



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

To: Derby/Tournament Director

From: Bill Foreman
Inland Fisheries Division

Subject: **New requirements for tournaments – preventing spread of zebra mussels**

Dear Fishing Tournament Director,

Non-native and invasive zebra mussels were found in both Lake Lillinonah and Lake Zoar in October 2010. Prior to this time, zebra mussels had only been known to occur in Connecticut at East and West Twin Lakes in Salisbury. All these water bodies are popular fishing tournament locations.

The discovery of new zebra mussel locations has led to heightened awareness of the need to prevent the introduction of this highly invasive species into additional water bodies in Connecticut. Fortunately, most water bodies in Connecticut do not have suitable water chemistry to support the establishment of zebra mussel populations. However, certain water bodies that host open water fishing tournaments do have water quality characteristics (sufficient calcium concentrations) that may make them susceptible to colonization by zebra mussels. These waters are:

- Ball Pond
- Batterson Park Pond
- Beseck Lake
- Candlewood Lake
- Hatch Pond
- Lake Housatonic
- Mudge Pond
- Silver Lake
- Squantz Pond
- Lake Wononskopomuc

Beginning this year (2011), there will be several additional requirements for open water fishing tournaments fishing the water bodies susceptible to possible zebra mussel colonization. These requirements are as follows:

- All operators of boats participating in a fishing tournament/derby conducted on CT waters determined to be susceptible to invasion by zebra mussels must certify that their boat has **1)** not been operated in a water body known to contain zebra or quagga mussels in the 15 days prior to this fishing tournament/derby, or **2)** been properly cleaned/decontaminated (see guidelines).

You or a designee are responsible for ensuring that each participating boater has properly certified boat status by having them sign and note which of the above two choices applies to their boat on the "Tournament/Derby Boater "Clean Boat" certification form.

- Additionally, you or a designee must certify for your organization that all boats and trailers used in the tournament/derby have met the “clean boat” requirements.

Enclosed for your information are copies of both certification forms (the *Tournament/Derby Boater “Clean-Boat” Certification Record* and the *Tournament/Derby Certification*). These forms will also be included in the approved permit packets that you receive following permit approval for tournaments being conducted at water bodies susceptible to zebra mussel colonization. These forms will also be available on the DEP website (www.ct.gov/dep/fishing). Both forms must be completed and available for review by DEP staff at the time of the tournament/derby, and copies of the completed forms must be returned to DEP Inland Fisheries within seven days of the event. It is strongly advised that clubs/organizations plan ahead and arrive at launch areas earlier than usual to allow sufficient time to complete the self-certification process. **Failure to fully follow these requirements for self-certification can result in immediate revocation of the permit for the event, and negatively impact status of future permits and permit applications.**

Additionally, clubs/organizations should not plan to fish a water body susceptible to zebra mussel colonization within 10 days following fishing East Twin Lake, Lake Lillinonah and/or Lake Zoar. **DEP will not approve/issue permits for tournaments at a zebra mussel susceptible water body within 10 days following a tournament conducted by the same club/organization at East Twin Lake, Lake Lillinonah and/or Lake Zoar.**

In those few instances where applications have already been submitted for an event on a zebra mussel susceptible water body within ten days of fishing a CT water body containing zebra mussels, we will work with those involved to appropriately reschedule their tournaments.

This year for tournaments held on East Twin Lake, Lake Lillinonah and Lake Zoar, we will also be enclosing in the approved permit packets information on precautions that participants should take (including before leaving the launch) that will help prevent the further spread of zebra mussels.

Your cooperation is appreciated, and will both help prevent the spread of zebra mussels and ensure the long-term future of fishing tournaments in Connecticut. If you have any questions, or would like additional information, please contact me by phone (860-424-3868) or email (William.foreman@ct.gov).

Thank you,

Bill Foreman

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