

JOINT PUBLIC STATEMENT

Ruth Lake Community Services District
&
Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District

April 3, 2026

Mandatory 30-Day Ballast Tank Watercraft Quarantine Now in Effect at Ruth Lake

Protecting Our Water Supply and Natural Resources from Aquatic Invasive Species

The Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD) and the Ruth Lake Community Services District (RLCSD) are jointly announcing the implementation of a **mandatory 30-day quarantine program for all watercraft** entering Ruth Lake **with ballast tanks** or other components that cannot be drained. This measure is essential to prevent the introduction of Golden, Zebra, and Quagga mussels which are highly destructive aquatic invasive species that pose a serious threat to our water infrastructure, the lake's ecosystem, and the region's long-term water supply.

Why This Matters to Our Community

Ruth Lake is a critical water resource for the Humboldt Bay region. As your water wholesaler, HBMWD's mission is to safeguard and sustainably deliver clean and reliable water to our community while protecting our natural resources and providing a resilient water supply for present and future generations. Invasive mussels have devastated water systems across the western United States, clogging intake infrastructure, degrading water quality, and costing communities millions of dollars in damage and remediation. Once established, these species are virtually impossible to eradicate. Prevention is our only viable defense.

How the Quarantine Program Works

All watercraft entering Ruth Lake are subject to the following requirements:

- 1. Watercraft Survey.** All boat owners and operators must complete a Watercraft Survey form documenting vessel information and recent launch history.
- 2. Physical Inspections.** All watercrafts will go through physical inspections to ensure they are completely cleaned, drained, and dried. If watercraft fails inspection, it must go through a mandatory 30-day quarantine.
- 3. 30-Day Quarantine for Ballast Tank Watercraft.** Any watercraft with ballast tanks or components that cannot be fully drained (such as wakeboard boats) will

automatically fail inspection unless the vessel already carries a BLUE exit band from Ruth Lake. This quarantine period is in lieu of your watercraft going through decontamination.

4. **Clean, Drain, and Dry.** All boaters are reminded to clean their gear, boat, and trailer; drain all bilge, ballast, wells, and buckets; and allow equipment to fully dry before launching in any water body.

Where to Obtain Quarantine Bands

RED quarantine bands are available at the Ruth Lake Marina and Ruth Recreational Campground for \$10.00.

For boaters in Humboldt County, quarantine bands are also available at two convenient locations: Reynolds RV (646 Hwy 36, Fortuna) and Pacific Outfitters (1600 5th Street, Eureka). Signage with quarantine instructions will be posted at all major launch and access locations.

A Shared Responsibility

Protecting Ruth Lake is a community effort. We are asking every boater, angler, and lake visitor to do their part. Compliance with the quarantine program is not optional. Failure to comply may result in revocation of boating privileges and potential citation or eviction from the lake. These measures are in place to protect the water supply that serves our entire region, both now and for generations to come.

For More Information

Ruth Lake Community Services District: www.ruthlakecsd.org

California Department of Fish & Wildlife — Golden Mussel Information: wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Invasives/Species/Golden-Mussel

Contacts:

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