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May 6, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Stacy Horton, Washington Policy Analyst, Biologist

SUBJECT: State of Washington Invasive Mussel Detection Canine Demonstration

BACKGROUND:

Presenters: Justin Bush, Aquatic Invasive Species Division Manager; Fin, Aquatic Invasive Species Detection Canine; and Nick Knauss, Aquatic Invasive Species Canine Handler and Inspector; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Summary: Western states and provinces, including the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, have watercraft inspection stations to prevent aquatic invasive species from being introduced into Columbia River Basin waters. In Washington, Fin, the state's invasive mussel detection canine, has been a key part of the team working to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive mussels. Invasive mussel detection dogs, like Fin, are specifically trained to sniff out quagga and zebra mussels on boats and watercraft, helping to prevent the spread of these invasive species. Aside from a well-trained nose, Fin and his handler, Nick Knauss, raise awareness of the threats posed by invasive species and encourages all of us to practice responsible boating practices like Clean, Drain, Dry.

More info: Preventing the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species – Clean, Drain, Dry:
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/prevention>

Western State and Provincial Watercraft Inspection Stations:
<https://www.westernais.org/watercraft>