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## CROSS CONTAMINATION WHEN USING MATS

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There is a risk of cross contamination on multiple sites with any previously used crane mats or 3-ply access mats. Contamination might come from:

- Noxious weeds, such as club root spores or seeds,
- Invasive species of water-born fungi or algae,
- Invasive or non-native species of amphibians or insects, or
- Other dangerous plants, flora, fauna, or wildlife.

Any of the contaminants listed above are easily and commonly transported in ground protection mats and on the equipment. After one use, contaminants can become lodged between the timbers/boards or can be buried within the debris/mud that gets caught on the mats. Only with thorough pressure washing or chemical sprays can these contaminants be removed. However, these processes are tedious and require time and manpower.

The risk of relocating these contaminated mats on the “new project location” has potential to cause irreparable damage to the ecosystem. It can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars in an effort to eradicate the introduced contaminants. There are many cases of noxious weeds and invasive species being carried into new ecosystems and damaging the native environment.

Examples of this would be club root wiping out canola and other grain crops, the zebra mussel invasion in Lake Winnipeg, and the Eurasian water-milfoil in British Columbia.

All of these potential risks and costs can be completely eliminated by using newly manufactured ground protection mats, which have not been previously installed on any site.