

DECLARATION OF COOPERATION

Working Together to Ensure a Rapid
Response to an Introduction of Dreissenids
in the Columbia River Basin

CRB MEETING – JANUARY 2020

The states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and the Province and British Columbia

Recognizing the long-term detrimental economic, environmental, and cultural effects of dreissenids and other aquatic invasive species;

Taking into account the spread of dreissenids in North America and the proximity of dreissenids to the Columbia River Basin boundary;

Acknowledging key progress made since the creation of the *Columbia River Basin Interagency Invasive Species Response Plan: Zebra Mussels and Other Dreissenid Species*, including:

- The development of rapid response plans and implementation of rapid response exercises;
- Completion and ongoing tracking of vulnerability assessments in Basin hydropower facilities;
- Establishment of model regulations for state watercraft inspection and decontamination programs;
- Creation of shared online databases that document locations of western watercraft inspection stations and water bodies where dreissenid monitoring occurs;

- Consensus among Basin entities regarding *Uniform Minimum Protocols and Standards for Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination Programs for Dreissenid Mussels in the Western United States*;
- Articulation of recommended practices to facilitate Endangered Species Act Section 7 compliance;
- Development of an online dreissenid incident response toolkit to facilitate a response to an introduction of dreissenids in the Basin; and
- Formal training for watercraft inspection and decontamination staff throughout the western United States;

Expressing continued support for public engagement relative to aquatic invasive species prevention via efforts, such as *Clean, Drain, Dry, Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!*, *Don't Let it Loose*, and *PlayCleanGo.org*;

Advancing the international, national, and regional collaboration that has occurred through initiatives, such the 100th Meridian Initiative, *Building Consensus in the West*, the Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, and other efforts;

The four Columbia River Basin states, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia commit to:

- Collaborate and cooperate relative to ongoing dreissenid prevention efforts and all efforts associated with preparing for, and responding to, an introduction of dreissenids to the Basin, including, but not limited to:
 - Ongoing support for projects and programs that advance dreissenid prevention, detection, and control efforts;
 - Sharing information, equipment, and staff resources to respond quickly and early to a detection;
 - Use of the *Columbia River Basin Dreissenid Incident Response Toolkit* to advance an effective and timely response to a dreissenid introduction;
 - Adequate levels of monitoring and sharing of monitoring information on a regular basis; and
 - Public engagement to increase awareness, understanding, and support for aquatic invasive species prevention and control efforts in the Basin;

We view this declaration as an expression of:

- The role of cooperation and collaboration to protect the economy, environment, and cultural resources of the Basin;
- The importance of the health of the Basin to the quality of life of residents and visitors;
- The recognition that cooperation will facilitate an effective and timely response to an introduction of dreissenids to the Basin; and
- Our ability to cooperate based on our common interests.

The signatories to this Declaration commit to a regular assessment of the progress made in dreissenid prevention efforts in the Basin, and to continued development and implementation of collaborative approaches to protect the Basin from economic, environmental, and cultural effects associated with a dreissenid introduction.

State of Idaho (Date)

State of Montana (Date)

State of Washington (Date)

State of Oregon (Date)

US Fish and Wildlife Service (Date)

Columbia River Inter-Tribal
Fish Commission (Date)

Province of Alberta (Date)

Province of British Columbia (Date)