



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish  
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### **New rules approved to combat aquatic invasive species**

SANTA FE – All boats soon will be subject to inspection and possible decontamination before launching in New Mexico waters under new rules adopted to combat the spread of harmful aquatic invasive species.

The new rules, approved by the State Game Commission at its Jan. 14 meeting, will take effect Feb. 12.

Changes to the AIS rules include:

- Mandatory watercraft inspection required any time an inspection station is set up and in operation.
- Mandatory inspection and, if necessary, decontamination of all out-of-state registered watercraft or watercraft re-entering the state of New Mexico.
- Fourteen-day advance notification of intent to transport watercraft 26 feet long or longer into New Mexico.
- All boaters are required to “pull the plug” and drain watercraft when transporting in New Mexico.
- Implementation of a voluntary watercraft seal program to expedite boater access to a waterbody with limited need for inspection.

The amended rules were sought to help combat the spread of highly destructive aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels, quagga mussels and other aquatic invasive species. New Mexico is one of only six western states that remain free of the invasive mussels, but is surrounded by neighboring states where the mussels are established. Invasive mussels attach to structures and grow quickly, clogging inlet pipes and other equipment. The most effective deterrent to their spread is to clean, drain and dry watercraft after each use.

For more information about the rule changes, watercraft inspection station locations and other news about aquatic invasive species, please visit [www.wildlife.state.nm.us/ais](http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/ais) or [www.facebook.com/aquaticaliens](http://www.facebook.com/aquaticaliens); or contact the department’s aquatic invasive species coordinator, James Dominguez, (505) 476-8163, or [james.dominguez@state.nm.us](mailto:james.dominguez@state.nm.us).

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