



Status of Zebra Mussel Expansion Northern Manitoba

We recently received the 2020 monitoring report from the provincial Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Unit who is responsible for coordinating testing and assessing the presence/absence and expansion of Zebra Mussels and other AIS across the Province. Of the 100 water bodies that were sampled, 38 were located in northern Manitoba. The following is a brief synopsis of the results:

- In the NW Region (The Pas/Flin Flon/Snow Lake area) water bodies that were sampled - including, Cedar Lake, Saskatchewan River (The Pas), Cormorant Lake, Lake Athapap, Iskwasum and Wekusko Falls, showed no evidence of Zebra Mussels. This is very good news, however, sampling in Cedar Lake, confirmed the presence of Spiny Waterflea, an invasive zooplankton (a tiny animal species) that forms large, jelly-like masses that can spread to other water bodies on commercial and sport fishing equipment or in standing water in watercraft.
- In the NE Region (Nelson River/Wabowden/Thompson and surrounding areas) extensive sampling confirmed the expansion of Zebra Mussels along the entire length of the Nelson River including Playgreen Lake, Cross Lake, Sipiwesk Lake, Split Lake and downstream of the Limestone Generating Station. Assean Lake, which flows into Clarke Lake just downstream of Split Lake, also tested positive for the presence of zebra mussel larvae (called veligers). The good news is other lakes that were sampled, including Bowden Lake (Wabowden), Paint Lake, Setting Lake and Molson Lake showed no evidence of Zebra Mussels or other AIS.

These results provide important information on the spread of zebra mussels, and other AIS, into our northern waters, and guide the actions of the provincial AIS Unit. In addition, the results are a powerful reminder of the critical importance for owners of watercraft to implement proper AIS prevention measures including Clean – Drain – Dry protocols and ensuring their boat plug is removed when out of the water. And – for a watercraft that has been in a waterbody within a Control Zone, it needs to be properly decontaminated. For more information about what you can do check out:

<https://www.zebramusselprevention.com/clean-drain-dry>

The Provincial summary report that includes results for other areas in Manitoba can be found at:

https://144c3d57-546a-4409-ba72-4128f65e1427.filesusr.com/ugd/9c966d_7aa5f061b5b84f208b4fdefb6b316505.pdf

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