

NEWS

Oregon State Marine Board

Boat Oregon!



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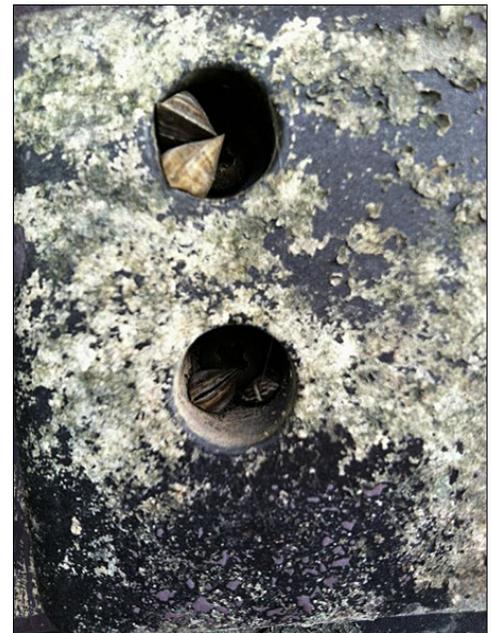


For Immediate Release

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Protecting Our Waterways from Invaders *2015 Annual Report is Out*

It's been six years since the Oregon Legislature enacted the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program, aimed at protecting Oregon's waterways from the economic and environmental devastation experienced in the Midwest from invasive quagga and zebra mussels. Since the program's inception, the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) have issued an annual report highlighting the year's activities to include mandatory check stations, education and outreach, and program finances.



In 2015, ODFW completed 12,953 watercraft inspections of trailered boats and non-motorized boats at mandatory roadside check stations along border points of entry. Two hundred and eighty one of the 12,953 boats inspected were contaminated with invaders: 207 with aquatic vegetation, 33 with marine organisms, and 29 with freshwater organisms. The remaining 12 were contaminated with either quagga or zebra mussels originating from Arizona, Louisiana, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Utah and Wisconsin. These boats were decontaminated with high pressure and hot water at the inspection stations.

In addition to the inspection stations, OSMB and ODFW expanded education and outreach efforts by distributing printed materials through additional partnerships with park rangers, river rangers, biologists, and researchers.

Another enhancement was increasing on water enforcement of the permit and education about the program. In 2015, officers documented 47,781 contacts with boaters. Most of these boaters were in compliance, however, 810 warnings were issued for boaters who did not have an aquatic invasive species permit, and 356 citations were issued.

Some of the permit fees were dedicated to monitoring Oregon's waterways. Portland State University's (PSU) Center for Lakes and Reservoirs supported two programs: monitoring waterways for zebra and quagga mussels, and continuing the Oregon Lake Watch Program. With the help of volunteers who "adopt" a waterway, these individuals were provided technical field training and equipment to sample the waterbody a few times during the year. PSU collected the data and tracked locations where aquatic invasive species of concern were found.

Aquatic Invasive Species revenue is also being used for targeted removal efforts. In 2010, an invasive colonial tunicate (*Dideemnum vexillum*) was found in two locations: The Charleston Marina and Winchester Bay's "triangle" on the southwestern Oregon coast. In 2015, an underwater suction dredge was purchased and will be used in 2016 at the Winchester Bay location to begin removing the tunicates from where they are growing. Monitoring at the Charleston Marina continues, with any found tunicates being removed by divers when found. The annual dive surveys indicated a population decrease in this location.

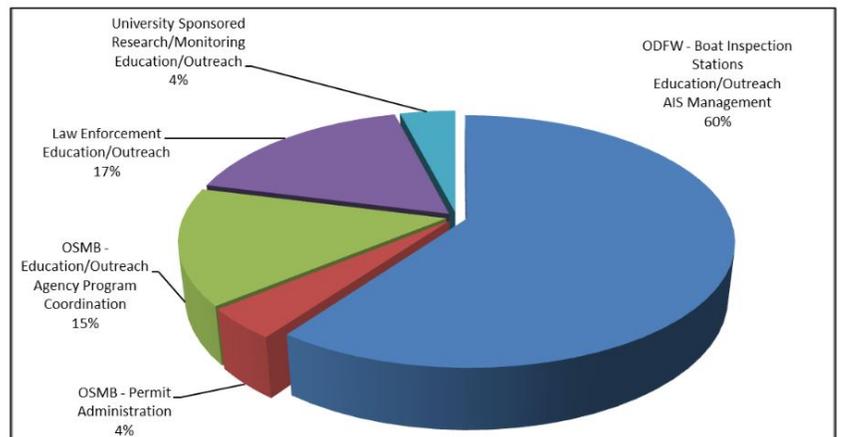
Revenue generated from the permit sales slightly increased over 2014, with \$796,753. There were 77,766 motorboat owners who renewed their boat registrations, which include a \$5 surcharge that goes directly into the AIS fund. Out-of-state boaters purchased 4,979 permits, 2,300 permits were sold to guides and rental facilities and 52,271 permits were sold to non-motorized boat owners (number includes annual and two-year permits).

All of the permit fees go directly into the AIS program that funds inspection station staff, decontamination equipment, education and outreach materials, and waterway monitoring.

For more information about

the Aquatic Invasive Species Program, visit www.boatoregon.com or

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/invasive_species/quagga_zebra_mussel.asp.



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