

ISDA Quagga Mussel Treatment Messaging

On October 3, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) will begin implementing a copper-based treatment to eradicate quagga mussels in the Mid-Snake River area.

Why is treatment needed?

The presence of quagga mussels in the Snake River near Twin Falls has been confirmed by ISDA.

- If nothing were done, quagga mussels would quickly take over waterways. They would irreparably harm water use in Idaho.
- Quagga mussels quickly spread and clog pumps and pipes that deliver water for drinking, energy, agriculture, recreation, and a variety of other uses. Established quagga populations harm fish and wildlife habitat. The mussels also pose a major threat to the Columbia River Basin.
- If not treated, quagga mussels have the potential to cost Idaho hundreds of millions of dollars, especially for irrigators, power users, and recreationalists.
- There is a limited timeframe where a treatment option may be effective. It is essential for treatment to be implemented quickly before water flows increase or a quagga mussel population grows.

What is the treatment?

- Natrix is a copper-based product that is labelled and approved by EPA for these kinds of aquatic applications. Similar copper-based products are used in Idaho and other states for mussel, fish, algae, and plant control.
- ISDA will begin treatment Tuesday, October 3, using a comprehensive strategy. The treatment will occur in two phases over the course of 10 days. The treatment is being applied at a rate that will eradicate mussels but is below the drinking water standard for humans.
- Treatment will begin to dissipate immediately outside of the application area (Twin Falls Dam to Centennial Park). The product is expected to dissipate by 70% within a 16 mile stretch downriver of Centennial Park. Within this 16-mile dissipation area, product will be present in the water for approximately three days after the final treatment application. The treatment is expected to finish on October 13. The ISDA will post the final treatment day on our website and in our stakeholder update email.
- ISDA, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, and USGS will be routinely monitoring the water to evaluate treatment effectiveness and product dissipation.

What is the anticipated impact?

- The treatment application will occur across a six-mile section – less than one percent – of the Snake River and is intended to eradicate quagga mussels at all life stages.
- The treatment is not expected to impact any drinking water sources. The application rate of Natrix at the immediate application site is lower than the drinking water standard. There are no public drinking water intakes near this treatment area of the Snake River.
- The treatment will cause mortality in fish, aquatic plants, and algae in the six-mile reach from the Twin Falls pool above Shoshone Falls downstream to Auger Falls. Fish mortality is expected

to decline rapidly as the treatment dissipates. For more information on fish mortality, contact Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

What can you do to help?

- **Stay off the water** – While the response and treatment are implemented, access to the Mid-Snake River from Twin Falls Dam to Niagara Falls is CLOSED. To minimize any exposure to the treatment and to prevent the movement of mussel larvae, any persons, watercraft, pets, decoys, and fishing tackle are temporarily prohibited from accessing the water.
- For more treatment and current closure information, visit idaho.gov/quagga.