

# **Boat Access Restrictions at Lake Casitas To Prevent Invasive Species Contamination**

Pursuant to Ordinance 2020-01, restrictions have been imposed on vessels entering the Lake Casitas Recreation Area, including canoes and kayaks. **FLOAT TUBES ARE NOT ALLOWED.**

Customers may participate in a Tamper Proof Tag Program. Vessels that pass inspection must complete a 35-Day Quarantine period either inside or outside the Recreation Area. Please read our Policies & Procedures for Vessel Inspections and the Tamper Proof Tag Program below.

For questions, information **and to make an inspection appointment**, please call (805)-649-2233.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **CASITAS MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR VESSEL INSPECTION FOR QUAGGA MUSSELS LAKE CASITAS RECREATION AREA**

### **1. Policies & Procedures**

The policies and procedures in this document are for inspection criteria for vessels entering the Lake Casitas Recreation Area. These policies and procedures are to ensure that invasive species do not enter Lake Casitas and impact treatment infrastructure and threaten the lake's ecosystem.

In order to be consistent with policies, procedures and training, the Lake Casitas Recreation Area Vessel Inspection Checklist will be used on all vessel inspections. This document outlines the process that staff must complete before a vessel of any kind is authorized to enter the Lake Casitas Recreation Area. The Vessel Inspection Checklist is a check off sheet outlining aspects of this policies and procedures document. Each step in the Vessel Inspection Checklist has specific expectations associated with it and will only be conducted by fully trained staff.

Lake Casitas Recreation Area staff will follow a zero tolerance policy for inspection criteria. If at anytime during an inspection a vessel fails a step on the Vessel Inspection Checklist, the vessel will fail the inspection process and a re-inspection will need to be scheduled. The re-inspection will be scheduled no sooner than seven (7) days, i.e. the same weekday of the following calendar week. Upon passing a re-inspection, the vessel will be quarantined for thirty-five (35) days.

At the discretion of Casitas Municipal Water District, vessels may be subject to random bilge water test that will examine water microscopically.

#### Vessel Inspection Checklist

- (a) The owner/operator is to be informed that an inspection will be performed and that Casitas has a zero tolerance policy for any water, including condensation, debris, or growth found on any vessel, trailer or towing vehicle due to possible transportation of invasive species by vessels and trailers.
- (b) Staff will write the state boating identification number and owner/operator's name and date on the Vessel Inspection Checklist.
- (c) Staff will check the Casitas generated database of vessels that have previously been denied access due to inspection issues. A re-inspection cannot be performed until the due date.

(d) Customer will fill out and sign the “Vessel Quarantine, Re-Entry, Temporary Storage and Tamper-Proof Tag Acknowledgement” (Acknowledgement) in staff’s presence. Customer is voluntarily signing the Vessel Acknowledgement under penalty of perjury. After the customer signs the Vessel Acknowledgement, he/she will be given the bottom yellow carbon copy of the Vessel Acknowledgement.

(e) Staff has been directed to provide educational materials to the boating community and general public. Two handouts are given to each vessel operator/owner upon first entry to the park and in general as new information becomes available as follows:

- (1) Casitas flyer entitled “Take Action to Save Our Lakes from Quagga Mussels”.
- (2) Department of Fish & Wildlife flyer entitled “Don’t Move A Mussel”.

(f) Staff will request the owner/operator of the vessel to open all compartments.

(g) The vessel, trailer and vehicle inspection will include looking for moisture, water, debris including but not limited to: mud, weeds, sand/pebbles or growth on or in any inspected area. Surfaces will also be touched to see if growth or mussels may be attached. The inspection will be completed the same way each time starting at one side of the vehicle, vessel and trailer and ending at the other side. Checking the “Yes” box indicates that the inspected material is dry and clear of debris. If the “No” box is checked the vessel has failed, will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list and will not be eligible for re-inspection for seven (7) days.

## 2. **Areas of Inspection**

The following areas will be inspected by Staff:

(a) **Vehicle Rear:** The vehicle bumper, tailgate or spare tire may have mud, grass, weeds or other debris on it. If there are positive signs of mud, etc., the inspection cannot continue. The vessel may return at a later date for re-inspection, towed by a different vehicle.

(b) **Trailer Structure, Railings and Spare Tire:** The trailer, railings and spare tire may have mud, grass, weeds, debris or standing water. If there are positive signs of mud, etc., the inspection cannot continue. The vessel may return at a later date for re-inspection or on a different trailer that is clean and dry.

(c) **Vessel Hull:** The vessel hull will be inspected for growth and debris. Growth may be visible if the vessel has been in the water for an extended period of time. Small mussels attached to a vessel can feel like sandpaper or sesame seeds. If a vessel’s hull has any type of growth or debris, the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(d) **Transom:** The transom is at the back of the vessel where the engine is attached. The transom may have several items of importance for inspection that mussels can attach to including the out drive, trim tabs, transducers, bilge plug area and through hull fittings. The transom must be checked to make sure the surface is smooth and visibly clear of all debris and growth. If there are positive signs of growth, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(e) **Outdrive:** The outdrive is attached to the transom on stern drive vessels and the lower unit on outboard vessels. It has intricate parts that make it easy for mussels to attach, hide and grow. Staff will feel and look for any signs of growth, debris or texture of sandpaper. If there are positive signs of growth, debris or texture of sandpaper, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven

(7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(f) **Propeller/Shafts:** Mussels can attach and live on or around where the propeller attaches to the lower unit of the drive shaft. Mussels can also attach to the shaft or connecting points of the vessel. These can be hard to see and must be inspected with a flashlight to verify if any mussels, debris or water are present. If there are positive signs of mussels, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(g) **Trim Tabs:** Trim tabs are located on the lower portion of the transom and are usually metal plates that help stabilize the vessel while underway. Staff will feel the corners, edges and look on the underside of the trim tabs for debris and growth. If there are positive signs of growth, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(h) **Transducers:** These are located on the transom or bottom of the hull near the stern of the vessel. They are used in conjunction with a computer to determine depth, speed and water temperature. Growth or debris can appear on them. If there are positive signs of growth, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(i) **Bilge Plug:** If the bilge plug is pulled when the vessel arrives at the lake, there should be no fluid or debris coming from it. Staff will carefully insert fingers in the plug hole to determine if debris is blocking water from exiting. If the bilge plug is not pulled, the owner/operator will be requested to pull the plug. If water exits, the plug will be reinstalled to prevent additional water from being released. If there are positive signs of growth, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(j) **Through Hull Fittings:** Through hull fitting in all boats have the potential to store mussels in the right conditions. To check these fittings, Staff will use a flashlight to look inside and feel for irregularities. If water or debris is observed or felt, the vessel will be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(k) **Bait Tank/Live Well/Compartments:** Bait tanks, live wells and compartments should be dry and clear of all water and debris. Some compartments do not drain completely due to the way they are manufactured. Any debris in compartments is not acceptable. Common debris often found includes; fish scales, weeds, small pebbles and trash. If it does have positive signs of fish, etc., the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(l) **Bilge:** The bilge is at the bottom of the inside stern of the vessel. It may not be visible in all boats due to various boat designs. The bilge should be clean from all water and debris. If there are positive signs of water, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(m) **Anchor/Fenders and Line:** Anchors can have mud or debris on them. If an anchor, fender and lines attached have been in infested water for an extended period of time then mussels and debris can attach. Staff must check these items for mud, growth and debris. If there are positive signs of mud, etc. the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

(n) **Trolling Motor:** Trolling motors can pick up plants and debris while being used and must be inspected. These items must be checked for mud, growth and debris. If there are positive signs of mud, etc.,

the vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days and will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list.

The Vessel Inspection Procedures, Vessel Inspection Checklist, Vessel Acknowledgement and Casitas handouts have been developed to ensure proper inspections of vessels, trailers and vehicles to prevent Lake Casitas from becoming infested with invasive species. All documents pertaining to the Vessel Inspection Procedures are subject to change due to updated policies at the sole discretion of the District.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Scroll down to see Checklist &  
Quarantine & Tamper Proof Tag Program**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## LAKE CASITAS RECREATION AREA - VESSEL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

CF #: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner/Operator (Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

- Computer check to see if vessel has been previously denied entry.
- Completed Vessel Acknowledgement. Have owner/operator complete and sign form.
- Informational handouts "Take Action to Save Our Lakes" and "Don't Move a Mussel" flyers given.
- Request vessel owner to open all compartments and have the bilge plug pulled.
- Inform owner/operator that Casitas has a no tolerance policy for any water, debris or growth found on any vessel due to possible transportation of invasive species by vessels and trailers.

Vessel Inspection: Check for **WATER, DEBRIS** or **GROWTH** and check all smooth surfaces for "SANDPAPER" feel.

Clear of Water, Debris and/or Growth: Check appropriate box below.

**Yes No**

- Vehicle rear
  - Trailer structure, railings, spare tire
  - Vessel hull
  - Transom
  - Outdrive
  - Prop/shafts (propeller on the engine)
  - Trim tabs (located on back of hull near engine. Not all vessels have them)
  - Transducers
  - Bilge plug pulled – no fluid or debris
  - Through hull fittings
  - Bait tank/live wells/compartments
  - Bilge (may not be visible)
  - Anchor/fenders and line
  - Trolling Motor
- Your vessel has not cleared the inspection due to water and or debris in one or more areas. A re-inspection will need to be scheduled with staff. The re-inspection will be scheduled no sooner than seven (7) days, meaning the same weekday of today's date next calendar week. This zero tolerance has been established to ensure the safety of Lake Casitas water quality and its ecosystem. Thank you for understanding in this matter.
- You may enter the Lake Casitas Recreation Area on the date indicated on the Vessel Acknowledgement. Thank you for your cooperation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff (PRINT NAME)

**CASITAS MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT  
LAKE CASITAS RECREATION AREA  
VESSEL QUARANTINE, RE-ENTRY, TEMPORARY STORAGE AND  
TAMPER-PROOF TAG PROGRAMS**

**THESE PROGRAMS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR  
SKI BOATS WITH INTERNAL BLADDERS OR FLOAT TUBES.**

Programs have been developed for quarantine procedures, tamper-proof cables and tags and provision for limited temporary storage.

**A. INSPECTION**

1. Vessel inspections are available by appointment only.
2. An inspection will be conducted by authorized staff only in accordance with the attached policy entitled "Policies & Procedures for Vessel Inspection for Quagga Mussels". If the vessel passes inspection it will continue with the thirty-five (35) day Quarantine process described in B below. If the vessel does not pass, the customer's name and vessel state issued identification numbers will be placed on the 7-day wait list. The vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days, i.e. the same weekday of the following calendar week.
3. At the discretion of Casitas Municipal Water District, vessels may be subject to random bilge water testing that will examine the water microscopically.

**B. 35-DAY QUARANTINE PROCESS**

1. If the customer has been assigned a dry storage space (Trailer Storage Area):
  - (a) Verify that the vessel has a current annual boat permit.
  - (b) Place a customer or Casitas owned cable on the vessel with a Casitas tag.
  - (c) Enter release date in log book.
  - (d) Escort the customer to his/her assigned space.
  - (e) Place tongue lock or cuff over the tongue of the trailer.
  - (d) Advise customer to retain a copy of the Checklist and Vessel Acknowledgement containing the quarantine expiration date.
2. If the customer has an assigned Boat Rental slip:
  - (a) Verify that the vessel has a current annual boat permit.
  - (b) Place a customer or Casitas owned cable on the vessel with a Casitas tag.
  - (c) Enter release date in log book.
  - (d) Escort the customer to his/her assigned space.
  - (e) Place tongue lock or cuff over the tongue of the trailer.
  - (d) Advise customer to retain a copy of the Checklist and Vessel Acknowledgement containing the quarantine expiration date.
3. If the customer is participating in the Tamper-Proof Tag Program and is completing the thirty-five (35) day Quarantine period inside the park:

- (a) Direct the customer's attention to the disclaimer for temporary quarantine parking on the signed Vessel Acknowledgement.
- (b) Place a customer or Casitas owned cable on the vessel with a Casitas tag.
- (c) Enter release date in log book.
- (d) Escort the customer to the designated space.
- (e) Place tongue lock or cuff over the tongue of the trailer.
- (f) Advise customer to retain a copy of the Checklist and Vessel Acknowledgement containing the quarantine expiration date.

4. If the customer **declines** to participate in the Tamper-Proof Tag Program and is completing the thirty-five (35) day Quarantine period inside the park:

- (a) Direct the customer's attention to the disclaimer for temporary quarantine parking on the signed Vessel Acknowledgement.
- (b) Place a Casitas owned cable on the vessel with a Casitas tag.
- (c) Enter release date in log book.
- (d) Escort the customer to the designated space.
- (e) Place tongue lock or cuff over the tongue of the trailer.
- (f) Advise customer to retain a copy of the Checklist and Vessel Acknowledgement containing the quarantine expiration date.
- (g) Upon completion of the thirty-five (35) day quarantine collect applicable fees (e.g. day use or overnight boat, etc.).

5. The customer may complete the thirty-five (35) day Quarantine Process outside the park by participating in the applicable sections of the Tamper-Proof Tag Program described in B below.

6. At the end of the quarantine period, staff will remove the lock or cuff. It is the responsibility of customers to immediately remove their vessels from the quarantine area. Any vessel left in the quarantine area longer than fifteen (15) days after release of the tongue lock or cuff will be removed by Casitas and stored at the owner's sole cost and expense.

## **B. TAMPER-PROOF TAG PROGRAM**

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to guarantee that vessels entering and leaving periodically have not been in any infected waters. This will be accomplished by installing a tamper-proof cable, padlock, and a tamper-proof security tag. The tamper-proof cable must be attached to both the vessel and the trailer. The connection points must be in a location that prevents a part of the vessel or trailer from being removed without damaging the cable or tamper-proof security tag.

1. All vessels are subject to a thirty-five (35) day Quarantine period which may be completed inside or outside the park.
2. Customers must schedule appointments with authorized staff.
3. Inspections will be conducted by authorized staff only in accordance with the inspection policy.
  - (a) If the vessel passes inspection it will continue with the Tamper-Proof Tag Program process. The customer will be advised to retain a copy of the Checklist and Vessel Acknowledgement containing the quarantine expiration date.

(b) If the vessel does not pass, the customer's name and vessel identification number will be placed on the Casitas 7-day wait list. The vessel will not be eligible for re-inspection for a minimum of seven (7) days i.e. the same weekday of the following calendar week.

4. For Vessels Completing the Thirty-Five (35) day Quarantine Period Outside the Park

(a) The vessel owner/operator will be informed that a security kit must be purchased consisting of a weatherproof tamper-proof steel cable, weather resistant padlock and a tamper-proof tag. The connection point areas must be reviewed with the vessel owner/operator with an explanation as to why these locations have been chosen.

(b) The vessel owner/operator shall install the equipment as needed. The connection points must be verified and relocated by the owner/operator if necessary.

(c) The tamper-proof security seal must be installed as required and the Tamper Proof Tag Program Log updated. The vessel owner/operator must verify the tamper-proof security number and cable number and sign the Tamper Proof Tag Program Log. The vessel owner/operator must be informed that if the weatherproof tamper-proof steel cable and tamper-proof security tag are not in place or damaged in any way upon his/her return, a new inspection and thirty-five (35) day Quarantine period will be required.

(d) The vessel owner/operator must be informed that the vessel has been placed on a thirty-five (35) day Quarantine list and that he/she may leave the park and return after the thirty-five (35) day Quarantine period has been completed.

(e) Vessels returning to the park after completing the Tamper-Proof Tag Program will have the weatherproof tamper-proof steel cable and tamper-proof security tag inspected by Staff and the cable and tag numbers verified with the entries in the Log. As long as the tamper-proof security cable and tag are not missing or damaged, the tamper-proof security tag will be removed by Staff and the vessel will be allowed to enter the park and launch. **Special Note:** A "Clean & Dry Inspection" will not be required because the vessel and trailer will not have been in any other body of water.

(f) If there is **any** evidence that the weatherproof tamper-proof steel cable and/or tamper-proof security tag have been compromised, damaged or removed, staff must obtain a second opinion before the vessel is rejected.

5. For Vessels Completing the Thirty-Five (35) Day Quarantine Period Inside the Park Without Participating in the Tamper-Proof Tag Program

Any vessel returning to the park without participating in the Tamper-Proof Tag Program must complete the inspection and thirty-five (35) day Quarantine period.