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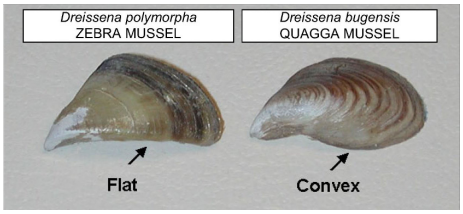
New York State Museum Selects Marrone Bio Innovations as Partner to Commercialize Environmentally Safe Zebra and Quagga Mussel Biopesticide

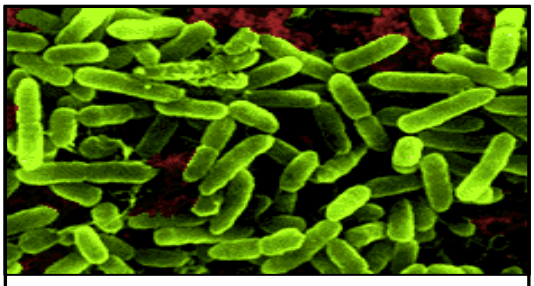
DAVIS, Calif., August 14, 2007 – The New York State Museum (NYSM) has selected Marrone Bio Innovations, Inc. (MBI) to commercialize its exciting discovery of a naturally occurring microorganism to kill invasive zebra and quagga mussels.

These invasive freshwater bivalves (zebra mussel and the close relative, the quagga mussel) are having a billion dollar impact on the North American economy and major negative impacts on freshwater ecosystems.



But it appears these invasive mussels may have met their match in an environmentally friendly microbial biopesticide that is proven to be lethal to these pest bivalves without harming their surroundings.

The New York State Museum screened over 700 bacterial strains before identifying one common bacterium, *Pseudomonas fluorescens,* which is lethal to these problematic mussels, but non-toxic to other aquatic organisms, including fish, ciliates, *Daphnia*, and other bivalve species. This important discovery was made possible by funding from the New York power industry and the US Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Lab, who recognized the devastation these mussels could wreak on electric power facilities.



Individual cells of *P. fluorescens*.

"MBI is the perfect partner to take this product to market," said Dr. Dan Molloy (dmolloy@mail.nysed.gov; 518-677-8245), discoverer of the mussel-killing strain and Director of NYSM's Field Research Lab [www.nysm.nysed.gov/bio_molloy]. "We did a national search for a company that could bring this safe control agent to market and we selected MBI because of its team's unparalleled track record and experience at commercializing microbial biopesticide products."

"Licensing and commercializing this bacterial strain is right in line with MBI's mission," said Dr. Pam Marrone, MBI's CEO and Founder. "We look for promising environmentally friendly biopesticide technologies that fill an unmet market need and then add value with our expertise in formulation, natural product chemistry, process development, field trials, and biopesticide registration."

Introduced from Europe in the 1980s, these tiny, fingernail-sized mussels foul freshwater ecosystems and clog the intake pipes of industries that draw water from infested lakes and rivers. Power plants and other raw-water dependent facilities currently have no choice but to use non-selective, polluting chemicals to reduce densities of these fouling mussels. For open water habitats (rivers, lakes, etc.), there is currently no cost-effective and environmentally safe solution, and hence these mussels continue to spread, causing economic damage and irreparable ecological harm.

Zebra mussels encrusting pipe orifice.
(Credit: J. E. Marsden)

In 2007, these invasive mussels were found in Lake Mead and Lake Powell, foreshadowing their spread to California's important aqueduct system, which moves irrigation water to agricultural fields.

Last year, the NYSM received a Phase I Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to explore moving this project from the lab bench to the marketplace. The Phase I investigation conducted was a success, and now MBI has joined with the NYSM to submit a follow-up Phase II grant to NSF for the final work needed to bring this promising green technology to commercialization. NSF's decision on whether to provide seed money for the MBI-NYSM partnership will be made at year's end.

About Marrone Bio Innovations, Inc.
Marrone Bio Innovations (MBI) discovers, develops, and markets natural products for pest management. Through a combination of in-licensed technology and its own R&D, MBI develops products that target markets needing effective and environmentally responsible solutions. MBI's own R&D finds naturally occurring microorganisms from unique habitats and develops them into products for controlling insects, weeds, nematodes, and plant diseases.
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