

Protection of Lake Diefenbaker from Zebra Mussels

Would you be interested in helping prevent the invasive zebra mussel? Please read below to determine your answer. If so, please advise Dianne Hahn, Administrator at rvbeaverflat@gmail.com or 306-741-3362. We appreciate any help that could be provided in this regard as this is a serious concern.

As you may be aware, the zebra mussel is an invasive mussel that is capable of causing extensive damage. This damage could include the loss of water from the river to property owners within the Resort Village, invasion of the beach with sharp shells or algae weeds along with several other things. Please see more detail at the end of this information document.

The Resort Village of Beaver Flat is a member of PARCS (Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan). PARCS has been working diligently on preventing the invasion of zebra mussels in Saskatchewan. Lake Diefenbaker has been referred to as “ground zero” for a potential mussel infestation in Saskatchewan. Late last summer there were two watercraft in Saskatchewan which had been infected with zebra mussels and which were intercepted just as each was about to launch into a Saskatchewan lake. It was only by sheer luck that each boat was caught and required to undergo decontamination. One of these boats was at Lake Diefenbaker. Zebra mussels have been in Manitoba and Montana, both bordering Saskatchewan. The Provincial Government is implementing two fixed inspection stations, however, neither of these are in a location that will provide the much needed protection for Lake Diefenbaker. PARCS has struck a Committee to pursue plans to protect Lake Diefenbaker. Part of their plans are to encourage communities to have **Citizens on Patrol**. We are currently looking for individuals who would be willing to take some time over the watercraft season to do this. During the time period that you volunteer you will:

- Allow your cell phone number to be posted on a sign
- Coordinate with other Citizens on Patrol so that one of them is in the community most of the time
- Carry the phone number of the inspector at the nearest inspection marina
- Approach persons with an out-of-province watercraft and ask where they are from, where was the watercraft in the water the last time, and how long ago the watercraft was in the water.
- There will be target areas for the answers to these questions and should any of the targets be met, the watercraft owner will be asked to take the boat to the nearest inspection marina. You would then need to call the inspector and advise you are sending a watercraft to them for inspection. If need be, you can also involve TIPS.

Information on Zebra Mussels:

Listed below is just *some* information on zebra mussels and the damage they can cause.

- Zebra and quagga mussels filter water to the point where food sources such as plankton are removed, altering food webs. This also causes clearer water, allowing sunlight to penetrate deeper, increasing growth of aquatic vegetation, including algae.
- Impact fish and wildlife by increasing toxic algae blooms.
- Large colonies affect spawning areas, potentially impacting the survival of fish eggs.
- Affects recreational activities by cutting swimmers feet as a result of their sharp shell.
- Zebra and quagga mussels are capable of heavily colonizing hard and soft surfaces, including docks, boats, break walls and beaches. These colonizations are also responsible for clogging intake structures in water pumps and hoses.

What Can You Do Personally to Help Prevent Spread?

- Inspect your own watercraft, trailer and equipment after each use. Remove all plants, animals and mud before moving to a new water body.
- Drain water from motor, live well, bilge and transom wells while on land.
- Rinse all recreational equipment with high pressure (>250 psi), hot water (50°C / 122°F) OR let it dry in the sun for at least 5 days.
- Encourage others to do the same.
- If you find zebra mussels or other invasive species, please contact the TIPS line at 1-800-667-7561