

Boat inspections, fees required throughout Nevada

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Statewide boat inspections to detect aquatic invaders are required and should be under way next year under a plan signed into law Wednesday by Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval.

More immediate changes – making it unlawful to deliberately introduce invasive species into Nevada’s waters – take effect in July, with violators facing potential fines of between \$25,000 and \$250,000.

The program approved by Sandoval and the 2011 Legislature is designed to protect the state’s rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs from damaging invaders such as the quagga mussel. The mussels have overrun Lake Mead in Southern Nevada and might be present in Northern Nevada’s Lahontan and Rye Patch reservoirs.

Sandoval dropped earlier objections to a fee charged to boaters to pay for the program, in part because of the degree of danger posed by mussels and other non-native aquatic species, Chief of Staff Heidi Gansert said. The fee is designed to help recover the cost of fighting the problem, Gansert said.

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