

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

September 20, 2021

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso,

The North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) consists of a broad network of professionals and organizations that implement and support programs to prevent and manage the detrimental impacts of invasive species to North America's lands and waters. NAISMA continues to be concerned with the increasing number of recreational watercraft exiting federally owned or managed impoundments in the Colorado River Basin with invasive quagga mussels on board, putting western water, energy, and natural resources at great risk.

NAISMA encourages the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to authorize federal recreation managers, including the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the USDA Forest Service, to perform activities intended to prevent and contain the spread of aquatic invasive species, such as zebra and quagga mussels, on recreational conveyances. Authorized activities should include mandatory watercraft inspection and decontamination (WID), quarantine, and enforcement for non-compliant users entering and leaving federal recreation areas.

Science-based standards for WID-related activities have been developed in partnership by states, federal agencies, and private industry. The [WID standards](#) have been approved by the Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. A [regional WID training program](#), supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, implemented by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, is available to individuals performing WID activities.

NAISMA also encourages the Committee to authorize funding to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for cost-share agreements with states, tribes, and local governments to support the implementation of this critical work. Since 2007 when mussels were first found in Lake Mead, states have borne the majority of the burden to perform and fund this work on federal lands and waters, in addition to waters managed by the states themselves and local governments.

The task of protecting natural resources, water supplies, and energy production is a shared responsibility, as is the task of providing outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities for which the

West is known. WID prevention and containment is now a necessary part of operating reservoirs and managing water-based recreation in the west. The need for this work to be done on federal impoundments to protect shared resources are overwhelming western states. The irreversible invasion of Lake Powell since 2013 has resulted in a large increase of infested boats each year, as drought in the Colorado River Basin further amplifies the problem.

States, tribes and local governments that are engaged in cross-jurisdictional WID prevention programs have proven that this strategy works to keep invasive zebra and quagga mussels and other aquatic invasive species out of our waters. When prevention programs at negative waters are partnered with containment programs at infested waters, and both have enforcement, we stand the best collective chance to stop the spread of invasive species on recreational watercraft and protect western resources. It is of the highest importance that the federal agencies that own or manage recreational water bodies be authorized to perform this work in a collaborative manner with states.

Thank you very much in advance for your efforts to protect natural resources, energy, water supplies, the environment, and the economy of the United States from the threat of invasive species.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle Bergner".

Belle Bergner, Executive Director
North American Invasive Species Management Association