

ONOTA LAKE ZEBRA MUSSEL PLANS

ONOTA LAKE ZEBRA MUSSEL PREVENTION ACTION PLAN FOR 2010 AND BEYOND

A special committee of LOPA formed at the Emergency Meeting of the Board of Directors on August 1, 2009 has met and developed the following recommendations for City/State/LOPA implementation for the 2010 season and beyond.

1. Boat Washing Station(s)

The ideal solution would be to have a manned, self-contained high temperature/pressure boat and equipment washing station located at or near the boat launch ramp. This option should be explored for the long run but it is questionable whether it is feasible for implementation by next April. Therefore two other alternates are to be investigated. One is to create an arrangement with one or more local car wash facilities to modify (if necessary) one bay to wash boats to DCR criteria and certify their "cleanliness". The other is probably the most practical solution and that is to work out an arrangement with Maces Marine on Valentine Road to provide certifiable boat washes at his facility. The committee intends to renew talks with Charlie Mace to structure such an arrangement for LOPA/City consideration. We must be able to direct boaters to a certified wash station for the "self-certification" process to work

2. Education/Public Relations

We recommend an enhanced education and public relations effort to raise the awareness of the general public about the Zebra Mussel threat to our lake(s). This should be a county wide effort and we believe should be centered around a TV and/or U-Tube public information video which is short and to the point. It is also recommended that a new kiosk which includes the video be installed at critical launch ramps. The video should also be made available on the LOPA, LAPA-West and City websites. Also we recommend an outdoor advertising campaign (Billboard?) to reach people that are not really interested -- maybe a "gripping" picture of zebra mussels along with a "wash your boating equipment" message. Something to change the public mindset about protecting our lakes.

3. Launch Ramp Monitoring/Control

Although full time launch ramp monitoring with monitors possessing adequate enforcement powers would be the best way to prevent potentially infected boats from being launched, we recognize that it is probably not financially feasible -- nor would it deal with smaller boats being launched at places other than state ramps. This last point is why the Education/PR recommendation is so crucial to overall success. For state ramps it is recommended that a robust invasives monitoring program be put in place by DCR, possibly augmented at critical times (fishing derbies, Live-on-the-lake, etc) by LOPA Volunteers. At times the ramp is not monitored, we recommend establishment of a "quasi" open ramp arrangement whereby the boat launcher would have to get out of his tow vehicle and unhook a rope or chain from a post containing unmistakable signage requiring completion of the self-certification process prior to launching. The clip end of the rope would include a sign requiring replacement of the rope after launch. We also need to do whatever it takes to create the police powers to "boot" any trailer and tow vehicle not displaying the self-certification certificate on their windshield.

4. Update the Self-Certification Form

As has already been recommended to the state DFG by Bob Race in his August 26th comments on the state's Interim Zebra Mussel Action Plan, we recommend revision and simplification of the form for use at boat ramps. Major changes are to list all currently known surrounding-area water bodies that have Zebra Mussels along with a couple of blank lines and then just require a yes or no as to exposure to the listed bodies in the last 30 days. Then if the answer is yes, go to the list of decontamination procedure options (including the

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above-recommended boat wash) and require the printing of the owners name and his signature certifying which option he has completed.

5. Augment Permitting on Fishing Tournaments

We recommend that the DFG require that a fishing club requesting a permit for a fishing derby certify that the club has not and/or will not sponsor a derby at any infested waters for the 30 days prior to the requested derby. Also have the club certify that none of their member boats will have been in infested waters for 30 days prior to the scheduled derby or will have subsequently been decontaminated in accordance with DCR procedures if they have been (in accordance with the self-certification process).

RWR 10/01/09

Rev 1 – 10/12/09

Rev 2 – 10/14/09

Rev 3 – 10/29/09

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN UPON FINDING OF ZEBRA MUSSELS IN ONOTA LAKE.

1. Notification

Immediately upon the finding, notify DCR to obtain verification of the finding.

2. Ramp Closure

Immediately upon verification by DCR that indeed Zebra Mussels are in Onota Lake, the Harbormaster should close the boat ramp to all traffic except when an authorized monitor is present.

3. Assessment

Immediately request and obtain the services of DCR/contractor to survey the lake to determine the extent and location of Zebra Mussels throughout the lake.

4. Eradication

On the basis of prearranged contract with a local SCUBA dive team through Action Sports, Inc., institute removal of the mussels from identified areas of the lake in a last ditch attempt to save the lake.

5. Drawdown

Unless the mussel infestation is in waters deeper than five feet, immediately ask the Conservation Commission to issue an emergency order of conditions to commence a deep (six foot) drawdown.

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