

Aquatic Invasive Species Changing Behavior

Eileen Ryce

AIS Supervisor and Hatchery Section Chief

Mike Lewis

Human Dimensions Unit Leader



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

Outreach, Awareness, Behavior

- ***Outreach***: reaching out using various tools, changing tools for changing message and changing audience
- ***Awareness***: an understanding of the issue
- ***Behavior change***: taking action to achieve the goal of the outreach effort

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

With just **three easy steps**, you can do your part to help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species like plants, mussels and whirling disease:

INSPECT.

CLEAN.

DRY.

Evaluation

- Pre survey
 - 5,000 random boaters and resident anglers
- Post survey
 - 5,000 random boaters and resident anglers
- Results
 - Awareness already high
 - Significantly increased awareness
 - Did NOT change behavior

“why do boaters and anglers fail to change their behavior when they know that failure to do so may ultimately lead to widespread negative effects on the quality of their boating and angling experience”

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

Why people don't change behavior:

- Change takes time
- Patterns of behavior run deep
- Physical barriers
- Physical environment not conducive to desired change
- Overloaded and overwhelmed
- Source of message is not trusted

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

Why people don't change behavior:

- Low self-efficacy
- Cognitive dissonance theory
- Strongly held values impacting messaging
- Takes dramatic, life-altering events to change behavior
- Ignorance is bliss
- Not personally affecting someone

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

Why people don't change behavior:

- Some may think change is not needed
- Avoidance of topics that are bad or scary
- Invulnerability perceptions
- Trivializing risks
- No leverage, need for disincentives and incentives

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

**“Providing information is
important, but not always
sufficient”**

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.

Recommendations

- Messages that activate “social norms”
 - positive or negative
- Where possible remove physical barriers
- Ensure instructions are easy to follow and implement
- Partner with private groups
- Develop strong emotional messages
- Recognize individuals as ambassadors
- Inform people of the success
- Evaluation
- Be persistent but, try new ways

INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.



INSPECT. CLEAN. DRY.