

# Funding requested to control aquatic invasive species



## **\$26.3 million in federal appropriations are needed to control harmful aquatic invasive species in the Pacific Northwest**

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) threaten billions of dollars of Washington's economy, critical infrastructure, public health, and environment but current federal funding levels are insufficient to support the control of harmful AIS. Of particular concern are invasive European green crab and quagga and zebra mussels.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), partner agencies, Native American tribes, and industry and stakeholder groups request Congress provide sufficient financial support to address current and potential destructive impacts of AIS. We request Congress appropriate:

- \$8 million to the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Invasive Species Program for the Northwest Region
- \$5 million to the Coastal Aquatic Invasive Species Mitigation Grant Program annually
- \$4.8 million to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Quagga-Zebra Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters
- \$4.4 million to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's State and Interstate Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan Grand Program
- \$3 million for a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service annual grant program to implement the National European Green Crab Management Plan
- \$800,000 to the U.S. Geological Survey's Biological threats and Invasive Species Research Program
- \$300,000 to Willapa National Wildlife Refuge and Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge for European green crab eradication efforts.

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More information on European green crab and quagga and zebra mussels can be found on the next page.

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**European green crabs and quagga and zebra mussels threaten West Coast economies, the environment, and tribal, cultural, and commercial resources.**

**The European green crab**, a globally damaging species that can survive in a wide range of water temperatures, has become established in many temperate coastal zones around the world. They feed on clams, smaller crabs and fish, eelgrass, and damage habitat as well as preying on native species.

If able to become widespread in Washington's marine waters, they will harm businesses relying on cultivated shellfish including commercial oyster and clam growers—a \$100+ million industry in Washington—as well as tribal and recreational shellfish harvesters and shellfish gathering rural coastal communities. These predatory crabs also compete with Dungeness crab—a fishery valued in the hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity.

More than one million European green crabs have been captured and removed in recent years by Washington state agencies, Native American tribes, and partners. However additional federal support and coordination is needed.

**Quagga and zebra mussels** clog intake pipes and damage critical infrastructure costing utilities, companies, and taxpayers millions of dollars in mitigation and management costs. Invasive mussels threaten billions of dollars of Washington's economy including shipping on the Columbia River valued at \$31.2 billion, irrigated agriculture valued at \$9.6 billion, and \$20.5 billion in outdoor recreation and fisheries.

While not currently established in Washington, introduction of invasive mussels is an imminent threat. In 2023 and 2024, quagga mussels were detected in Idaho's Snake River and consumer aquarium Marimo moss balls were found to be contaminated with zebra mussels. Annually, WDFW watercraft inspection stations intercept mussel-fouled watercraft.

Federal support is key to supporting prevention and readiness actions critical for protecting Washington's waters, economy, public health, and environment.

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