

# NW MONTANA

## Whitefish to tweak invasive species regulations

By **LYNNETTE HINTZE**  
Daily Inter Lake

The Whitefish City Council turns its attention to aquatic invasive species tonight with two agenda items.

The first is a public hearing to consider an ordinance that amends city regulations regarding aquatic invasive species prevention to align with the regulations and protocol of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Whitefish adopted its aquatic invasive species ordinance in April and began performing inspections and Whitefish

State Park and City Beach on May 1, requesting decontamination of high-risk boats. After the city began its program, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks received calls from boaters concerns about the city's decontamination protocol and the fee Whitefish Lake Institute was charging boaters for use of its decontamination station.

Whitefish Lake Institute is no longer charging for decontamination, though a donation is optional, City Manager Adam Hammatt said in his report to the council. The state agency asked Whitefish

to amend its AIS ordinance to ensure it's consistent with state law and regulations.

The proposed amendments to the city's ordinance will clarify definitions, as well as clarify that high-risk vessels are prohibited from launching in Whitefish Lake without decontamination when decontamination is required by a city or state inspector.

Whitefish and the state also have negotiated a vessel inspection station operation agreement in order to comply with the Montana Invasive Species Act. The council will consider passing a resolution approving

the terms of that agreement, which allows the city to operate its inspection stations in compliance with written protocols established by the city and Whitefish Lake Institute. The agreement also establishes protocols and procedures to be followed in the event a mussel-fouled vessel is discovered at an inspection station.

**IN OTHER** business, the council will hold a public hearing to consider a resolution approving the terms of a public recreational trail easement with Winter Sports Inc.

During the process of nego-

tiating the Haskill Basin conservation and trail easements, the city approached Winter Sports — the parent company of Whitefish Mountain Resort — about obtaining an easement on Winter Sports' property for a trailhead and connector trail providing summer and winter access to the portion of the Whitefish Trail to be located on F.H. Stoltz Land & Lumber Co.'s property.

The meeting begins at 7:10 p.m. at Whitefish City Hall.

Features editor Lynnette Hintze may be reached at 758-4421 or [lhintze@dailyinterlake.com](mailto:lhintze@dailyinterlake.com).