

Mussel dogs sniff out aquatic invasive species

By Deke Farrow, Modesto Bee

Nemo, Noah and Popeye.

Their names may not carry quite the coolness of some of their current and former canine colleagues in local law enforcement – Cash, Volk, Samson, Zeus – but the decidedly marine monikers fit perfectly what this trio is trained to do.

They're the Mussel Dogs, and they guard reservoirs, lakes and other waterways against intruders that, while not criminals, are killers.

Quagga and zebra mussels are invasive species that cannot be eradicated once they infest a body of water, said Denair resident Debra DeShon, who founded Mussel Dogs in 2008 and has three canine-and-handler teams.

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