

Representative Helm, other committee members, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Dr. Arick Rouhe and I'm the director of the Center for Lakes and Reservoirs (CLR) at Portland State University. In 2001, on the heels of the creation of the Oregon Invasive Species Council and the drafting of the Oregon Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan, CLR was established by ORS 352.691 with the purpose of assisting state and federal agencies in researching and mitigating nonindigenous, invasive aquatic species in Oregon. This established CLR as the official entity to monitor for Aquatic Invasive Species in Oregon.

From the presentations and panel testimony, you can see the importance of keeping Zebra, Quagga, and Golden mussels from taking hold in Oregon waters. If any of these mussels make it into waterbodies in Oregon, research from other regions of the country indicates that to be a likely scenario, finding them as soon as possible once they arrive and treating them early and as often as possible is the most effective method for keeping populations from establishing a foothold and impacting Columbia River Basin hydropower infrastructure. So, early detection monitoring is a crucial line of defense and the Center for Lakes and Reservoirs is the entity in Oregon that is tasked with early detection monitoring for these mussel species.

Since the CLR zebra and quagga monitoring program was established in 2005, our funding has fluctuated annually but we have been able to strategically adjust our monitoring schedule each year to focus on water bodies or regions of need.

Our current effort maximizes our resources for the locations that have the highest monitoring need (Columbia River along the border between Washington and Oregon, the Snake River along the eastern border with Idaho...) but early detection monitoring is considered to be below the minimum threshold for the number of locations that need to be monitored in Oregon. With the increasing risk of a zebra or quagga mussel introduction due to Oregon's proximity to the Twin Falls population and from Golden mussels due to the high level of ship and recreational boat traffic from the Sacramento River Delta to Oregon water bodies, the need for being above the minimum threshold of monitoring for invasive mussels has never been greater in the state of Oregon.

So, the take away message from my comments today is that Early Detection Monitoring in Oregon is in danger of falling far below the minimum threshold of effectiveness and the funding that would be provided by HB 2981 for monitoring would provide the Center for Lakes and Reservoirs with the resources to stay above that threshold.