

Jeffery C. Allen
Chair
Idaho

Idaho

Doug Grob
Montana

Mike Milburn
Montana



Northwest **Power** and **Conservation** Council

KC Golden
Vice Chair
Washington

Washington

Ginny Burdick
Oregon

Louie Pitt, Jr.
Oregon

February 7, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Leslie Bach and Patty O'Toole

SUBJECT: Update on Zebra and Quagga mussel prevention efforts

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Stephen Phillips, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

Summary: The Council has been actively engaged in supporting federal-cost share funding for preventing quagga and zebra mussel invasion into the Columbia River Basin. We will hear an update on regional efforts on quagga and zebra mussel detection, prevention and rapid response, as well as an overview of the legislation and funding that supports these efforts.

Relevance: In the 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program the Non-native and Invasive Species strategy states: "Prevent the introduction of non-native and invasive species in the Columbia River Basin, and suppress or eradicate non-native and invasive species". The strategy notes that, "currently, the greatest known threat in the Columbia River Basin from aquatic invasive species is introduction into the basin of zebra or quagga mussels". The Program encourages a regional approach to establishing a defensive perimeter to keep invasive mussels out of Columbia River Basin waters, and supports monitoring and rapid response efforts. The program also identifies the need to share data and information among all entities working on efforts to prevent invasive mussels and to coordinate on education and outreach efforts.

Background: The Columbia Basin is the only basin without an infestation of zebra and quagga mussels. Invasive mussels from other infested areas of the U.S. pose a direct threat to the regional hydropower system, affecting both native fish and wildlife and human uses of the system.

Each of the Northwest states has established Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination stations throughout the region to prevent the introduction and establishment of invasive mussels in the waters of the Columbia River Basin. In 2014, Congress passed new authorization for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that included a provision giving the Corps legal authority to enter into cost-sharing agreements with the four Northwest states to establish and operate Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination stations. The Council worked closely with regional partners in advancing the legislation and supporting continuing funding for this program.

The cost-share program is coordinated through Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. The funding has allowed the four Northwestern states to increase the number of watercraft inspection stations and their days and hours of operation. It has also supported ongoing monitoring and rapid response efforts.

More Info: [PSMFC Aquatic Invasive Species Program](#)