



Staff Report

City Council Pre/Post Briefing Meeting
March 25, 2019



Visionary Leadership, Effective Governance and Proactive Regional Collaboration



Beautiful, Desirable, Safe and Environmentally Responsible City



Financially Sustainable Government Providing Excellence in City Services

Subject: Recreation and Water Quality Threats at Standley Lake

Prepared By: Jason Genck, Parks, Recreation & Libraries Director
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Summary Statement:

Based on the compilation of clear and compelling information, the City Manager on March 19, 2019, decided to immediately and indefinitely end the use of trailered boats on Standley Lake due to increasing concerns of Zebra and Quagga mussel infestation until Staff can determine that there is a way to ensure these types of boats won't pose a substantial risk.

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council.

Background Information:

Zebra and Quagga mussels (ZQM) were identified as a threat to Colorado reservoirs in 2007 and at that time work began to protect Standley Lake, Westminster's sole water supply and key ecological and recreational asset. Westminster implemented the first ZQM protection program in the State. Even today, Westminster is a leader in ZQM protection programming. ZQM are an extremely aggressive invasive species that, once successfully established in a lake, overtake every hard surface in that water body. These mussels decimate local ecosystems, clog potable water intake facilities to the point of being unusable. Boats with ballast tanks represent the greatest chance of ZQM reaching Standley Lake.

The City's decontamination process has evolved over the years as new information has become available and weaknesses in the process have been identified. At the end of January, Staff uncovered a new, much greater weakness to the program that necessitates action. The Standley Lake Staff completed an extensive effort to compare State records of boat launches to data produced from newly implemented software at Standley Lake. Based on that research, Staff has identified as many as 24 boats that circumvented the quarantine process in 2018.

A City commissioned report estimates that a ZQM infestation would result in an initial cost of \$10 million for capital improvements necessary to install appropriate equipment. An additional \$3 million to operate, clean, and maintain the system would be required on an annual basis.

Based on this information, the City will not permit trailered boats on Standley Lake beginning this summer due to increasing concerns of ZQM infestation until Staff can determine that there is a way to ensure these types of boats won't pose a substantial risk. Boaters were notified of this change on March 19, 2019, and boaters who had purchased permits are being issued refunds. The notification letter is attached.

The attached report outlines current threats to Standley Lake water quality, recreation, and habitats from ZQM. This report was prepared by Staff as part of the evaluation of risk associated with ZQM and Standley Lake. It is provided as additional background.

Additional information is also available at: <http://www.cityofwestminster.us/boating>

By protecting Standley Lake, the City is demonstrating a commitment to conserve resources and support sustainable natural resource behaviors adhering to the Beautiful, Desirable, Safe, and Environmentally Responsible City Strategic Plan goal. Protecting Standley Lake water and recreational resources is sound financial practice that reduces the potential for significant future budgetary needs in line with the Financially Sustainable Government Providing Excellence in City Services goal. The long term protection of the City's

critical water resources and providing responsible recreational opportunities meets the Visionary Leadership, Effective Governance, and Proactive Regional Collaboration goal.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald M. Tripp

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City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
<u>Attachment A: Recreation and Water Quality Threats at Standley Lake</u>	3/20/2019	Attachment
<u>Attachment B: Letter to Standley Lake Boaters</u>	3/20/2019	Attachment