



New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

Susana Martinez
Governor

Tod Stevenson
Director

John H. Bemis
Cabinet Secretary

**New Mexico
Game & Fish**



Tommy Mutz
Division Director

**New Mexico
State Parks**



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New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Media contact: Marty Frentzel, (505) 476-8013
Public contact: (505) 476-8000
Martin.frentzel@state.nm.us

New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
Media contact: Jodi McGinnis Porter (505) 476-3227
Public contact: (505) 476-3200
Jodi.Porter@state.nm.us

POSSIBLE INFESTATION CLOSES SUMNER LAKE TO BOATING

FORT SUMNER – New Mexico State Parks Division and the Department of Game and Fish announce that Sumner Lake will be closed to boating temporarily due to a test result indicating the potential presence of Quagga mussel veligers, or larva, during routine tests of Sumner Lake's water.

The positive test result was initially made by the Bureau of Reclamation, and confirmed by Pisces Molecular, a testing firm in Colorado. Sumner Lake State Park will remain open for camping and other recreational activities.

"We are at critical point with invasive species and we have to take this drastic action of closing Sumner Lake, because these destructive mussels can destroy drinking water infrastructure downstream," said Tommy Mutz, State Parks Director. "We can't emphasize enough the serious irreversible environmental damage invasive species can do to our natural habitats."

"This temporary closure to boating will allow us to thoroughly evaluate the organisms that have been found, and also protect our natural resources," said Tod Stevenson, director of the Department of Game and Fish. "We can't allow boats to leave the lake and risk spreading these Aquatic Nuisance Species to other state lakes,"

Quagga mussels are small invertebrates that rapidly reproduce and can cause enormous problems for farmers, boaters, municipalities or any other organization that distributes or uses water. The mussels quickly clog pipes, pumps, and water-cooling intake valves on engines.

Zebra and quagga mussels and commonly called aquatic invasive species. They have been found in water bodies in states adjacent to New Mexico. In addition to closing Sumner Lake, employees of both agencies will be looking for these small mussels on boats attempting to enter other lakes across the state.

These devastating invasive species are carried from place to place on boat trailers and boats. They are highly successful in part because they attach to any hard surface and can live out of water for weeks at a time. Dealing with a water body infested with aquatic invasive species entails significant costs. Other states have spent tens of millions of dollars in attempts to control aquatic invasive species.

Aquatic Invasive Species prevention and control is authorized in accordance with the Aquatic Invasive Species Control Act of New Mexico and federal laws including the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 and Control Act of 1990.

The New Mexico State Parks Division reminds all boaters to Clean, Drain, and Dry their boat each and every time! For more information call 888-NMPARKS or visit NMPARKS.com.