

OUR LAKE OUR FUTURE

Whitefish Lake | Aquatic Invasive Species
Management Program

NEW INSPECTION & DECONTAMINATION PROGRAM FOR WHITEFISH LAKE

In 2016, zebra mussels were found in Montana waters east of the Continental Divide. The rapid spread of these mussels in U.S. water bodies shows how profoundly Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) can alter the environment. Human health, ecosystems, recreation, industry, tourism, and the economy are all impacted by the presence of zebra mussels. Watercraft inspections aid in intercepting vessels and equipment that have the potential to spread AIS, and allow for decontamination, if necessary, before launching into Whitefish Lake.

State of Montana

All motorized or non-motorized watercraft users **MUST** stop at all watercraft inspection stations throughout Montana. Watercraft users can be cited for driving past an inspections station, and can be charged with a felony and fined up to \$5000 for knowingly or purposely attempting to introduce AIS into Montana waters.

City of Whitefish

INSPECTIONS: All watercraft *not* sealed by a previous state or provincial inspection station **MUST** be inspected prior to launching in Whitefish Lake. Users launching without an inspection will be charged with a misdemeanor or issued a municipal infraction. There is no fee for inspections. Watercraft users exiting Whitefish Lake can request an **exit seal** from the watercraft inspectors. With an intact seal, watercraft can re-launch in Whitefish Lake without the need for another inspection or decontamination. If AIS are found on a watercraft, the watercraft will be quarantined until Montana, Fish, Wildlife & Parks can respond to the issue. *Because this is our first year with mandatory inspections, we appreciate your patience as we strive to make the process as convenient as possible!*

DECONTAMINATION: The following watercraft must be decontaminated prior to launching in Whitefish Lake whether or not you have been inspected at another inspection station (there is no fee for decontamination, but donations to support the program are accepted):

- Those with ballast tanks or bags that have not been out of water for 30 days
- Those with standing water
- Those that have been in a mussel infested waterway in the last 30 days
- Those that inspectors deem too dirty to inspect

COMMERCIAL HAULERS: Watercraft with proof that they have been stored for 120 days or longer are exempt from decontamination.

Whitefish City Beach Watercraft Inspection Station

May	5:00 AM – 9:00 PM
June & July	5:00 AM – 10:00 PM
August	5:00 AM – 9:00 PM
September	6:00 AM – 9:00 PM

Whitefish Lake State Park Watercraft Inspection Station

May – September	7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
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Both boat ramps will be chained/gated after staffed watercraft inspection hours. Motorized watercraft may not launch before or after staffed inspection hours. Watercraft users will be able to exit the lake after staffed watercraft inspection hours by removing and replacing the chain or opening and closing the gate.

Whitefish Decontamination Station

May 1- June 15	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
June 16 – August 15	9:00 AM – 8:00 PM
August 16 – Sept 30	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Located at Whitefish Marine & Powersports
6191 U.S. Hwy 93 just south of JP Road

Non-Motorized Hand-Launched Watercraft Sticker

Non-motorized watercraft such as kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards may launch at City Beach and Whitefish Lake State Park throughout the year after completing the optional **Online AIS Self-Certification Program** and demonstrating via a test that they have acquired the appropriate knowledge

Off Season (October 1 – April 30)

The **City Beach** and **Whitefish Lake State Park** boat ramps will be chained/gated and locked in the off season. All motorized and non-motorized watercraft users may launch in the off season by demonstrating via the **Online AIS Self-Certification Program** they have acquired the appropriate knowledge. Users who successfully pass the program test will be issued a certificate and lock code to enter and exit the boat ramps at City Beach and Whitefish Lake State Park. Find the Online AIS Certification Program at www.cityofwhitefish.org or www.whitefishlake.org.

Please see reverse for information on proper care of your watercraft



CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY YOUR WATERCRAFT

CLEAN.

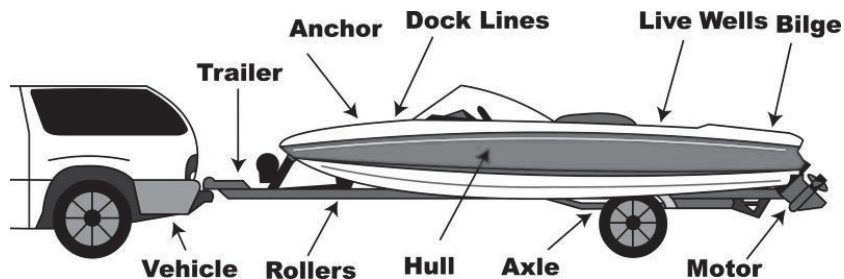
- Completely remove all mud, water, and vegetation before leaving the access area.
- Inspect your boat, trailer, and all gear. Pay attention to crevices and hidden areas.
- Remove all vegetation (by hand or sprayer).
- Remove all mud (use a pressurized power sprayer, found at most do-it-yourself car washes). The hot water kills organisms and the pressure removes mud and vegetation. There is no need to use chemicals or soap.
- Dispose of debris in trash or on dry land away from water or ramp.
- Dispose of all plants and animals away from lakes or rivers.

DRAIN.

- Drain all water from watercraft and equipment at the waterbody before leaving.
- Drain or remove water from boat, bilge, ballast tanks, live well, engine, internal compartments, and bait buckets by removing drain plugs before leaving the access area. Drain plugs must remain off for inspection.
- If you have an outboard engine, lower the outdrive on the engine to release any residual water.

DRY.

- Aquatic invaders can survive only in water and wet areas. Dry your watercraft and fishing equipment thoroughly; this will help kill most invasive species. The longer you keep your watercraft, trailer, waders, and other equipment outside in the hot sun between trips, the better.



Report suspected AIS: If you see a boat or trailer with aquatic organisms attached to it, call TIP-MONT (406) 847-6668 immediately.

The Whitefish Lake Aquatic Invasive Species Management Program is made possible by the following partners:

City of Whitefish
Department of Natural Resources & Conservation
Flathead Chapter Trout Unlimited
Flathead Conservation District
Joe & Cindy Gregory Family
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Montana State Parks
The Lodge at Whitefish Lake
Whitefish Community Foundation
Whitefish County Water & Sewer District
Whitefish Lake Institute
Whitefish Marine & Powersports

Program information on reverse side