

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/07/15

Action: Be Adopted.

Meeting Dates: 05/07

Vote:

Yeas: 7 - Barreto, Esquivel, Frederick, Krieger, McKeown, McLain, Witt

Exc: 2 - Gorsek, Whitsett

Prepared By: Chuck Gallagher, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Urges Congress to expedite appropriation of funds to enhance efforts to monitor and prevent spread of aquatic invasive species and to implement Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Increasing number of boats arriving in Oregon carrying invasive species
- Inability to cover all major access areas into the state with inspection stations
- Quagga mussels increasingly discovered on boats entering Oregon
- Need for greater inspection, outreach and funding to address problem

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Healthy aquatic habitats provide clean drinking water, flood control, transportation, recreation, purification of wastes, power generation, habitat for native plants and animals, production of fish and other foods, marketable goods and cultural benefits. Aquatic invasive species, including dreissenid mussels such as quagga mussels and zebra mussels, cause irreparable ecological damage to many waters of the United States. Dreissenid mussels significantly alter the ecology of lakes, rivers and streams, displace native species, block water delivery, disrupt recreational and commercial fishing, undermine docks and other structures in the water, and impede navigation, irrigation, and enjoyment of the country's waterways.

Dreissenid mussels have not yet been detected in the Pacific Northwest, but the annual cost to address dreissenid mussel populations if they were to become established in the region is estimated to amount to nearly \$500 million annually. The Water Resources Reform and Development Act was signed into law on June 10, 2014, and authorizes \$20 million for the Secretary of the Army to establish watercraft inspection stations in the Columbia River Basin to prevent the introduction of dreissenid mussels and other aquatic invasive species. On April 26, 2015 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife officials at the Ontario watercraft inspection station found a boat coming from Ohio containing zebra mussels.

Senate Joint Memorial 9 would urge Congress to expedite the appropriation of funds to enhance efforts to monitor and prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and to implement the Water Resources Reform and Development Act.