

Stop the Spread of Invasive Mussels Act of 2024

QUOTES OF SUPPORT:

"With the discovery of zebra mussel veligers in the Colorado River and in the Government Highline Canal near Grand Junction, CO, Representative Neguse's legislation is needed now more than ever to protect our state's waterways and critical infrastructure," said **Dan Gibbs, Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources**. "We commend Representative Neguse for being a continued champion of legislation to expand collaboration between state and federal partners, which will be critical to preventing these harmful species from further taking root in western rivers."

"This is a classic: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," said **Chané Polo, Executive Director of the Colorado Water Congress**. "The spread of invasive mussel species continues to be a risk to water bodies throughout the nation and will have a significant impact for all water supplies and infrastructure, including the water projects that were built by the Bureau of Reclamation. Colorado has been proactive in developing and expanding the inspection and decontamination program over the last 14 years and has brought different stakeholders and interests together to support and commit to the protection of water infrastructure and reservoirs against infestation. This bill will provide the necessary authorization, funding, and allow additional partnerships to be developed to support these programs on federal reservoirs, where the inspection and decontaminations are highly effective at preventing the spread of mussels. We applaud the efforts of Congressman Neguse and Senator Bennet to face this threat head on with a bill to authorize a clear and consistent role as a federal partner in federal water resource projects."

"Aquatic invasive species represent one of the greatest threats to the health and resilience of our fisheries. Given the difficulty of eradicating these species once established, they pose an outsized threat to the ecological balance of intact ecosystems and they have already overwhelmed native aquatic life in many waters. We applaud the leadership of Representative Neguse for the introduction of legislation that would facilitate coordination across management jurisdictions and engage stakeholder partners to improve processes for inspection and decontamination of watercraft, actions that are critical to address the spread of invasives like zebra and quagga mussels." said **Kaden McArthur, Government Relations Manager, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers**

"The spread of invasive mussels to Colorado's water storage and delivery infrastructure is alarming," said **Andy Mueller, General Manager of the Colorado River District**. "This important legislation will help to protect West Slope water users by bolstering state-led inspection programs and helping to prevent future mussel infestations in Colorado. I want to thank Representative Neguse for his leadership on this important issue."