

Henry Lorenzen
Chair
Oregon

Bill Bradbury
Oregon

Guy Norman
Washington

Tom Karier
Washington



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

W. Bill Booth
Vice Chair
Idaho

James Yost
Idaho

Pat Smith
Montana

Jennifer Anders
Montana

December 6, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council members

FROM: Leslie Bach, Mark Walker

SUBJECT: Status of Corps of Engineers cost-share funding for invasive mussels prevention

BACKGROUND:

Presenters: Dave Combs and Richard Turner, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Summary: Council members and staff are actively engaged with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure the timely release of federal cost-share funds for Watercraft Inspection Stations. We will receive an update from a representative of the Corps on the status of the documentation required to meet regulatory obligations and the development of cost-share agreements with the states.

Relevance: The Council's Fish and Wildlife Program encourages a regional approach to establishing a defensive perimeter to keep invasive mussels out of Columbia River Basin waters. The program specifically identifies the need to coordinate and share tracking and monitoring data on invasive mussels in the Columbia Basin and data on rapid response, prevention, monitoring, containment, control, eradication, enforcement and education and outreach efforts among a variety of organizations.

Background: 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. 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 stations. Funding to implement the new authority was included in the Corps' FY16 federal appropriation. This funding is critical as the states do not have sufficient resources to ensure that watercraft inspection stations are located in all critical areas. Recent detection of invasive mussel larvae in Montana reservoirs underscores the urgency of the funding need.

To implement the project, the Corps needs to complete an evaluation in the form of a "letter report", along with appropriate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation. The report will be completed by the Northwest Division and signed by Corps Headquarters. Until the report is finalized and approved by Corps headquarters in Washington, DC, no funds can be released to assist the states. It is hoped that the agreements can be finalized prior to the start of the "watercraft migration season" that will begin in late February at some locations when boats start to return from the Southwest, the Great Lakes, and other infested areas in the U.S. and Canada for the spring and summer boating season in the Northwest.

More Info: On November 2nd, Guy Norman and Council central staff met with Dave Ponganis and Rock Peters from the Corps' Northwestern Division to discuss progress on the letter report. Representatives from Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and PNWER also participated.

On November 29th, Council members sent a letter to Brigadier General Spellmon, Commander of the Northwest Division of the Corps, urging the timely completion of the letter report/NEPA documentation and release of the cost-share funding (Attachment 1).

Council members and staff are following up with Congressional representatives to continue encouraging quick completion of the necessary documentation.

Henry Lorenzen
Chair
Oregon

Bill Bradbury
Oregon

Guy Norman
Washington

Tom Karier
Washington



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

W. Bill Booth
Vice Chair
Idaho

James Yost
Idaho

Pat Smith
Montana

Jennifer Anders
Montana

November 29, 2016

Brigadier General Scott Spellmon
U.S Army Corps of Engineers
Northwestern Division
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 400
Portland, Oregon 97232

Dear Brigadier General Spellmon:

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council greatly appreciates the support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in implementing section 1039(d) of the Water Resources and Reform Development Act of 2014, P.L. 113-121 (WRDA 2014), pertaining to the funding of watercraft inspection stations in the Pacific Northwest. The placement and continued operation of these stations is critical to the region's efforts to prevent an infestation of invasive quagga and zebra mussels in the Columbia River Basin.

Recent news of the detection of invasive mussel larvae in Montana reservoirs underscores the urgency for federal cost-share funds for constructing, operating and maintaining watercraft inspection stations. If invasive mussels were to enter the waters of the Columbia River Basin, damage to the hydropower system could be devastating. Overall estimates of economic impacts to the Northwestern states and Canadian provinces exceed \$500 million per year.

To date, the four NW states collectively spend about \$3.35 million each year on prevention efforts, including watercraft inspection stations. However, to ensure that this effort continues to be successful, the states need to greatly expand the number and hours of inspection stations. The timely release of the federal matching funds contained in the Corps' Fiscal Year 2016 federal appropriation is crucial to this effort.

We urge the Corps to complete the necessary documentation and disseminate the federal funding. Specifically, we ask for quick completion of the "Letter Report" and National Environmental Policy Act document by the Northwest Division and for quick review and approval by Corps Headquarters. We also ask that the Corps develop and sign cost-sharing agreements with the states as soon as possible, to allow states to establish and operate watercraft inspection stations in time for the spring boating season.

Again, thank you for your leadership and support and for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Lorenzen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Henry Lorenzen
Chair

cc: Colonel Torrey DiCiro
Mr. David Ponganis
Mr. Rock Peters

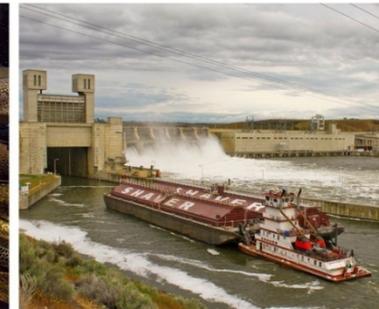
Federal Participation in Watercraft Inspection Stations Columbia River Basin

Richard Turner Project Manager

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Walla Walla District

Dec 13, 2016



Presentation Overview

- Summary of the Integrated Letter Report and Programmatic Environmental Assessment
- Authority
- Existing Watercraft Inspection Program
- Actions Considered in Report
- Environmental Compliance
- Recommendations
- Schedule



Integrated Report

- Integrated Report – combines the Letter Report and the Environmental Assessment.
- Letter Report:
 - ▶ What problems are addressed?
 - ▶ What actions are available?
 - ▶ Are the actions economically justified?
- Environmental Assessment:
 - ▶ Compliance of the proposed actions



WRRDA Authority

- Section 1039(d) of the Water Resources and Reform Development Act 2014
- Establish watercraft stations in the Columbia River Basin in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington
- Cost share 50/50 - constructing, operating, and maintaining watercraft stations
- Coordination- States, Tribes, and other Federal Agencies
- (e) Monitoring and contingency planning



Actions Considered in the Report

- No Action
- Expansion of the Watercraft Inspection Program
 - ▶ Adding Locations
 - ▶ Extending Daylight Hours
 - ▶ Adding Nighttime Inspections
 - ▶ Site Improvements
 - ▶ Utility Connections
 - ▶ Canine Detection Capabilities
 - ▶ Improved Signage
- Watercraft Inspection at Source Waters
- Monitoring: Identify Water Chemistry Parameters and Early Detection
- Contingency Planning and Rapid Response Plan



Economic Considerations

- Federal and Non-Federal Infrastructure Impacts
 - ▶ Hydropower Facilities
 - ▶ Navigation Locks
 - ▶ Fish Passage and Hatchery Facilities
 - ▶ Water Supply and Treatment Facilities
 - ▶ Boating and Marine Infrastructure
 - ▶ Recreation, Tourism, and Waterfront Property Values



Comparison of Costs

- Benefit to Cost ratio (B/C)
- The Benefits are defined as delaying the increased operation and maintenance costs due to an infestation
- The Costs are defined as the watercraft inspection program costs



Programmatic Environmental Assessment

- Existing Conditions
 - ▶ Environmental conditions in the study area
 - ▶ Resources in the study area
- Environmental Consequences
 - ▶ Compares the No action alternative (do nothing) and Proposed Expansion of the Program
 - ▶ What effects, if any, to the resources
- Compliance with laws and regulations
- Coordination, consultation, public involvement



Recommendations

- Under WRRDA 2014 (inside CRB within PNW states): Develop partnerships with states to expand the program
- Additional Authority (outside CRB within PNW states) - develop partnerships with states to expand the program
- Containment at the source:
 - ▶ Utah, Nevada, and California should implement similar laws (Arizona Fish and Game Department Directors Order 3 R05/15)
 - ▶ Mandatory inspections at infested Federal Lakes
 - ▶ Regional inspections stations leaving Great Lakes traveling to CRB



Recommendations

- Monitoring:
 - ▶ Early Detection
 - ▶ Identify high risk areas with similar water characteristics
- Contingency Planning and Rapid Response Plans
- Public Awareness
 - ▶ Outreach, Education, Ad Campaigns



Remaining Tasks

- Regional review
- USACE Technical and Policy review
- Submission to USACE HQ – Jan 2017
- Drafting Agreements, Scope of Work
 - ▶ Watercraft Inspection Locations and Costs

