

United States Senator Dean Heller

Press Releases

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) has introduced the *Protecting Lakes against Quaggas (PLAQ) Act*, which would add quagga mussels to the national list of invasive species covered under the Lacey Act. While Administrative action to list quagga mussels as an invasive species could take many years, this bill would speed up the process significantly and allow for prevention and control measures to commence.

“The quagga mussel is a threat to many of our greatest national treasures, including Lake Tahoe and Lake Mead. By infiltrating new habitats and ecosystems and then multiplying at an alarming rate, quagga mussels quickly become nuisances and are extremely difficult to remove.

“By passing the PLAQ Act and listing the quagga mussel as an invasive species, Congress can protect these natural resources and accomplish in just a short time what would otherwise take many years. I would also like to thank Congressman Joe Heck for his leadership on this issue by introducing the companion bill in the House of Representatives,” said Senator Dean Heller.

The quagga mussel is considered one of the biggest threats to Lake Tahoe, Lake Mead, Lahontan Reservoir, Rye Patch Reservoir, and many other western lakes and reservoirs. They wreak havoc on the water bodies by concentrating pollutants, clogging pipes, and lining shorelines. Their razor sharp shells damage boats, water infrastructure, and native wildlife.

Quagga and zebra mussels have cost more in prevention and control than any other aquatic species to invade the United States, costing an estimated \$5 billion in prevention and control efforts since their arrival to the Great Lakes in the late 1980s. Currently, only the zebra Mussel is listed as an invasive species.

This legislation is supported by many local stakeholders including:

The Nevada Department of Wildlife
Tahoe Regional Planning Authority (TRPA)
Colorado River Energy Distributors Association (CREDA)
Western Governors Association
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
National Wildlife Federation
Irrigation & Electrical Districts' Association of Arizona
National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species.

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