



NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD
JULY 2009

INVASIVE ZEBRA MUSSEL FOUND IN BERKSHIRES LAKE

The MWRA Board of Directors approved a decision to close the Quabbin Reservoir to private recreational boats for 45 days as a precautionary move following the discovery of an invasive species in the Berkshires. The Zebra Mussel, a freshwater mussel that has wreaked havoc in other parts of the United States, was found in a lake in Lee, Massachusetts earlier this month. Zebra Mussels are a problematic invasive species that can clog water intake pipes and threaten native species; they are transmitted by clinging to bottom of boats and can spread from lake to lake. Currently, the mussels have only been confirmed at Laurel Lake in Lee. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) maintains a fleet of rental boats that can be used for fishing on the Quabbin, during the 45 days in which private boats are banned.

The MWRA Advisory Board supports the move by the MWRA and DCR to close the Quabbin to private recreational boats for 45 days. The Advisory Board is developing a "white paper" which outlines its position on ensuring the public water supply stays protected for the two and a half million people in the MWRA service area. Joseph Favalaro, Executive Director of the Advisory Board, said, "It is critical to have a fail safe plan in place before ever allowing private boats back into the Quabbin. Some may argue that the risk of Zebra Mussel exposure is small, but none could argue that the consequences of a mistake are huge."

ADVISORY BOARD FIELD TRIP

SAVE THE DATE: AUGUST 20, 2009!

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Join other Advisory Board members on a tour of three MWRA facilities: the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant, Nut Island Headworks, and the Biosolids Processing Facility (Pellet Plant) in Quincy. Members will learn about ongoing renewable energy initiatives at Deer Island and Nut Island and visit the plant where wastewater sludge is processed. Transportation and lunch are provided. A detailed itinerary will be mailed. *Space is limited; contact Mary Ann at the Advisory Board to register!*

STATE BUDGET SIGNED; INCLUDES \$500,000 IN DSA

Governor Patrick signed the \$27.4 billion State Budget for FY10 two days prior to the start of the new fiscal year. The budget bill makes deep cuts into programs and includes an increase in the sales tax from 5% to 6.25%. It also contains local option taxes and an expansion of the sales tax base to include alcohol. The final budget relies on funds from the state's rainy day fund and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Governor vetoed \$147 million in spending approved by the Legislature. Escaping the Governor's veto was \$500,000 in Debt Service Assistance, which goes directly towards rate relief for cities and towns. The Advisory Board is appreciative of the efforts of the Legislature and the Governor to include funding in this line item, in the midst of extraordinarily difficult times. The Legislature has yet to take up any of the Governor's vetoes, but is expected to later this month.



Photo credit Eugena Ossi / Governor's Office. Governor Patrick swears in new and returning members of the MWRA Board of Directors. Left to Right: New Board Member Jack Walsh (Quincy), Ellen Walsh, Governor Patrick, and MWRA Advisory Board Appointee Andrew Pappastergion.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL NOT MEET IN AUGUST.
THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
DO NOT MEET IN JULY OR AUGUST.

If you have any questions regarding topics raised in this newsletter or any other MWRA issue, please contact:
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