

July 10, 2020

**AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES
UPDATE**

Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development reports adult zebra mussels have been found for the first time in Sipiwesk Lake, which is located north of Cross Lake and is part of the Nelson River.

Zebra mussels were first discovered in the South Basin of Lake Winnipeg in 2013. It was expected they would move down the Nelson River naturally, so it was designated an aquatic invasive species (AIS) control zone in 2015 to help prevent the introduction and control the spread of zebra mussels and spiny waterflea.

Adult and veliger zebra mussels were first detected in the Nelson River in August 2019. Last fall, department officials contacted nearby communities and stakeholders to inform them of the discovery of zebra mussels, mostly in the larval stage, in the region.

Zebra mussels can impair community drinking water systems and other industries that use water from affected water bodies. They can contaminate watercraft motors and shorelines. Zebra mussels also negatively affect commercial fishers, lodge operators and local tourism.

The spread of zebra mussels and other AIS is preventable. All surface water users such as boaters, fishers, beach goers and floatplane operators are reminded to do their part when entering and exiting all water bodies in Manitoba. Specific decontamination and bait requirements are in place within AIS control zones. The AIS open-water season checklist is a step-by-step resource that can help surface water-users comply with the Manitoba government's AIS regulation.

Watercraft inspection stations are operating into the middle of fall. It is a legal requirement for all watercraft, which includes canoes, kayaks and jet skis, to stop at watercraft inspection stations when they are open. AIS requirements and set fines for offences are in effect year round.

For more information on invasive species, including the decontamination station schedule for aquatic invasive species, visit www.manitoba.ca/StopAIS.