: live/bait wells, bilge areas, anchor compartments, equipment compartments and any other compartments that hold items that have come into contact with the water body.
- Have the battery switch turned on so that the engine can be lowered or pumps can be activated.
- Have the anchor and ropes out of their compartment for inspection.
- Be prepared to remove any sea strainers or raw water filtration devices.
- If using live aquatic bait, please have the bait receipt out and available for the inspector.
- Clean, Drain, and Dry.





What can a boater do to help make the exit inspection go faster at the ramp?

- At the inspection site, **turn off the vehicle**, set the parking brake, get out of the vehicle and assist the inspector with the inspection.
- Remove the bilge plug.
- Lower the motor.
- Open/drain all compartments including but not limited to: live/bait wells, bilge areas, anchor compartments, equipment compartments and any other compartments that hold items that have come into contact with the water body.
- Activate all pumps (bilge, live well, ballast tank, etc.) to insure drainage.
- Have the anchor and ropes out of their compartment for inspection.
- Place unused bait in the trash.
- Get a green seal and receipt to make the next inspection go faster.
- Remember to dry all equipment at home prior to the next launch.
- Clean, Drain, and Dry.



What Happens During a Boat Decontamination?

Boats are decontaminated using hot water 120°–140° Fahrenheit to kill mussels and other ANS. The exterior of the boat and trailer are sprayed with a high pressure rinse to remove the mussels or ANS from the boat. The interior compartments and the engine/motor are flushed or rinsed with low pressure hot water.

When Will Decontamination Be Required?

Most inspections will not result in a decontamination being performed. However, these circumstances may result in a decontamination being performed:

- If zebra or quagga mussels are found attached to a watercraft.
- If any other ANS is positively identified or suspected on a watercraft.
- If suspect unidentifiable bumps are detected on a watercraft.
- If the watercraft is from a positive water and has any water in it.





- Ballast tanks, inboard engines and inboard/outboard engines can not be fully drained and require decontamination when moving from a positive water (blue receipt) to a negative water (white receipt). These systems will always require decontamination if the boat has no seal and receipt.
- If the watercraft is unable to be fully drained.
- If the watercraft or trailer has plants attached that can't be removed by hand.
- If the watercraft has live aquatic bait without a valid receipt.



What's the Big Deal with Standing Water?

Zebra and quagga mussels start off life as microscopic, free-floating organisms that are too small to see with the naked eye. They can be transported to new locations in standing water in live wells, bilge areas, and other compartments on boats. Mussels aren't the only unseen invasive species. Others, such as the spiny waterflea (pictured right), are also microscopic and transported in the water from the lake or reservoir. Small plant fragments that get sucked up in water onto the boat could start a new infestation in another lake if flushed out there. To prevent the movement of invasive species through standing water on boats, the lake or reservoir water must be fully drained out of the boat in between each use. If the standing water cannot be fully drained, the boat may need to be decontaminated.

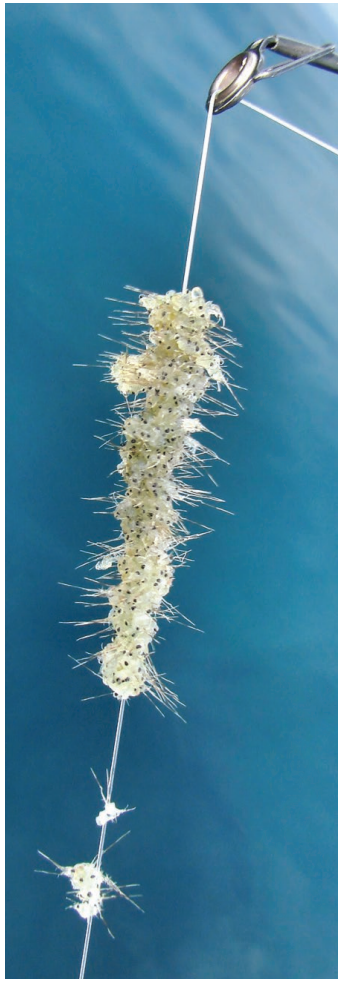


PHOTO BY JEFF GUNDERSON, MINNESOTA SEA GRANT



PHOTO BY CHRIS EVANS, RIVER TO RIVER CWMA

What's the Big Deal about Bait?

Live aquatic bait can harbor diseases that can be spread when they are transported. For this reason, the transport of live baitfish is now prohibited. The bait itself may also be invasive. Live baitfish must be used in the same body of water from which they are taken, except for those fish captured within the Lower Arkansas River Basin (below Pueblo), which may be transported and used in other counties within that same area.



PHOTO BY JOHN WOODLING

Anglers using live aquatic bait purchased from an authorized Colorado dealer should keep their receipt with it to show the inspector. If the receipt is less than 7 days old, and the species listed on the receipt matches what is in the container, and the bait is allowed at that site, the angler will be permitted to use that bait east of the Continental Divide. If there is no receipt, the live bait will not be permitted for use and will be disposed of in the trash.

Use of live fish remains prohibited above 7,000 feet on the east slope and in all areas west of the Continental Divide, except Navajo Reservoir.

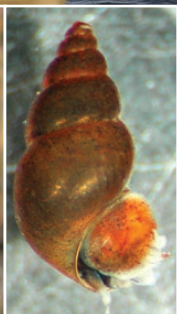
All crayfish caught west of the Continental Divide must now be immediately killed by removing the head from the thorax and taken into possession, or immediately returned to the water from which they were taken. The same restriction applies to Sanchez Reservoir on the East Slope due to the invasive rusty crayfish.



PHOTO BY PHIL MYERS, MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Protect our Rivers and Streams from Invasive Species

How Anglers Can Help



NEW ZEALAND MUDSNAIL PHOTO (RIGHT) BY MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Four Options to Keep Your Angling Gear Free of Invaders

Keep all angling gear free of mud, plants, and organic debris in between each and every use. Unknowingly moving a species from one body of water to another, even within different stretches of the same river, can start a domino effect of invasion, causing irreversible ecological damage. It is especially important to keep waders clean.

Anglers should scrub the bottom of boots or waders with a brush and remove all mud, plants, and organic materials in between each and every use. Anglers should then perform **ONE** of the following options before going into the next body of water:

OPTION 1

Submerge waders and gear in a large tub filled with a mixture of 6 ounces per gallon quaternary ammonia-based institutional cleaner (such as Super HDQ Neutral) and water for at least 10 minutes, scrubbing debris from the gear, and visually inspecting the gear for aquatic organisms before rinsing. Follow all precautionary label instructions! Rinse water must be from a source free of invasive species (to avoid re-infection), and the chemical bath must be properly disposed of, away from the water body.



OPTION 2

Spray or soak waders and gear with 140° Fahrenheit water for at least 10 minutes.

OPTION 3

Dry your waders and equipment completely for a minimum of 10 days in between each use (remember that invasive species can survive several days out of water).

OPTION 4

Place waders and boots in a freezer overnight between use.

Thank you for protecting Colorado's fisheries from the harmful impacts of invasive species!

You Can Make a Difference!

You can help stop the spread of Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) in Colorado and the West! Before entering and when leaving any waters always:

Clean: Remove all plants, animals, and mud. Thoroughly wash everything: boats, trailers, vehicle hitches, and motors. Aquatic plant fragments and animals can hide in mud and survive many days out of water. Be sure to clean all fishing equipment including waders and boots.

Drain: Completely drain every space or item that could hold water, including live wells, bait containers, ballast and bilge tanks, and engine cooling systems. Leave the bilge plug out during transport and any time the watercraft is not on the water.

Dry: Allow sufficient time for boats and equipment to dry completely before launching in other waters.

Dispose: Properly dispose unused live bait into trash containers, not into the water. Properly dispose of aquarium or classroom animals or plants, do not place them in any body of water or natural setting.

Report: If you find anything that you think is an invasive species on your boat or in a water body, report it to the CPW by calling (303) 291-7295 or emailing Invasive.Species@state.co.us.

For more information on invasive species, please visit:

- <http://www.westernais.org>
- <https://stopaquatic hitchhikers.org/>
- <http://www.habitattitude.net>
- <http://www.playcleango.org>
- <http://www.dontmovefirewood.org>

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5/2022 – 10,000

