

# HB 18-1008



EMPOWERED CITIES AND TOWNS, UNITED FOR A STRONG COLORADO

## MUSSEL-FREE COLORADO ACT

### COLORADO'S AQUATIC NUISANCE PROGRAM IS IN JEOPARDY

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#### HB 18-1009: YOUR "YES" VOTE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED

The Colorado ANS program was authorized by the Colorado Legislature in 2008 utilizing severance tax funds. Since that time, Colorado Parks and Wildlife has leveraged those funds with federal and local grants to fund the program. Unfortunately, due to the volatility of severance tax in recent years as well as reduced federal funds, CPW can no longer rely upon these funding sources as guaranteed revenue to fund this important program going forward.

Zebra and Quagga mussels are not native to the nation's rivers, lakes and reservoirs and are considered our most serious aquatic nuisance species threat. They cause enormous problems for municipal water infrastructure by attaching to, clogging and impairing water storage, treatment, and distribution systems. To avoid a mussel infestation, Colorado has implemented an effective prevention program to stop mussel introduction by inspecting watercraft before they enter and ensuring that users clean, drain, and dry watercraft.

So far, Colorado's reservoirs have been able to resist a mussel infestation thanks largely to this vigorous inspection program. In states where infestations have occurred, controlling the damage that mussels inflict on municipal infrastructure becomes a permanent and expensive part of normal operations.

The Mussel-Free Colorado Act:

- Provides a stable funding source of \$2.4 million for the ANS program every year by requiring boat owners to purchase an ANS stamp. (\$25 for residents and \$50 for non-residents)
- Continues to utilize Tier-2 severance tax appropriations when available to cover the remainder of the program's costs.
- Increases fines for ANS related violations.
- Allows CPW to charge labor/costs incurred to store and decontaminate intercepted vessels.
- Encourages federal partners to take responsibility for ANS inspection funding at their reservoirs.

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