

NWCG Logistics/Equipment Management Committee (LMC)

Equipment Bulletin: 26-001

July 20, 2026



To: Complex Incident Management Teams (CIMT), Resource Advisors (READ)

From: Nate Hesse, Chair, NWCG Equipment Technology Subcommittee (ETSC)

Subject: Aquatic Invasive Species — Seasonal Reminder for Mussels



Issue: Aquatic invasive mussels continue to be a problem. These invasive bivalves are highly efficient filter feeders and form dense colonies. They consume large quantities of aquatic plants and animals that native species and sport fish depend on. Their colonization of surfaces impedes water flow, clogs pipes, fouls watercraft motors, and necessitates ongoing, costly removal to maintain operational function. These costs result in economic impacts to water conveyances, energy production, recreation, agriculture, and ultimately the public. Adult mussels spawn multiple times each year and have the potential to produce thousands of planktonic offspring. **They can easily be transported to new waters on fire equipment if equipment is not properly decontaminated.** See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CbzDUymM34>.

Background: In October 2024, Golden Mussels were discovered in North America for the first time in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and O'Neill Forebay (Merced County) in California. They are now found in other locations. See <https://wildlife.ca.gov/News/Archive/cdfw-confirms-northernmost-detection-of-golden-mussel-in-port-of-west-sacramento>.

Quagga mussels were recently observed in Oregon in the Prineville Reservoir. See https://www.centraloregondaily.com/news/prineville/quagga-mussel-prineville-reservoir-oregon/article_f014e80c-98a8-4037-ac4f-8dc4123b19bf.html.

Actions For 2026 Fire Season:

1. Follow decontamination processes in *Guide to Preventing Aquatic Invasive Species Transport by Wildland Fire Operations*, PMS 444. See www.nwcg.gov/publications/pms444.
2. If you find mussels, contact Lead READ with photos and location information as soon as possible. Take clear, close-up photos that include something (such as a pencil or hand) to show size. Report to local Fish and Wildlife Departments.
3. Within California: Lead READs will report sighting to the CDFW Invasive Species Program at <https://arcs.is/10D4G8>, invasives@wildlife.ca.gov, or (866) 440-9530.

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