

Aquatic Invasive Species District Newsletter



Know the Natives: Yellow Pond-lily

Pictured above is Yellow Pond-lily, an aquatic plant native to Montana and common within Missoula County. This lily can be identified by its beautiful yellow flower and large oval/heart shaped leaf. It is found in slow moving or stagnant water bodies growing in depths reaching up to 16 feet. You can learn more about this species with iNaturalist, Montana Field Guide, or the USDA Plant Data Base.

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Watercraft Inspection Station Update June 2025:

Clearwater Junction Station

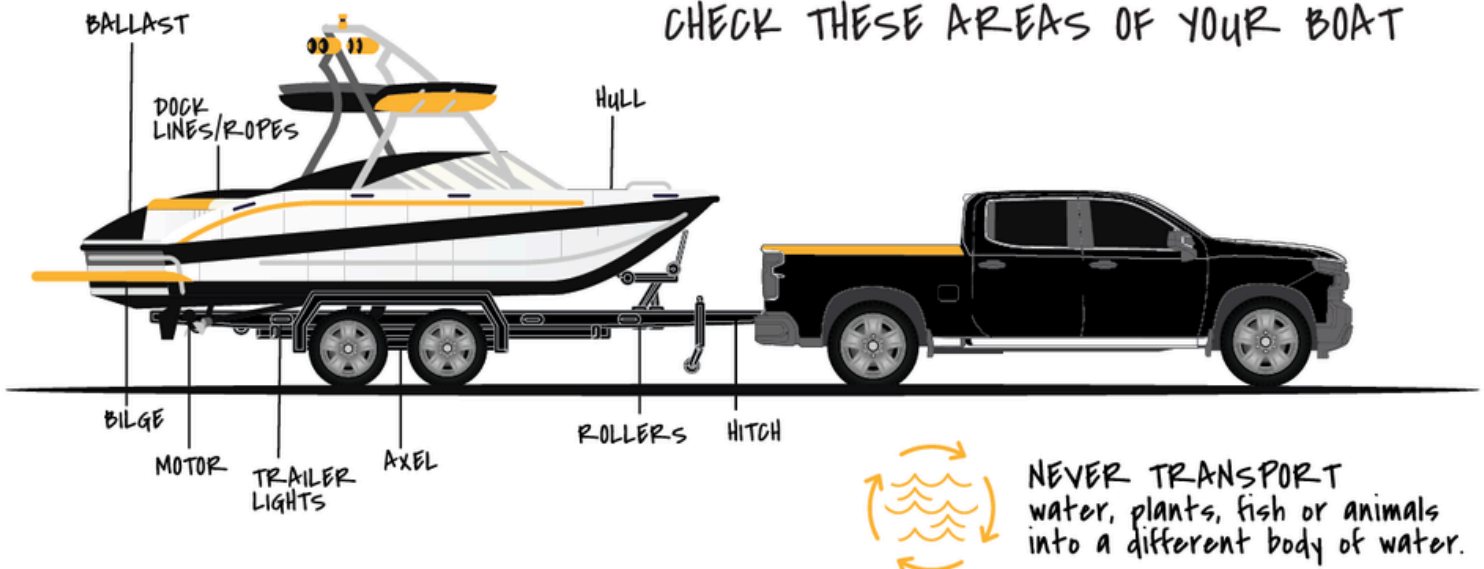
- 6,440 watercrafts were inspected throughout the month of June
- 116 standing water decontaminations
- 12 plant decontaminations
- 141 total decontaminations
- 13471 total inspections at Clearwater in 2025

Montana Inspection Stations

- 50,286 inspections conducted across Montana
- 24 mussel fouled boats intercepted across Montana

CLEAN.DRAIN.DRY.

CHECK THESE AREAS OF YOUR BOAT



Ornamental to Invasive: Monitoring Fragrant Water-lily

Fragrant water-lily (FWL) is a perennial, aquatic lily native to Eastern North American but invasive in the Western United States. FWL has been documented within Missoula County since the early 1900s, however, there is still much to learn about how this lily impacts native ecosystems once it becomes established.

Since 2019, Missoula County has been researching the impacts of FWL on native plant communities and water quality to better understand the threat it poses to our waters and create treatment/control plans for infected water bodies within the Missoula County.



In 2019, the aquatic invasive species district created monitoring plots (defined areas of study), within several of the lakes in the Clearwater Chain of Lakes. These plots are monitored every month from April through October for changes in plant community composition and to track the potential expansion of FWL within the native communities.



To accomplish this monitoring, the AIS team takes out the yellow Winona canoe and a couple GoPro cameras. Our crews paddle to each subplot to take overhead photos of the emergent foliage as well as the submerged plants. These photos are then compared using grid-point intercept software to quantify the change in abundance of these aquatic plant species over time.



News from Outside of Montana: Golden Mussels in California

Originally native to areas in Southeast Asia, the Golden Mussel was first found in the U.S. in October of 2024 in San Joaquin County, California. Golden mussels are like Quagga and Zebra mussels in impact and appearance. They are an aquatic invasive species that pose a great immediate threat to North American waters. Their introduction was likely caused through international trade and shipping traffic.

According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Golden Mussels can out compete native species for resources and contribute to the growth of fish-killing algal blooms. They can also clog water-based infrastructure like irrigation lines and hydroelectric systems, causing a huge increase of maintenance and repair costs. In an attempt to control the spread and mitigate long-term costs associated with their invasion, there may be increased inspections, management fees, and in extreme cases, waterbody closures within CA.

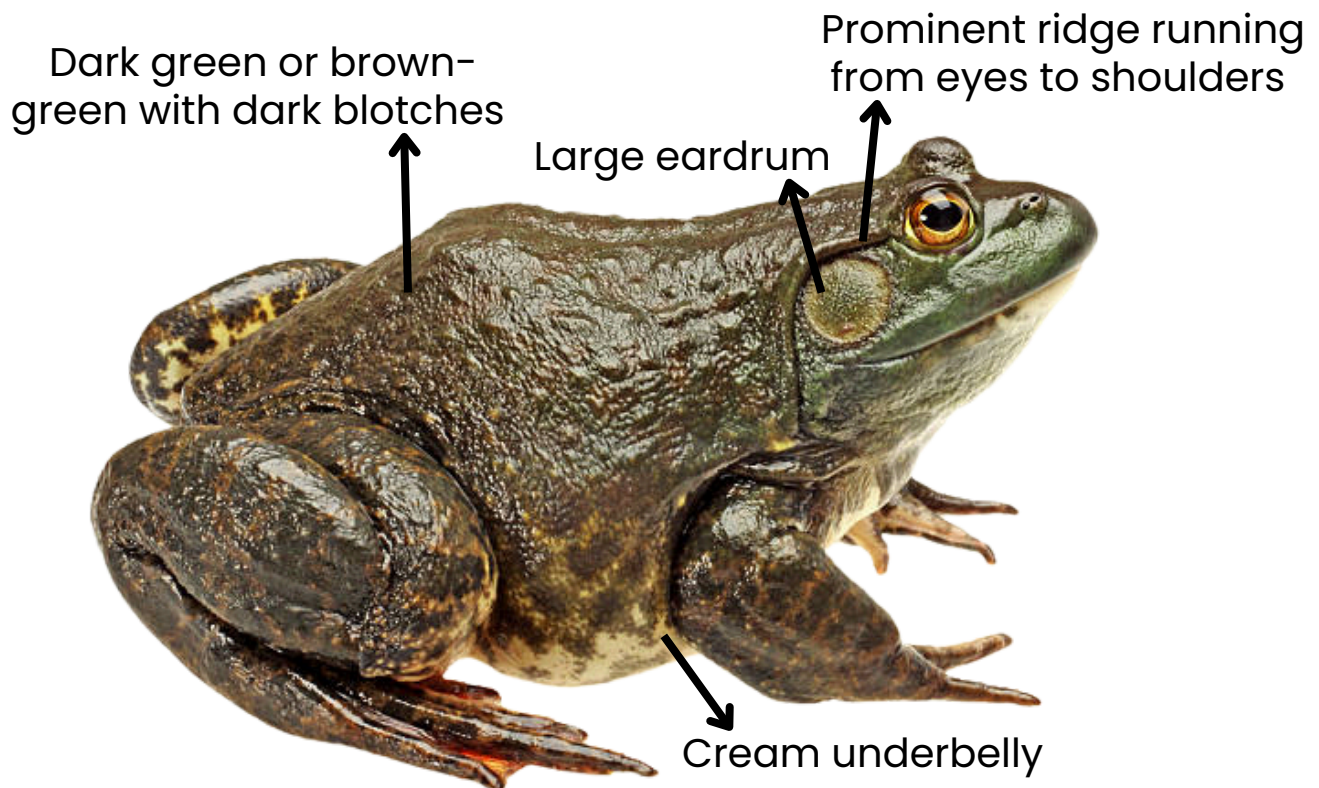


The red dots on the map above represent Golden Mussels found in CA in the last 10 months. California is attempting to slow and control the spread of Golden Mussels by increasing public outreach and monitoring efforts, containing infested waters, and protecting uninfested waters.

The Clean, Drain, Dry message is being spread across the state via social media, radio, commercials, billboards, and newspapers. California AIS teams hope to reach a wide audience with a consistent and actionable message. Everyone can help prevent the spread of AIS!

INVASIVE SPECIES HIGHLIGHT

American Bullfrog



Impacts:

- American bullfrogs are able to eat anything that they can fit into their mouths including fish, native amphibians, turtles, ducklings, snakes, and smaller individuals of their own species
- Threaten native species through predation and resource competition
- Can carry and spread chytrid fungus to native species

How to help:

- Clean, drain, and dry watercraft and irrigation equipment before each use in other water bodies
- Thoroughly wash and decontaminate equipment and boats
- Report any suspect infestations at 1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6688) or visit <https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/aquatic-invasive-species/report-an-ais>