



PACIFIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

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April 19, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N. W.
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell,

At the 65th Annual Meeting of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission there was considerable discussion of aquatic invasive species and in particular potential impacts of quagga and zebra mussels. The ecological and economic devastation these mussels cause is well-documented. The potential for negative economic and environmental impact should these mussels continue to spread throughout the West is immense. When one considers potential impacts to the 28 ESA-listed stocks of salmon and steelhead on the West Coast, hydroelectric power production, agriculture and water delivery, the need for effective action to prevent the spread of quagga mussels is clear.

The PSMFC commissioners are on record, by unanimous vote, to communicate with you to “direct the National Park Service to utilize all existing authorities onsite at Lake Mead to immediately inspect and decontaminate all watercraft of quagga mussels leaving Lake Mead.”

Numerous agencies and organizations over the last four years have repeatedly requested that the Department of Interior improve watercraft decontamination procedures at Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LMNRA). For reference, we have attached correspondence summaries on this issue from West Coast states, tribal groups, legislators, interstate fish/wildlife organizations, NGO's, as well as power production and economic interests.

Despite these requests, contaminated watercraft continue to leave LMNRA without proper decontamination. In fact, in 2012, over 100 quagga mussel contaminated watercraft from LMNRA were intercepted at state-run watercraft inspection stations, making it the number one source of contaminated watercraft in the west. Since these stations are not open 365 days a year, nor operated on a 24 hour basis, it is frightening to think of how many contaminated boats are being launched into uncontaminated waterbodies. It is clear that the chance of contaminated boats entering our waters would

be much lower if an effective mussel watercraft decontamination program was implemented at LMNRA.

Western states have committed significant resources in establishing watercraft inspection and decontamination stations, but they cannot be the only line of defense.

Decontaminating quagga mussel fouled watercraft at their source must occur, or we will continue to witness the spread of quagga and zebra mussel across the western U.S.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Fisher', written in a cursive style.

Randy Fisher
Executive Director

Attachment

Attachment: Summaries of correspondences on quagga mussel management in the Lower Colorado River.

DATE	FROM	TO	Subject
7/24/2008	US Senator Dianne Feinstein	Secretary Dirk Kempthorne	It is my understanding that the Department has not sought any additional funding despite the threat that quagga mussels pose to National Park Service resources and vital Bureau of Reclamation infrastructure. Additionally, there also appears to be some confusion regarding whether they or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for coordinating the overall federal response. It is critical that the Department inform Congress about what funds are necessary for these agencies to develop and implement a comprehensive response and provide clear direction as to who is responsible for administering the overall effort.
5/21/2009	US Senators Dianne Feinstein, John McCain, John Kyl, Harry Reid and John Ensign	Secretary Ken Salazar, Lisa Jackson, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency	As you know the Lower Colorado River is a critical water source for several of the driest states in the country. Local governments are working hard to safeguard their water supplies, ensure that water quality standards are met, and deal with invasive species. To better understand the federal resources available to address these issues, we request that you provide our offices with information pertaining to any existing federal authority and resources that are available toaddress invasive species such as the quagga mussel in the Lower Colorado River Basin.
6/9/2009	Idaho Governor Butch Otter	Secretary Ken Salazar	Mr. Secretary, please seriously consider instituting within all U.S. Department of Interior agencies, including the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a mandatory decontamination requirement for ALL vessels leaving mussel-infested waters such as Lake Mead. Additionally, I ask that Interior use its Lacey Act authority to enforce restrictions on instate transport of zebra mussels.
11/3/2009	Amy Ferriter AIS Coordinator, Idaho Department of Agriculture (ISDA)	Superintendent William Dickenson, Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LMNRA)	It is my understanding that National Park Service concessionaires keep detailed records on boats moored at each facility at Lake Mead, and that these boats must file a 30-day notice prior to departure. I am hereby requesting that NPS staff provide copies of relevant departing boat notifications to the Idaho Invasive Species Program as they are files throughout the year.
9/25/2009	Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)	Secretary Ken Salazar	There is an ongoing need for a high level of bio-security by all government jurisdictions that manage boating waters in the United States that harbor zebra and quagga mussels; but it is absolutely critical that the Park Service and other applicable federal agencies contain contaminated boats within the Colorado River system via comprehensive inspection and decontamination programs and associated water access security and enforcement.
10/14/2009	Director Phil	Superintendent	I ask that you enhance your aquatic invasive species prevention and enforcement efforts at

	Anderson, Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	William Dickenson, LMNRA	Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Enhancements to your inspection protocol, enforcement of laws and regulations, mandatory/voluntary decontaminations, and educational outreach would all benefit in dealing with infested vessels and equipment. In addition, we also ask that you work with the 100 th Meridian Initiative Columbia River Basin Team and Western Regional Panel in an effort towards...a regional “alert” system ...that will send out necessary alerts and needed information in the event a “suspected “ Quagga mussel infested boat leaves an infested area without being inspected or decontaminated...”
4/21/2010	Larry Dalton, AIS Coordinator, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	Superintendent William Dickenson, LMNRA	Boats that depart Lake Mead must be decontaminated, but experience during 2009 has shown that most of the 15 quagga mussel encrusted boats encountered in Utah originated from Lake Mead. At the time that your personnel or the concessions are notified, will you please provide a list of those boats (hull registration number and boat description; owner's name, address and phone number; and the haulers name address and phone number) that are returning to or with intent to travel through Utah.
5/14/2010	Michael D. Stone, Chief of Fisheries Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.	Superintendent William Dickenson, LMNRA	I am requesting that information (including description, dates and contacts) for moored boats that are returning to or with intent to travel through Wyoming be provided to us before the boats leave Lake Mead. This information will help in our AIS prevention efforts and enable us to contact owners of these boats to facilitate compliance with Wyoming requirements prior to launching.
10/22/2010	Thomas E. Remington Chair, Colorado River Fish and Wildlife Council (COFWC)	Secretary Ken Salazar	A significant problem at Lake Mead seems to be quality control relative to decontamination of moored boats that are about to depart the recreation area. Not all departing boats get decontaminated, and many of those that do evidence attached mussels in a latent inspection by another regulatory agency. We request that the National Park Service compel their concessionaires as part of their contract and training to implement the aforementioned methodology for encrusted boats that have been moored: 1) Clean (remove all attached mussels), drain, and dry the boat for the appropriate time. 2) If they opt to professionally decontaminate the boat with scalding hot water as per above, then proceed to: a) quarantine the boat thereafter for the appropriate time to kill mussels through desiccation; and b) remove (clean) any remaining mussels from the hull prior to a boat being transported.
11/17/2010	Celia Gould Director, ISDA	Superintendent William Dickenson, LMNRA	Requesting that NPS provide ISDA with all information related to Idaho registered ...boats which will be travelling to or through the state of Idaho that have launched or will launch a vessel within the LMNRA.
12/27/2010	Celia Gould	Superintendent	In a letter dated 11/17/10 I requested information from the National Park Service related to

	Director, ISDA	William Dickenson, LMNRA	Idaho-registered/bound vessels at LMNRA, I am seeking this information to ensure that boats leaving the quagga mussel-infested LMNRA will be inspected and decontaminated before launch into Idaho's waters
1/18/2012	Celia Gould Director, ISDA	Secretary Ken Salazar	<p>The Department of Interior's FY 2012 budget has been allocated \$1 million in funding, which is specified in the Interior Appropriations bill to go to "the Implementation of mandatory operational inspection and decontamination-stations at federally-managed or inter-jurisdictional water bodies considered to be of highest risk."</p> <p>From our perspective, a good use of these funds would be for on-the-ground actions to inspect and decontaminate boats leaving the Lake Mead National Recreational Area (LMRNA). If an effective mussel containment program could be implemented at LMNRA in the near term, this action would greatly reduce the number of contaminated boats entering Idaho's waters. It is critical that this program be put in place immediately, as seasonal boats will begin returning to Pacific Northwest waters in early spring.</p>
1/26/2012	Larry Voyles, Chair, COFWC	Dr. Daniel M. Ashe, Director U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	<p>Since their discovery in the lower Colorado River in 2007, containment of quagga mussels has become overwhelming for state and federal resource agencies and lake concessionaires. Consequently, trailered boats continue to serve as an active vector for invasive mussels from infested waters in the Southwest to new locations, often across state lines.</p> <p>The approved Interior FY 2012 budget included a funding sum of \$1 million designated towards, "the implementation of mandatory operational inspection and decontamination stations at federally-managed water bodies considered to be of the highest risk, as called for in the February 2010 Quagga-Zebra Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters." In addition, ". . .\$1 million is included to continue and expand funding for the control and eradication of zebra-quagga mussels and other aquatic invasive species, including funding for State aquatic invasive species management plans." The Council supports these fund designations and believes it would best benefit the region and nation as a whole if they were directed to the lower Colorado River (specifically the Lake Mead National Recreation Area – National Park Service), the primary source for potentially contaminated boat traffic in the West.</p>

2/3/2012	Northwest Power and Conservation Council	Daniel M. Ashe, Director U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	We strongly urge you, in concert with the National Park Service, to use the \$1 million earmark in your FY 2012 budget to establish a mandatory inspection and decontamination requirement for all vessels leaving the mussel-infested federal waters of Lake Mead. While our states have established watercraft inspection and decontamination stations, the chance of contaminated boats entering our waters would be much lower if an effective mussel containment program could be implemented at Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Furthermore, it is critical that such a program be implemented without delay, as seasonal boats will begin returning to Pacific Northwest waters in early spring.
2/13/2012	Babtist Paul Lumley, Executive Director Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission	Daniel M. Ashe Director, United States Fish and Wildlife Service	CRITFC recommends that the Service work cooperatively with the National Park Service to establish and implement a mandatory inspection and decontamination requirement for watercraft leaving Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Language in the FY2012 budget specifically recommends: “the implementation of mandatory operational inspection and decontamination stations at federally managed or inter-jurisdictional water bodies considered to be of highest risk.” A mandatory program at Lake Mead would fall squarely within that budget direction.
5/15/2012	Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER)	Mike Oetker, Assistant Regional Director – Fisheries Region 2 USFWS	<p>The quagga mussel infestation of Lake Mead.....is still a major source of infested boats to water bodies throughout the West. Despite repeated requests to the National Park Service and to Secretary Salazar, the federal government still has not implemented an effective boat-cleaning program to prevent the spread of these mussels to the Pacific Northwest.</p> <p>The USFWS is charged with allocating the FY12 \$1 million Interior appropriation. The attached “List of priority actions proposed for 2012 QZAP funding targeting containment of quagga mussels in the Lower Colorado River with an emphasis on Lake Mead National Recreation Area” has been provided to us for review purposes. The actions outlined in this document <u>do not</u> provide for mandatory, operational inspection stations as is clearly stated in the appropriation language.</p>
5/22/12	Northwest Power and Conservation Council	Mike Oetker, Assistant Regional Director – Fisheries Region 2 USFWS	To protect the Pacific Northwest economy and the ecology of the basin, it is absolutely critical that the Department of Interior contain contaminated boats within the lower Colorado River system through a comprehensive inspection and decontamination program and associated water access security and enforcement. The FY 2012 Interior Appropriation bill included clear and direct language to the Department of Interior. It states: “This bill includes \$1,000,000 towards the implementation of mandatory operational inspection and decontamination stations at Federally-managed or interjurisdictional water bodies considered to be of highest risk, as called for in the February 2010 Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters.” We are concerned that while some of the actions proposed to be undertaken with 2012 funding

			<p>have merit, they do not provide the mandatory inspection stations at Lake Mead or other federal waters in the lower Colorado River, as is intended in the appropriation language.</p> <p>The Council continues to believe the most effective approach is a two-part plan of action: 1) Inspection and decontamination stations are needed at Lake Mead as a first priority, and then at other southwestern waters, where most of the contaminated watercraft arriving in the Northwest have come from. 2) Efforts of our Northwest States, all of which have mounted inspection efforts to intercept and decontaminate infested boats, do need to be expanded and enhanced. In March, the Council directed a letter to members of the Northwest Congressional delegation, urging a separate appropriation of \$2 million in FY 2013 for this purpose.</p>
6/18/2012	Representative Eric Anderson, Idaho House of Representatives	Secretary Ken Salazar	<p>As we have said repeatedly, it is important that at a minimum, the National Park Service should implement an operational mandatory inspection and decontamination program for moored watercraft. This could be implemented either by Park Service personnel or through the amendment of existing concessionaire agreements with marinas. Complimenting that effort, the National Park Service should ensure that there is adequate notification to all western state invasive species prevention programs when long-term moored watercraft depart the Lake Mead National Recreation Area; so that these programs may have a better chance to intercept these vessels for further inspection as needed. In addition the National Park Service should direct all day use boaters to clean, drain and dry their vessels when departing the National Recreation Area. All of the above efforts are possible given existing resources and knowledge. What is required is the direction the National Park Service to make this a priority.</p>
6/29/2012	The Nature Conservancy (Joint letter: States of ID, MT, OR, WA, WY, AZ)	Superintendent William Dickenson, LMNRA; Mike Oetker, Assistant Regional Director – Fisheries Region 2 USFWS	<p>To protect the ecological systems of our states, it is absolutely critical that the Department of Interior contain contaminated boats within the Lower Colorado River system through a comprehensive inspection and decontamination program. The FY 2012 Interior Appropriation bill included clear and direct language to the Department of Interior. It states: “This bill includes \$1,000,000 towards the implementation of mandatory operational inspection and decontamination stations at Federally-managed or inter-jurisdictional water bodies considered to be of highest risk, as called for in the February 2010 Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters.”</p> <p>Inspection and decontamination stations are needed at Lake Mead as a first priority, and then at other southwestern waters, where most of the contaminated watercraft arriving in the Northwest have originated. All other proposed expenditures are of lesser value and priority and, in our view, should not be undertaken at this time.</p>
10/2/ 2012	Northwest	Sally Ericsson,	On behalf of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council I am writing to urge you to

	Power and Conservation Council	Associate Director for Natural Resource Programs Office of Management and Budget	include a specific line item in the Fiscal Year 2014 Fish and Wildlife Service budget to strengthen inspection and decontamination programs to reduce the threat of invasive zebra and quagga mussels invading Pacific Northwest waters through infected watercraft..... We are particularly concerned that inspection and decontamination of watercraft leaving the Southwest is not as rigorous as it could be. This is especially important for boats leaving the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, which is heavily infested with invasive quagga mussels.
12/ 20/2012	Pacific Northwest Economic Region	Secretary Ken Salazar Department of the Interior	Six months ago, we sent a letter to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Regional Director expressing our concerns with the spending plan for the FY12 Interior appropriation directed at Quagga and zebra mussel containment at federally-managed waters (attachment). We also provided specific requests for the appropriate use of this funding. To date, none of the high priority actions call for by the Interior Appropriations Committee have been accomplished. This is extremely alarming to our organization. We encourage you to assure that the USFWS and the National Park Service (NPS) immediately implement a comprehensive and effective boat decontamination and notification system at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LMNRA).