



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Michelle Garrison, Interstate, Federal & Water Information Section

DATE: July 19, 2017

AGENDA ITEM: 16. Aquatic Nuisance Species Funding Update (informational item)

Background:

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) staff presented information regarding Colorado's Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Program at the January 2017 Board meeting. The Program's goals focus on protecting the state's water infrastructure for municipal, industrial and agricultural uses, as well as preserving natural resources and providing outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities. The ANS Program operations include a multi-jurisdictional mandatory watercraft inspection and decontamination program, statewide sampling and monitoring of waterbodies, and education and outreach efforts. The program has been very successful in intercepting watercraft infested with harmful zebra and quagga mussels. This January Colorado became the only state in the nation to go from positive to negative status for mussels.

The ANS Program historically received funding from Tier 2 Severance Tax revenue. With the drastic decrease in that funding source, CPW is investigating more stable long-term funding mechanisms for the ANS Program, including license fee increases, sticker fees or registration fees. Long-term alternative funding sources are expected to take at least 2 years to develop and fully establish.

CPW is working with partners including water supply providers and reservoir operators, recreation interests, Federal agencies and the CWCB to prioritize activities and continue this vital program while addressing funding shortfalls. CPW and its partners provided emergency funding for 2016 and 2017. The state legislature provided approximately \$3.6 million of short-term funding for the ANS program through SB17-259. Funding from CPW, its partners, and SB17-259 will support the ANS Program through 2018.

CWCB staff will provide an update on ANS Program funding options.

