

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

December 1, 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 enthusiastically supports S.3266 The Outdoor Recreation Act, specifically Section 202 which authorizes federal recreation managers, including the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation 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 exiting federal recreation areas.

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

NAISMA encourages the authorization of funding to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for cost-share agreements with states, tribes, local governments, and non-governmental organizations to support the implementation of this critical invasive species prevention, containment, and management 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 federally owned and managed 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 is overwhelming western states. The irreversible invasion of Lake Powell since 2013 has resulted in a large increase of infested boats transporting invasive species each year, as drought in the Colorado River Basin further amplifies the problem.

States, tribes, local governments and non-governmental organizations 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". The signature is fluid and includes a long, sweeping underline.

Belle Bergner, Executive Director
North American Invasive Species Management Association