

Wyoming Game and Fish Department Administrative Dreissenid Mussel Rapid Response Plan

Kevin Gelwicks, Assistant Fisheries Management Coordinator
Beth Bear, Aquatic Assessment Crew Supervisor

Wyoming Game and Fish Department, 1212 S. Adams Street, Laramie, WY 82070

SUMMARY

Zebra and quagga (dreissenid) mussels are aquatic invasive species that have spread to most of the lower 48 United States. Wyoming is one of the few states where these invasive mussels have not been detected, but recent detections in neighboring states have heightened concerns about their introduction. As a result, dreissenid mussel rapid response plans have been developed for the 23 highest risk waters in Wyoming. These plans detail how invasive mussels would be contained in each water after initial detection. This administrative rapid response plan is a companion to individual water rapid response plans, providing an overview of the existing Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program in Wyoming, which focuses on keeping invasive mussels and other AIS out of the state. This plan also details the existing AIS regulations and potential changes needed if dreissenid mussels were detected in Wyoming. This document then gives an overview of individual water rapid response plans and outlines how dreissenid mussels would be detected and confirmed through sampling and laboratory testing. Next, this plan details the steps that should be followed after an initial detection of dreissenid mussels, including a communication plan, follow-up sampling, implementation of the water-specific rapid response plan, personnel hiring and equipment acquisition, National Environmental Policy Act compliance and an overview of what a local boater program may entail. Finally, this plan gives an overview of the statewide communication plan needed to disseminate information about a dreissenid mussel detection to the public. In concert with the individual water plans, this plan provides resource managers with a process by which they can respond quickly and effectively to contain a dreissenid mussel detection in a Wyoming water.