

Research & Strategic Partnerships

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Co-Chairs Devlin and Rayfield
Joint Ways and Means Committee on Natural Resources

c/o Paul Siebert, Committee Administrator
(WaysandMeans.NaturalResourcesSub@state.or.us)

Dear members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee on Natural Resources:

As chair of the Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, I am writing to testify in support of the DEQ's budget bill proposed under House Bill 5018. A fact sheet describing the task force organization and objectives is attached for your convenience.

The task force is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders and seeks to develop consensus-based solutions regarding invasive species prevention practices for commercial vessels operating in Oregon waters. One of the primary objectives of the task force during 2014 was to evaluate ballast management program activities at DEQ and, if necessary, propose funding recommendations to ensure that the program has adequate resources to meet vessel inspection and compliance verification needs. We examined the program's operations, objectives, and current resources and concluded that additional resources are needed to sustain current program service levels beyond 2015. The complete task force report with recommendations to the 2015 Legislature is available at:
http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/cu/emergency/docs/STAIS_LegReport2015.pdf

Specifically, the task force unanimously recommends an increase in the per-vessel-arrival ballast management fee with the expectation that the state would provide a commensurate increase in General Fund allocation to the program in order to maintain a 50/50 cost share in support of program activities. While SB 261 addresses the vessel arrival fee increase, Policy Option Package 136 of the DEQ budget requests the additional General Fund necessary to achieve a balance between the two revenue sources. Together, this partnership of public and private industry funding sources would satisfactorily support the implementation and enforcement of existing ballast water laws to prevent environmental risks of transporting invasive species into Oregon waterways.

DEQ Policy Package 136 - in conjunction with SB 261 - reflect the hard work and careful deliberations of the task force and, if implemented, would sustain DEQ efforts to protect Oregon's rivers and coast from aquatic invasive species.

The task force recognizes the value and importance of the work being done by DEQ's Ballast Water Management Program to protect Oregon waterways. All members of the task force support the proposal to maintain program funding with a fee increase and a commensurate increase in General Fund support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D. Sytsma". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mark D. Sytsma
Chair, Oregon Task Force on Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species

Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force

Background

Recognizing the continued potential economic and ecological threats from aquatic invasive species, the 2013 Oregon Legislature passed SB 116, reestablishing the task force charged with studying and making recommendations for preventing the shipping-related introduction of aquatic invasive species.

In addition to investigating emerging issues and opportunities to promote ballast water management regulatory consistency among West Coast states, the task force will consider other shipping-related risks, such as biofouling, that could transport aquatic invasive species into Oregon waterways. Previous reports from this task force are available from the website listed below.

Task force organization

DEQ's director appoints members to the Task Force to achieve equitable representation from the maritime industry, environmental and academic communities, relevant federal agencies and the states of Washington and California.

Appointed task force members for 2013-14 are:

- Jas Adams, OR Dept. of Justice
- Jeff Bachman, ODEQ (WQ/OCE)
- Rick Boatner, ODFW
- Ralph Breitenstein, Hatfield Marine Science Center
- Nicole Dobroski, California State Lands Commission (alt: Chris Scianni)
- Robyn Draheim, USFWS
- Michelle Hollis, Port of Portland
- Frank Holmes, Western States Petroleum Association
- Ross McDonald, Sause Bros.
- Hans Meere, EGT LLC
- Amanda Hanson, Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership
- Michael Pearson, USCG
- Allen Pleus, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (alt: Gary Gertsen)
- Mark Sytsma, Portland State University
- Kate Mickelson, Columbia River Steamship Operators Association
- Brett VandenHeuvel, Columbia Riverkeepers
- Dick Vander Schaaf, The Nature Conservancy
- Rian Hooff, ODEQ (ex-officio)

In addition, the Oregon Senate President and Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives appoint two members from the Oregon Legislature to serve in an advisory capacity to the task force. The 2013/14 legislative advisors are:

- Sen. Arnie Roblan (Dist. 5)
- Rep. Caddy McKeown (Dist. 9)

Objectives and responsibilities

SB 116 (2013) directs the Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force to study and make recommendations on:

- combating the introduction of aquatic non-indigenous species associated with shipping-related transport into Oregon waters;
- funding mechanisms to support and maintain prevention efforts;
- developing potential changes to ballast water regulations that may address: shipping industry compliance, treatment technology advances, water quality discharge standards, compatibility with other pertinent laws, and new techniques or regulations that may reduce the risk of aquatic invasive species invasions; and

The task force completed a report on its findings and recommendations to the Oregon Legislature in May 2014. The report is available at the web link listed below.

Information and meeting schedule

DEQ anticipates bimonthly meetings of the task force beginning in autumn 2013. For more information about this task force, visit the DEQ Web link:

www.deq.state.or.us/lq/cu/emergency/staistaskforce.htm

Alternative formats

Alternative formats of this document can be made available. Contact DEQ's Office of Communications & Outreach, Portland, at (503) 229-5696 or call toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696.



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