



## Colville Confederated Tribes Fish and Wildlife Department



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### **TRIBE RECEIVES FUNDING TO PROTECT UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER FROM INVASIVE SPECIES**

*(Nespelem, Wash. April 15, 2020)* – The potential of an invasion of quagga and zebra mussels in Lake Roosevelt and Rufus Woods could be a reality but groups who manage these large bodies of water have partnered to monitor and protect the upper Columbia River Basin from these invasive species.

The Colville Confederated Tribes (CCT) has partnered with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Lake Roosevelt National Park Service (NPS) to expand the capabilities of the tribe to monitor and remove aquatic invasive mussels.

“The tribe has received approximately \$260,000 from BOR and NPS that will be used over the next four years to implement a monitoring program at access sites along Lake Roosevelt and Rufus Woods reservoirs,” said Holly McLellan, fisheries biologist for the Colville Tribe. “We have identified ten additional sites that may be vulnerable to mussel infestation if they arrive in our waters. Our staff will monitor these sites from March to October.”

The tribes’ data will be provided to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Aquatic Invasive Species Program who monitor sites throughout the Columbia River watershed. The new sites in the upper Columbia River will be added to the 19 that WDFW and the Spokane Tribe currently monitor.

**(MORE)**

The funding will enable the CCT to fully participate in regional AIS issues such as:

- Provide training for staff to correctly identify and prevent invasive mussels from spreading, decontaminate vessels, and report the information to appropriate agencies in the region
- Monitor ten additional sites in Lake Roosevelt, Lake Rufus and Kettle River
- Operate a wash down station at boat launches located on the western shore of Lake Roosevelt and Rufus Woods
- Purchase equipment
- Implement AIS decontamination protocols and monitoring methods

The CCT currently invests millions of dollars annually to protect and enhance habitat and fish populations that utilize Lake Roosevelt and Rufus Woods. The tribe also has a vested interest in the protection of Grand Coulee Dam from invasive mussels that could cause devastation to the power production capabilities of the dam.

“Invasive mussels are prolific breeders and will infest water facility infrastructure such as water intakes, gates, diversion screens, hydropower equipment, pumps, pipelines, and boats,” said McLellan. “Infested facilities can fail or create major cost burdens for agencies to clean and maintain.”

For more information about how to keep Lake Roosevelt and Rufus Woods free from invasive quagga and zebra mussels, go to: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/specieshabitats/invasive/boating>. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.usbr.gov/mussels/>.

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