

**Recommendations to prevent the introduction of zebra/quagga mussels into the Rio Grande basin.
Prepared by: Bob Pitman & Dave Britton**

- Enhance outreach & education using signs, billboards, TV messages, newspaper, articles in *New Mexico Wildlife* and the Colorado Division of Wildlife *Outdoor Journal*, weekly outdoor shows, newsletters.
- Develop a screening-filtering system for boats launching at high risk waters such as Navajo. Restrict launching to times when monitors are able to assess risk and prevent risky vessels from launching. Will need to hire temporary workers during peak times. Close or restrict access to remote launches where vessels have no opportunity for inspection or washing.
- Establish boat washing facilities similar to NPS at Lake Mead & Powell operated and maintained by private concessionaires. All launch ramps at Navajo or establish a check-point with washing station west of Navajo.
- Ensure state legislation, regulations making the movement of contaminated vessels illegal and that this is the responsibility of the boat owner. Add instructions to all registered boat owners when renewing registration and add it to information to angler.
- ENFORCE the legislation and launching restriction/constriction. Work with users to accept this extra layer of boater responsibility to protect their waters and resources. Enforce these regulations with legislatively approved penalties.
- Educate state law enforcement officers, game wardens and boating safety officers, state park law enforcement officers, and other LE ASAP using the training developed and readily available by Bill Zook and Wen Baldwin.
 - Inspection training for all LE and marina operators so they know where to look and what to look for to determine if a vessel is clean and needs decontamination. This is important for LE so that they have the required “probable cause” knowledge.
 - Decontamination training. Provides the necessary skills & knowledge so that boats sent for cleaning by “approved” staff have an acceptable level of decontamination. Some boats which have been cleaned were later found to still have mussels attached in hard to reach locations.
- Establish a continuous monitoring program to regularly collect plankton samples for PCR analysis at BOR lab or, in early 08, at any genetic lab with costs at about \$20/sample. Presently the cost is over \$200/sample.
- Develop long-term funding capabilities using the state ANS Management Plan as a central point to build and support partnerships which are effective in preventing spread into the basin.
- Utilize the 100th Meridian Initiative as a central point of coordination, not only for basin-wide prevention efforts, but also for coordination with other river basin teams and the Initiative as a whole.

This team will have to increase preventions through time in concert with the increasing risks surrounding the basin. This is not a one-time meeting with short-term commitments of time but will have to be long-term to protect resources, users and prevent an invasion.