



NACIMIENTO RESIDENT VESSEL PROGRAM

GOAL: Acknowledge that many vessels remain on Lake Nacimiento for months/years at a time, remaining within the watershed, and merit a different approach to mussel screening renewals.

PROPOSAL: Amend Lake Nacimiento Mussel Prevention Program to relieve “Resident Vessels” from 14 day renewal requirements.

BACKGROUND: Since May 2010, an active Mussel Prevention Program has been in place at Lakes Nacimiento and San Antonio administered by San Luis Obispo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (SLO District), Monterey County Water Resource Agency, and Monterey County. The Nacimiento Regional Water Management Advisory Committee, Heritage Ranch Homeowner’s Association, Oak Shores Community Association, and other community leaders have been integral in the execution of the program. The program began as a self-certification seasonal program relying heavily on public outreach.

Year-round vessels merit a different approach to mussel screening renewals.

It is recognized statewide that tournament participants and the general public arriving from out of the area pose the highest risk of infestation, while residents/ non-transient boaters pose a very low risk. In May 2011, the program was expanded to require a mandatory screening/inspection of all vessels seeking to launch. Boaters, including lakeside residents, must carry a valid Vessel Screening Permit, renewed every 14 days, or risk being fined up to \$2,000. The program also evolved from a seasonal to a year round program.

Lake Nacimiento is unique in that there are 25+ ramps situated around a 165 mile shore line. There are 2 public ramps operated by Monterey County plus numerous ramps operated by private communities/owners who are actively engaged in the Mussel Prevention Program:

- The public ramps are staffed by trained Monterey County Parks Department staff.
- The largest two private communities provide screeners and screenings/inspections. These are Heritage Ranch Homeowners’ Association with approximately 2,104 members and Oak Shores Community Association with 626 members.
- Other private communities have fewer than 150 members and have volunteers who are trained as certified screeners. The volunteer screeners are members of the community, know most of the community members, and whether or not their vessels leave the lake.

SLO District sustains communication with approximately 200 trained volunteers representing various private communities around Lake Nacimiento. Monterey and SLO have provided screener training classes. The volunteer screeners check vessels and are responsible for rejecting high-risk boats.

The primary purpose of vessel screening is to identify boats that fail to arrive in a CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY condition, particularly those that have recently been on an infested water body. Because tournament participants and a portion of recreators haul boats around the State to various lakes and rivers, Vessel Screening Permits must be periodically renewed. The intent is to prevent boaters from going to infested water bodies, such as Lake Havasu, then returning with mussels and posing a threat to Lake Nacimiento.

A 14 day Vessel Screening Permit renewal period is currently in place to reduce the risk of boaters leaving the watershed and returning as a mussel-carrier.

Volunteer screeners spending most time on renewals for vessels that never leave the lake.

PROBLEM STATEMENT: The 14 day renewal requirement is intended to reduce the risk of infestation. An unintended consequence of the renewal requirement is the need to recertify the thousands of vessels that do not leave the watershed.

For example, an estimated 1,637 vessels were screened by volunteers at the smaller private ramps alone during the 2011 boating season¹. Of those, over 88% were re-certifications. In other words, the 200 trained volunteers are spending the majority of their screening time re-stamping forms for boats that never leave the watershed. This is time invested in handling forms and re-examining vessels THAT POSE NO RISK of introducing invasive mussels.

Our volunteers are the core of the Mussel Prevention Program. Asking that they dedicate the majority of their screening time on an activity that does nothing to reduce risks has not gone over well. Comments challenging the 14 day renewal have dominated dialogue with private communities and the volunteers. Private communities seek relief from the 14 day renewal cycle so that time is invested in truly risk-reducing efforts at the lake.

Observations indicate that continuing the 14 day renewal requirement for year-round, resident boaters, could cause:

- Volunteer screeners burnout and quit
- Longer processing time due to limited availability of screeners
- Frustration of community members
- Prevention program failure

CONCLUSION: The 14 day renewal for Resident Vessels does not reduce the risk of mussel infestation, dominates the time donated by volunteers, and if left in place, may well unravel private ramp program support altogether.

¹ This estimate excludes the larger private ramps (Oak Shores and Heritage Ranch) and only included reported figures.

PROPOSED AMENDED APPROACH:

Issue Resident Vessel Certificates to qualified vessels subject to these conditions:

A Resident Vessel is defined by:

- Vessel owner is legal owner of vessel and provides satisfactory evidence of current vessel registration;
- Vessel owner is a valid property owner at Lake Nacimiento as demonstrated by a recent secured property tax bill or other document;
- Vessel remains on Lake Nacimiento and may only be removed and re-introduced under conditions stated below;
- The owner has property or is affiliated with an organization/community with controlled access (i.e. private locked gate); and
- The vessel owner has legal access to a private launch ramp which is currently participating in the Lake Nacimiento Mussel Prevention Program identified in **Attachment A**.

Or,

- The vessel owner launches from a public launch ramp and is a member of an organization that is currently participating in the Lake Nacimiento Mussel Prevention Program identified in **Attachment B**.

Steps to Obtain a Resident Vessel Certificate

1. Complete a “Mussel Awareness Class” sponsored by SLO District. See **Attachment C** for enrollment instructions.
2. Provide documentation that vessel(s) qualify as a Resident Vessel, such as tax record, vessel registration, deeds, etc.
3. Sign “Affidavit of Resident Vessel Owner” stating limitation and conditions on transport of Enrolled Vessels. Acknowledge repercussions and penalties for failure to comply.
4. Vessel(s) successfully pass a mussel screening/inspection by a certified screener and show current, valid Vessel Screening Permit.
5. Vessel Owner has completed a Resident Vessel Certificate. See **Attachment E**

Issuance of Vessel Pass

Upon completion of enrollment steps above, each qualifying vessel shall be issued a Vessel Pass by SLO District. Passes are to be displayed on the vessel and are valid for one year² as long as vessel remains in sustained compliance with Resident Vessel Program.

² Annual passes proposed to be valid from May 1st through April 30th of the following year.

Choosing to Leave the Lake

In the event an Enrolled Vessel leaves the premise of the address as stated on the Affidavit of Resident Vessel Owner to do anything other than launch the vessel into Lake Nacimiento, the Vessel Owner is required to contact their Mussel Coordinator (**Attachments A and B**), make arrangements to have the vessel banded prior to departure, and/or to make arrangements for screening upon return. Failure to do so renders the Vessel Pass null and void.

Vessel Passes that Become Null and Void

In the event that the Vessel Pass becomes null and void, that pass shall be removed from the vessel by a certified screener or Mussel Coordinator and that vessel is now required to adhere to the Mussel Prevention Program renewal requirements then in effect (currently 14-day renewal). The Vessel Owner is no longer eligible to enroll additional vessels in the then-current year's Resident Vessel Program and risks losing Vessel Passes on other Enrolled Vessels.

Re-Entry of a Banded Vessel

Upon Enrolled Vessel re-entry onto the premises, the Vessel Owner shall notify their Mussel Coordinator (**Attachments A and B**) of the vessel return and make arrangements to have a certified screener either remove the intact band or screen the vessel. *Only certified screeners are authorized to remove the bands or screen the vessel* and shall notify the Mussel

Coordinator that the vessel is authorized for re-entry. Vessel Passes will be rendered null and void if a vessel returns with a band that is not intact or has been tampered with or the band is removed by an unauthorized person, or fails to pass the mussel screening/inspection. See section above for Vessel Passes that Become Null and Void.

Suspected Violators

It is the responsibility of certified screeners to monitor comings and goings of Enrolled Vessels and to notify their Mussel Coordinators immediately of any suspected violators. Certified screeners will be required to perform a renewal screening of suspected vessel.

Program Monitoring

1. SLO District to keep a log of Enrolled Vessels, bands issued and removed, suspect vessel renewal screenings and Vessel Passes that have been revoked. via the private ramp Mussel Coordinators' record of the same and notification of SLO District of any changes to vessel status immediately.
2. SLO District will initiate a quality control program among the private ramps to verify that the standards set forth in both the Mussel Prevention Program and the Resident Vessel Program are being followed. SLO District will provide unannounced random inspections of the launch ramps throughout the year.

3. SLO District will alert area lakes about the Resident Vessel Passes and have them flag the vessels in their tracking system and notify Monterey County Parks Department or SLO District.

4. Monterey County Parks Department will regularly run enrolled vessels through their vessel tracking system to determine if vessels are identified as having left the area.

WHAT'S NEXT

- Artwork for Vessel Passes with distinct identification numbers
- Develop banding program for use at private ramps
- Prepare required forms
- Prepare material for Mussel Awareness Class
- Roll out to private ramps and conduct training

The Resident Vessel Program is proposed to be in effect for the 2012 boating season.

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ATTACHMENT A

Lake Nacimiento

**Private Ramp Communities and Mussel Coordinators
as of December 1, 2011**

Community	Mussel Coordinator
Cal Shasta	Phil Humfrey
Christmas Cove	Claire Simoulis
Happy Landing	Dennis Stinnette
Heritage Ranch HOA	Martin Rowley
Northshores S & B	Ray Green
Oak Shores	Dennis Javens
Rancho Del Lago	Russ Johnson
Running Deer Ranch	Chuck Enterline
South Shore Village	Debbie Kopack
Tri Counties Club	Eric Gamble

Private Ramps

Ramp	Mussel Coordinator
Private Ramp near Running Deer	Dave Kinman
Private Property w/ramp	Don Andre
Private Property w/ramp	Dave Dellamora
Private Property w/ramp	Mike McDermot
Private Property w/ramp	Mike Vaughn
Private Property w/ramp	Tom Vaughn

Lake Nacimiento

Private Organizations and Mussel Coordinators
as of December 1, 2011

Club	Mussel Coordinator
Laguna Vista Boat Club	Bill Capps

Lake Nacimiento
Mussel Awareness Class
Enrollment Instructions for 2012

****forthcoming****



Resident Vessel Program
ATTACHMENT D

Lake Nacimiento

AFFIDAVIT of RESIDENT VESSEL OWNER

I, _____ hereby certify that I own the following vessels, and that they are
(Name)

stored at Lake Nacimiento. They are stored at _____
(address)

and use the _____ launch ramp. I also certify that if I am granted a
(Community/private ramp)

Resident Vessel Pass I will continue to store the vessels at the above address. If I remove the vessel from the Lake Nacimiento watershed I must notify my Mussel Coordinator and the Enrolled Vessel must be banded before leaving the property and undergo a renewal screening by a certified screener. ONLY A CERTIFIED SCREENER MAY REMOVE THE BAND OR CERTIFY THE VESSEL FOR RE-ENTRY. I understand that if the band is removed by anyone other than a certified screen, or if the vessel fails to pass its re-entry screening, then the Resident Vessel Pass will be revoked.

I also understand that if I am granted a Resident Vessel Pass and I fail to comply with any of the conditions listed above I will have my Resident Vessel Pass revoked for the remainder of the year, and will be required to comply with the Mussel Prevention Program in place at that time.

CF _____ CF _____ CF _____

CF _____ CF _____ CF _____

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

Address: _____

Home Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

E-Mail Address: _____



ATTACHMENT E

Lake Nacimiento
2012 RESIDENT VESSEL CERTIFICATE

I certify that I, _____ own the following vessels and that they are stored at Lake Nacimiento
_____ and launched from the _____ ramp.
(address) (Community/private ramp)

(Signature & Date)

CF _____	Pass # _____	CF _____	Pass # _____
CF _____	Pass # _____	CF _____	Pass # _____
CF _____	Pass # _____	CF _____	Pass # _____

Ownership documents verified: _____
(SLO Flood Control District) (Printed Name, Date)

All vessels above have passed the screening and are known to remain at the above address: _____
(Certified Screener) (Printed Name, Date)

SCREENER
AFFIX SEAL HERE

Applicant has attended the Mussel Awareness Class: _____
(Instructor Signature) (Printed Name, Date)