Zebra mussels

Business

Nationwide expenditures to control zebra mussels in electric generating plants are estimated at $145 million dollars a year. We need to find ways to control the spreading of zebra mussels which are drastically affecting our ecosystem and environment.

zebra mussels are affecting our lakes in many ways. Because Zebra Mussels are filter feeders, they are a threat to other species. Zebra mussels threaten wildlife, destroy species (“ Zebra Mussel ‘ Dreissena Polymorpha’ “). “ Shells can cause cuts and scrapes if they grow large enough on rocks, swim rafts and ladders. Anglers may lose tackle because the shells can cut fishing line.

Zebra mussels can also attach to native mussels, killing them. Zebra mussels filter plankton from the surrounding water” (“ Harmful Aquatic Hitchhikers: Mollusks: Zebra Mussel”). Zebra Mussels clog intakes and attach to boats, docks, nets, and swimming platforms. Zebra Mussels cause trouble for lake residents. Homeowners that take water to lawns can have their intakes clogged.

Filtering the water may cause more aquatic vegetation to grow at deeper depths and more dense stands. Water treatment plants are most impacted because the water intakes bring the microscopic free-swimming larvae directly into the facilities. The zebra mussels also cling on to pipes under the water and clog them. As you can see, zebra mussels have many negative affects on our lakes. Zebra mussels have a positive impact too.

Because these Mollusks are filter feeders, they rid the lakes of algae. That means cleaner water for other fish. Clean water makes it easier for fish to breed. Zebra Mussels are also a great source of food for different kinds of

birds and fish. As the lakes clear, the brighter light levels cause aquatic plants to grow and increase in number (“| USGS Great Lakes Science Center”). These increase in plants are a good thing for certain fish such as Northern Pike and Yellow Perch.

However, increase in plants could be non beneficial for beaches and boaters. “ Zebra mussels have had positive impacts on parts of the Great Lakes ecosystems. Many native fish, birds, and other animals eat young and adult zebra mussels. Migratory ducks have changed their flight patterns in response to zebra mussel colonies. Lake sturgeon feed heavily on zebra mussels, as do yellow perch, freshwater drum, catfish, and all the sunfish.

The increase in aquatic plants provides excellent nursery areas for young fish and other animals, leading to increases in smallmouth bass populations in Lake St. Clair and the Huron River” (“| USGS Great Lakes Science Center”). Zebra Mussels came to the Great Lakes by accident. They were first detected in the Great Lakes in Canada. It is believed they came into our lakes by ships’ ballasts. A ship’s ballast is dumped to keep the ship stable; however, the amount of water is dependent on the amount of cargo on board.

They were traveling in the St. Lawrence Seaway and emptied their ballasts, and they dropped off zebra mussels into the river. From the river the zebra mussels invaded the Great Lakes. They continued to invade different rivers and lakes. Zebra mussels have also been known to attach themselves to Crayfish bait.

One cannot just simply get rid of zebra mussels, but there are many ways to keep them from spreading. If zebra mussels keep spreading, they might take

over the lakes, and there will be no room for other fish. We can take many actions to keep zebra mussels from spreading; these actions are just simple tasks. Removing leftover vegetation from your boat is a great way to stop the spreading. Zebra mussels could be stuck on your boat, and if you go to another lake they could spread into that lake.

All you need to do is wash off your boat with a hose and you can prevent the spread. Also do not reuse bait that was used in infested waters. You could also be spreading them in different lakes that way. The last way is dry your boat for at least 48 hours before going boating in uninfested waters (“ Harmful Aquatic Hitchhikers: Mollusks: Zebra Mussel”). “ Once zebra mussels become established in a water body, they are impossible to eradicate with the technology currently available. Many chemicals kill zebra mussels, but these exotics are so tolerant and tough that everything in the water would have to be poisoned to destroy the mussel.

Most commercial water users rely on chemicals such as chlorine, filters, or mechanical scraping to remove mussels from their intake pipes and facilities” (“ Zebra Mussel (Dreissena Polymorpha”). So, it is clear that we need to find ways to control the spreading of zebra mussels which are drastically affecting our ecosystem and environment. MLA Works Cited “ Article.” Zebra Mussels. N.

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