

California tries to stop quagga mussels

21 March 2008

Several California communities are banning recreational boats on inland waterways to keep out invasive quagga mussels.

The mussels foul drinking water supplies and harm local fish populations, the Los Angeles Times reported Thursday.

The Casitas Municipal Water District last week banned recreational boats from Lake Casitas, a popular bass fishing lake. Recreational boats were also banned from Westlake Lake in Ventura County and Lake Wolford in Escondido, Calif. The newspaper said Santa Barbara County was considering closing Lake Cachuma, at least temporarily.

The mussel, which is native to Russia and Ukraine, arrived in the United States in the 1980s in the ballast of ocean freighters. The invasive mussels hitchhike on boats and trailers and are virtually impossible to eradicate.

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