

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: November 20, 2008

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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CROWLEY LAKE ACCESS ROADS CLOSED TO BOATS TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE MUSSELS

In a continuing effort to help prevent the spread of invasive mussels into Crowley Lake that could severely impact the fishery and damage water conveyance systems, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) is closing access roads to stop boats from being launched into the reservoir this fall and winter. With Crowley Lake Fish Camp and fishing season closed until next spring, the LADWP has blocked vehicle passage in the Convict Creek, Greenbanks, North Landing and Layton Springs areas of Crowley.

Recreationists who wish to access the shoreline for hunting and other activities can continue to do so by parking their vehicles and walking to the lake. The LADWP requests the public's help in its efforts to keep Crowley Lake free of mussels and stop resource damage by parking all vehicles behind the barriers and adhering to the no boat launching regulations so that more restrictive controls do not have to be implemented. The LADWP will continue to explore other methods of controlling potential quagga mussel contamination while trying to minimize impacts to the recreational public. Any suggestions the public may have to accomplish this may be sent to the following:

LADWP
c/o Water Resource Section
300 Mandich Street
Bishop CA 93514
info@ladwp.com

Last spring the LADWP began a mandatory program to inspect all boats before allowing them to be launched on Crowley Lake. LADWP and Crowley Lake Fish Camp staff inspected almost 2,000 boats during the 2008 fishing season, and only a small percentage were turned away because they showed signs of contamination with invasive mussels. Boat launching was only permitted through the main gate at South Landing, and not allowed anywhere else along the shoreline. LADWP officials expect to implement a similar inspection program next year.

Invasive mussels, which include quagga and zebra mussels, are small shellfish that were first introduced into the Great Lakes area in 1988 by cargo ships traveling from Eastern Europe. They quickly spread to 12 states due to their ability to survive severe conditions and reproduce rapidly. They have since spread through the Metropolitan Water District's Colorado River Aqueduct to reservoirs in Southern California. Monitoring sites at LADWP facilities have tested negative for mussels.

Quagga mussels produce millions of offspring that attach to almost any surface, coating it in thick mats, and can change lakeside beach surfaces from sand to sharp mussel shells. They can attach to boat hulls and clog motors, water inlets and outlets, and power plants, causing millions of dollars in damage. These invasive mussels are capable of filtering up to a liter of water a day per individual, removing organisms that serve as a base of the food chain for fish and other organisms. This abrupt change in nutrient flow can result in the devastation of important fisheries and the poisoning of waterfowl.

To help prevent the spread of invasive mussels into other Eastern Sierra waters, the LADWP is also working to develop partnerships with other land management agencies, business operators, boaters and recreational enthusiasts to inspect boats and turn away those that show signs of infestation. Partnerships with the Forest Service and its concessionaires that manage many lakes in the area, the Bureau of Land Management, Southern California Edison, Mono County, Inyo County, the City of Bishop, Town of Mammoth Lakes, the Department of Fish and Game, and local businesses, as well as boaters and fishermen will be essential to help keep these aquatic invaders out.

Boaters can take the following actions to help prevent the further spread of invasive mussels:

- Inspect boats and trailers thoroughly, and remove any trash, mussels or aquatic weeds before leaving any water body.
- Mussels and other items removed from the boat should be properly disposed of in a trash container.
- Drain water from the motor, live-well, bilge and transom wells and any other water from the boat and equipment before leaving any water body.
- Wash boats, trailers and equipment thoroughly with a pressurized power sprayer and hot water.
- Rinse live-wells, bilge and cooling systems with hot water.
- Dry boats, motors, trailers and equipment thoroughly in the hot sun for at least two weeks before using them again.

Additional information can be obtained at the following websites:

www.LADWP.com/mussels

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/invasives/quaggamusel>

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