

Date of Hearing: April 14, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE

Diane Papan, Chair

AB 2032 (Ransom) – As Amended March 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Fish and wildlife: golden mussels

SUMMARY: Provides exemptions from Restricted Species Permits (RSP) and Scientific Collection Permits (SCP) for a public or private agency that operates a water supply system (water managers), as well as requires evaluation of pesticides and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits to be expedited to manage invasive golden mussels. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Exempts water managers from RSP requirements for maintenance and operational activities to control the spread of golden mussels in the water supply system, including removing golden mussels from pipes, screens, filters, and other infrastructure.
- 2) Requires the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through the Golden Mussel Task Force, to develop and adopt, on or before April 1, 2027, best management practices for water managers to control the spread of golden mussels until control plans can be developed and approved.
 - a) Requires the best management practices to include common maintenance and operational activities for water infrastructure, water supply systems, and water bodies.
 - b) Requires CDFW to provide guidance to water managers regarding the best management practices and to update the best management practices as necessary.
 - c) Encourages a water manager undertaking maintenance and operational activities to control the spread of golden mussels in the water supply system to comply with the best management practices.
- 3) Requires the Invasive Species Program in CDFW, through the Golden Mussel Task Force, to develop and adopt, by April 1, 2027, guidance for scientific research conducted by or for water managers to control the spread of golden mussels, including biology, ecology, and feasibility studies for golden mussel prevention, mitigation, control, and eradication methods.
 - a) Requires that the guidance include a process for water managers to submit a streamlined project proposal for scientific research to control the spread of golden mussels to CDFW and requires CDFW to respond with suggested best management practices for the possession and transport of golden mussels to minimize any negative impacts of the scientific research.
 - b) Encourages water managers engaging in research to comply with adopted guidance or the best management practices.

- c) Exempts scientific research to control the spread of golden mussels conducted by or for water managers from SCPs if the water manager participates in the Golden Mussel Task Force.
- 4) Requires CDFW to update the spatial distribution maps of golden mussel-infested water bodies posted on its internet website no less than quarterly based on monitoring and reported detections.
- a) Requires those maps to distinguish between reported and confirmed detections of golden mussels and include the date of the most recent map update to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information.
 - b) Requires that the purpose of the maps is to inform water agency decisions for water supply system projects, maintenance, and operational activities.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Until January 1, 2030, prohibits a person from possessing, importing, shipping, or transporting in the state, or placing, planting, or causing to be placed or planted in any water within the state, invasive mussels, unless authorized by CDFW.
- a) Provides the Director of CDFW, or a designee of the Director, the authority to conduct inspections of conveyances (e.g., vehicles and boats), order that the conveyance be drained, dried, or decontaminated, impound or quarantine conveyances, and conduct inspections of waters of the state and facilities that may contain invasive mussels. Permits the Director of CDFW to determine that other parties or state agencies, including State Parks, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the State Lands Commission, may exercise those authorities as well.
 - b) Exempts from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), any action in Existing Law #1, above, but does not exempt from CEQA the use of chemicals, other than salt or hot water, to decontaminate a conveyance or facility.
 - c) Requires a public or private agency that operates a water supply system (water manager) to cooperate with CDFW to implement measures to avoid infestation by invasive mussels and to control or eradicate any infestation that may occur in a water supply system. If invasive mussels are detected, the water manager, in cooperation with CDFW, shall prepare and implement a plan to control or eradicate invasive mussels within the system, and eliminate or minimize any potential downstream transport of an invasive mussel. Requires the approved plan to contain the following minimum elements:
 - i) Methods for delineation of infestation, including both adult mussels and veligers;
 - ii) Methods for control or eradication of adult mussels and decontamination of water containing larval mussels;
 - iii) A systematic monitoring program to determine any changes in conditions; and

- iv) The requirement that the water manager permit inspections by CDFW as well as cooperate with CDFW to update or revise control or eradication measures in the approved plan to address scientific advances in the methods of controlling or eradicating mussels and veligers.
 - d) If the water manager has prepared, initiated, and is in compliance with all the elements of an approved plan to control or eradicate invasive mussels in accordance with Existing Law #1 (b), the restrictions of Existing Law #1, above, do not apply to the operation of those water delivery and storage facilities, and the water manager is not subject to any civil or criminal liability for the introduction of invasive mussel species as a result of those operations. Authorizes CDFW to require the water manager to update its plan. Authorizes CDFW to apply the restrictions on a water manager if the plan is not updated or revised, until the water manager updates or revises the plan.
 - e) Requires CDFW, on or before December 31, 2026, to review all approved plans pursuant to (c) and requires all plans that do not specifically address all invasive mussel species known to be present in bodies of water in the state as of January 1, 2026, to be updated or revised appropriately to include all invasive mussel species, on or before September 30, 2027.
 - f) Requires every invasive mussel species to be addressed in a plan no later than 180 days from the date that the species is listed in the restricted species regulations. Requires CDFW to approve plans or provide written comments and suggestions on plan deficiencies within 180 days from the date of plan submission.
 - g) Requires an entity that discovers invasive mussels within this state to immediately report the discovery to CDFW.
 - h) Establishes an additional penalty for any violation of Existing Law #1 with a penalty not to exceed \$1,000.
 - i) Allows CDFW to adopt regulations to carry out the restrictions in Existing Law #1.
 - j) Indemnifies CDFW and any other state agency exercising authority under Existing Law #1 with regard to any determination or authorization made pursuant to this section [Fish and Game Code (FGC) § 2301]
- 2) Requires any person, or federal, state, or local agency, district, or authority that owns or manages a reservoir (reservoir manager) to undertake certain measures to prevent invasive mussel infestation, in reservoirs in which invasives mussels have not been detected.
- a) Requires a reservoir manager responsible for a reservoir, where recreational, boating, or fishing activities are permitted, except a privately owned reservoir that is not open to the public, to:
 - i) Assess the vulnerability of the reservoir for the introduction of invasive mussel species; and

- ii) Develop and implement a program designed to prevent the introduction of invasive mussel species. Requires the program to, at a minimum, include public education, monitoring, and management of those recreational, boating, or fishing activities that are permitted.
 - b) Requires a reservoir manager responsible for a reservoir, where recreational, boating, or fishing activities of any kind are not permitted, to include visual monitoring for the presence of mussels as part of its routine field activities, based on its available resources and staffing.
 - c) Allows a reservoir manager, except a privately owned reservoir that is not open to the public, to refuse the planting of fish in that reservoir by CDFW unless CDFW can demonstrate that the fish planting does not present a risk of introducing invasive mussels.
 - d) Establishes a civil penalty, not to exceed \$1,000 per violation of Existing Law #2, above. Authorizes CDFW to adopt regulations to implement and enforce requirements on reservoir managers to the extent funds are available (FGC § 2302).
- 3) Defines “invasive mussel” to mean any nonnative detrimental mussel species that is capable of spreading in freshwater and is listed in a regulation adopted by the Fish and Game Commission (FGC § 2303).
- 4) Requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to collect for resident and nonresident vessel owners, separate from the registration fee, an invasive mussel infestation prevention fee (invasive mussel fee) in an amount established by the Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW).
- a) Requires DMV to issue an invasive mussel infestation prevention sticker (invasive mussel sticker) to the vessel owner, upon payment of the mussel fee.
 - b) Authorizes the citation of a vessel operator for operating a recreational vessel in nonmarine waters without a valid state-issued invasive mussel infestation prevention sticker (Vehicle Code § 9853).
- 5) Requires the invasive mussel fee to be paid to DBW.
- a) Establishes the invasive mussel fee to be between \$30 and \$42, every other year. Requires those values to be adjusted for inflation. Requires DBW to establish and consult with a technical advisory group to determine the fee.
 - b) Permits DBW to adopt emergency regulations to manage the collection and use of the invasive mussel fees.
 - c) Requires all revenue from the invasive mussel fee to be deposited into the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund.
 - d) Clarifies that a vessel operator may be issued a citation for operating a recreational vessel in nonmarine waters without a valid state-issued invasive mussel sticker [Harbors and Navigation Code (HNC) § 675].

- 6) Establishes how revenues from the invasive mussel fee may be used.
 - a) Requires the moneys deposited into the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund be used for:
 - i) The reasonable costs incurred by DBW associated with determining the invasive mussel fee and adoption of regulations and with administering the grants.
 - ii) The reasonable costs, not to exceed 15% of the remaining revenues, of CDFW for implementation of invasive mussel regulations in those areas of the state where an invasive mussel infestation prevention plan has not been implemented.
 - iii) Grants to reservoir managers subject for the reasonable regulatory costs incident to the implementation of an invasive mussel infestation prevention plan. At least 85% of the revenue must be used for this purpose.
 - b) Requires DBW, when awarding grants, to:
 - i) Give priority to invasive mussel infestation prevention plans that meet requirements and that also include visual and manual inspection standards and other infestation prevention procedures consistent with established or future state adopted guidebooks and management plans;
 - ii) Take into consideration the benefits of regional-scale invasive mussel infestation prevention plans; and
 - iii) Take into consideration the unique economic, ecological, and recreational impacts to rural and urban reservoirs from invasive mussel infestation.
 - c) Prohibits the use of invasive mussel fees for any purpose other than those explicitly authorized (HNC § 676).
- 7) Prohibits the importation, transportation, possession, or live release of specified wild animals into this state except under a revocable, nontransferable restricted species permit issued by CDFW, in cooperation with CDFA [FGC § 2116 *et seq.*; 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) 14 § 671 *et seq.*].
- 8) Provides civil and criminal penalties for violations of invasive mussel restrictions and any permit conditions (FGC § 2125 and § 12000).

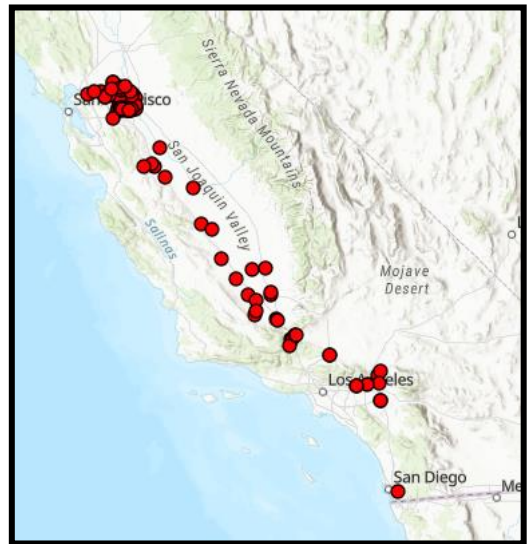
FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This bill is keyed fiscal.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose of this bill.** According to the author, “Current law requires a multitude of permits across state agencies, creating barriers for local water agencies to respond quickly and effectively [to the threat of golden mussels]. This ongoing crisis must be addressed with urgency. [This bill] would expedite onerous and lengthy permitting processes across state

agencies to ensure local water agencies can effectively respond to prevent, mitigate, control, and eradicate golden mussels from California's waterways."

- 2) **Background.** On October 17, 2024, DWR staff discovered golden mussels in the Port of Stockton. Soon after the initial discovery, the golden mussel was quickly found at additional sites within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta). The golden mussel is a freshwater bivalve native to the rivers and creeks of China and Southeast Asia, but it has established itself outside of its native range in several countries. The discovery in Stockton was the first detection of the species in the United States. The Fish and Game Commission quickly took emergency action to add "*Limnoperna fortunei* (golden mussel)" to the list of restricted species (species that cannot be imported, transported, or possessed within the state, except by a restricted species permit). Since then, the golden mussel has been detected throughout the Delta and the State Water Project.



Golden mussel detection map as of April 2026

The presence of the species poses a significant and immediate threat to the ecological health of the Delta and all waters of the state, water conveyance systems, infrastructure, and water quality. Environmental impacts of the golden mussel include loss of native and game fish through competition for food sources as well as a contribution to harmful algal blooms. It is estimated that a single mussel can filter up to a liter of water a day, which would remove critical nutrients and microbes that support ecosystem health. Recreational impacts of this mussel include waterbody closures, mandatory inspections, increased launch and/or entry fees, and reduced numbers of fish and shellfish for consumption. Economic impacts include costly repairs and maintenance (e.g., boats, water infrastructure, hydroelectric facilities), reduced water flow affecting food production, water delivery to homes, and flood control. According to the Administration's budget change proposal regarding golden mussels, "if allowed to spread further, golden mussel will affect every household in California, and every sector of our economy."

Invasive mussel legislative history. Since 2007, California has been working to control and eradicate two other species of invasive, freshwater mussels in state waters: quagga and zebra (dreissenid) mussels. In response to dreissenid mussel infestation, the Legislature has passed a series of bills that established the dreissenid mussels as restricted species, granted CDFW with authorities to inspect, order treatment, and quarantine water vessels. Since dreissenid mussels are restricted species, a person is prohibited from possessing, importing, shipping, transporting or introducing the dreissenid mussels in any water within the state, unless authorized by CDFW through a restricted species permit.

Further, statute requires water managers to work with CDFW to develop measures to avoid infestation, as well as requires water managers to develop control plans to prevent the spread

of the invasive mussels should the water system become infested with the mussels. The benefit of developing a control plan is that water managers enjoy liability protections from the unintentional transportation or introduction of dreissenid mussels to the water system once the control plan is approved by CDFW.

Several years later, the Legislature established the Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Program. Under the current program, an additional fee is charged to motorized boats in the state since motor boat recreation is thought to be the most likely cause of over-land aquatic invasive species spreading. Revenues from the fee are primarily used for grants distributed by DBW. The next round of grants for the program are currently open, and DBW expects to distribute up to \$2 million dollars. The grants are available to entities that own or manage any aspect of water in a reservoir that is open for public recreation and is mussel-free. The funds must be used for prevention projects, such as planning, watercraft inspection stations and inspectors, launch monitors, watercraft decontamination units, educational signage, and outreach.

Until last year, statute, and therefore state programming, was specific to quagga and zebra mussels. In AB 149 (see Related Legislation, below), the dreissenid mussel programs and authorities were expanded to include any invasive mussel, which includes the golden mussel.

Don't move a mussel. Golden mussels have proven to be much more difficult for the state and water managers to control. Golden mussels have high reproductive rates and form dense colonies. This mass colonization of surfaces (termed "biofouling") blocks, impairs, and, in many cases, inhibits the functionality of manmade surfaces including underwater intakes, structures, and mechanisms. Biofouling also coats the hulls and external components of watercraft and recreational facilities, and natural objects such as rocks, fallen trees, even other sedentary bivalves. In addition, mass colonies of golden mussels alter ecological processes of the natural environment resulting in detrimental impacts to native and game species and water quality. Nearly every fresh and brackish waterbody in California is suitable for golden mussel to establish. Indeed, this Committee has heard of countless examples of the issues golden mussel infestation has been causing for water infrastructure and the recreational boating industry. Even the fear of infestation has resulted in water managers heavily restricting, or even prohibiting, water access for public recreation.

There are no socially and environmentally benign methods currently available to eliminate invasive mussels once they are present. Adult mussels can survive days, even weeks, when removed from water. Larval mussels can survive a week or longer in small volumes of water. Eradication from large, interconnected bodies of water is likely impossible. Therefore, containing mussels within infested areas is the only means to minimize additional new, widespread impacts.

Clean, drain, dry. While the spread of invasive mussels in interconnected waters cannot be prevented without restricting navigation, their overland spread, attached to and within watercraft and equipment (vessels), can be prevented. If a vessel carrying live invasive mussels is launched into an un-infested waterbody, it can result in a new mussel infestation. The risk that any given vessel poses for spreading invasive mussels is dependent on the type of conveyance, and the watercraft launching behavior of the boater. Depending on the type of

watercraft and when it will be next launched, preventing the overland spread of mussels can be as simple as boaters draining water upon exit from a waterbody and allowing their watercraft to dry prior to their next launch, or a rigorous professional cleaning, which requires labor- and time-intensive hot-water, high-pressure washing, or weeks out of water, depending on the season, waiting for entrapped mussels to die.

Invasive Species Program. The mission of CDFW's Invasive Species Program is to reduce the negative effects of non-native invasive species on the wildlands and waterways of California. The program works to prevent the introduction of these species into the state, detect and respond to introductions when they occur, and prevent the spread of invasive species that have become established. Work is conducted in close coordination with other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the public to protect the state's natural environment, economy, and human health. The Invasive Species Program produces an annual internal report that summarizes statewide accomplishments (by calendar year), including watercraft quarantines, releases, inspections, decontaminations, finalized mussel prevention and control plans, monitoring efforts, lab, analyses, new mussel detections, outreach events, etc. The accomplishments anticipated from this request will be tracked and documented internally annually, consistent with the existing process that has been used for tracking dreissenid mussels since 2007.

Preventing biofouling. Golden mussels appear to be more resilient to chemical treatment than dreissenid mussels. However, the body of research regarding golden mussel ecology, environmental impact, treatment, etc. under state environmental conditions is still limited. Research is exploring chemical treatment options that could kill mussels, coatings that would prevent biofouling, and filters and ultraviolet radiation to prevent mussels or their microscopic offspring from moving through water systems.

Restricted species and scientific collecting permits. CDFW and the Commission maintain a list of species that are unlawful to import, transport, or possess except through a RSP (14 CCR § 671). CDFW is authorized to issue permits for the take or possession of wildlife, including mammals, birds (and their nests and eggs), reptiles, amphibians, fish, certain plants and invertebrates for scientific, educational, and propagation purposes, through a SCP (14 CCR § 650). Considering the nuance, novelty, and uniqueness of every water manager's system and goals for the permits, it is difficult to provide hard-and-fast rules on which, if either, of these permits are needed for water managers coping with golden mussel infestation.

As noted above, water managers receive liability protection from the restricted species standards for golden mussel upon CDFW's approval of their control plan. According to regulations, this liability protection currently only extends to the passive possession of the invasive mussels and the handling of mussels for monitoring purposes. It is not unlikely that water managers are, by necessity, having to perform activities that may require an RSP and are not currently protected under the liability coverages of an approved control plan. This likely stems from several core issues.

First, very few water managers have updated their control plans to include golden mussels. Possession of an updated and approved control plan is what grants liability protection, so without approved control plans, a water manager is exposed. According to CDFW, only two

control plans have been updated or newly generated to include golden mussels and those control plans are currently under review. Sponsors indicate that the lack of guidance on how to produce a control plan has prevented them from submitting, or even developing, a control plan. CDFW is currently working on guidelines for control plans, which it estimates will be available in a matter of months.

Second, current regulations were drafted to reflect the hazards of quagga and zebra mussels, which are not as aggressive as golden mussels. As such, currently, regulation does not afford restricted species liability protections for certain activities, like operations and maintenance. CDFW has expressed that it is currently working to update regulations to reflect recent authority expansions in AB 149 and expand the liability coverage to additional activities necessary to effectively manage a water system.

Finally, there is stress among water agencies that they are not protected from restricted species violations until they have an approved control plan. This is true. That lack of protections without an approved control, however, is intended to encourage water agencies to submit control plans quickly so that they could enjoy those protections. CDFW does appear to understand that no water agency *intentionally* possessed golden mussels and has not, to date, penalized a water agency under restricted species authorities.

- 3) **Policy considerations.** This bill may be highlighting a chicken-and-egg problem. The sponsors of this bill have expressed concern about the lack of liability protections for certain activities and the need to generate their own research and standards to inform their control plan. However, the control plan is the exact mechanism by which CDFW would guide and allow for those additional activities and evaluate the hazards of any golden mussel research. Sponsors have indicated to the Committee that they have not attempted to obtain RSPs or SCPs through the traditional route and have not submitted a control plan to CDFW to begin those discussions.
- 4) **Proposed committee amendments.** This bill proposes exemptions, under certain circumstances, for water agencies to receive RSPs and SCPs. *Should this bill pass this Committee, the author may wish to continue refining this bill to ensure any permit exemptions do not provide unnecessary pathways for water agencies to further delay submitting their control plans to CDFW. Approved control plans will provide holistic protections that this bill is also seeking to provide. Until that time, the Committee may wish for the author to take the following amendments in the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee, that align the proposed exemptions with the submission of control plans:*

Section 1, findings and declarations:

- (1) Invasive golden mussels are a serious threat to water infrastructure, water systems, water bodies, and ecosystem health.
- (2) Golden mussels have been detected ~~in much of the state~~ **throughout the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and in the southern portion of the State Water Project**, creating an emerging crisis that necessitates an emergency response.

(3) ***Golden mussels tolerate a wider range of environmental conditions than other invasive mussel species previously encountered in the state, and have been able to establish robust populations throughout the Delta.*** ~~Golden mussels are more resilient than other invasive mussel species and tolerate a wider range of water quality. Traditional control methods, such as chemical treatment, have proven less effective due to the increased tolerance. While chemical treatments are being developed, the concentrations will need to be tested.~~

(4) Several ***mollusk*** treatment methodologies, including filters, ultraviolet light, ~~and chemical,~~ ***chemicals***, and coatings, are available and may be effective to control the ***spread and*** settlement of golden mussels. ***These methodologies are being tested and refined for use specifically against golden mussels under various conditions across the state.***

(5) In order to maintain the function of water supply systems and facilities, golden mussels must be removed from pipes, screens, filters, and other infrastructure. Water agencies are experiencing a significant increase in these maintenance activities.

~~(6) Permitting processes relating to controlling the spread of golden mussels are extensive and time consuming, with permit approvals subject to lengthy backlogs.~~

(7) ~~The extensive number of permits that will be required~~ ***To promote efficiency in permitting efforts*** to control and mitigate the effects of golden mussels in the state must be strategically leveraged ***align existing processes*** to reduce the amount of time necessary to prepare, submit, process, and approve subsequent permits.

(8) To combat the spread of golden mussels, it is necessary to engage in scientific research efforts to obtain information on golden mussel biology and ecology and feasibility studies for prevention, mitigation, control, and eradication methods. ~~Much of this research qualifies for existing exemptions to the California Environmental Quality Act (Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code).~~

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this act to do both of the following:

(1) Support public and private agencies that operate water supply systems in the prevention, mitigation, control, and eradication of golden mussels.

~~(2) Streamline and expedite permitting to~~ ***Align permitting processes to better*** support the necessary rapid response to prevent serious impacts of golden mussels on water infrastructure, water supply systems, and water bodies.

Section 2, FGC § 2150.6:

(a) A public or private agency that operates a water supply system ***and has submitted their control plan, prepared pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 2301,*** shall be exempt from any permit requirement ***for golden mussels*** pursuant to this chapter for maintenance and operational activities to control the spread of golden mussels in the water supply system, including removing golden mussels from pipes, screens, filters, and other infrastructure ***that comply with the submitted control plan.***

(b) ***This exemption shall remain in effect until such time that the department determines the control plan does not meet the requirements of the control plan or approves the control plan.***

Section 3, FGC § 2301.5:

(a) (1) The department's Invasive Species Program, ~~through the Golden Mussel Task Force convened by the department, shall develop and adopt, on or before April 1, 2027, best management practices—~~**guidance** for public and private agencies that operate water supply systems ~~control the spread of golden mussels until~~ **to develop effective** control plans ~~can be developed and approved pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 2301. The best management practices shall include common maintenance and operational activities for water infrastructure, water supply systems, and water bodies. The department shall, upon request, provide guidance to public and private agencies that operate water supply systems regarding the best management practices and shall update the best management practices as necessary.~~ **The guidance shall include relevant protocols, example standards, and required elements of a control plan.**

(2) ~~A public or private agency that operates a water supply system undertaking maintenance and operational activities to control the spread of golden mussels in the water supply system is encouraged to comply with the best management practices adopted pursuant to paragraph (1).~~

(b) (1) The department's Invasive Species Program, ~~through the Golden Mussel Task Force,~~ shall develop and adopt, by April 1, 2027, guidance for scientific research conducted by or for public and private agencies that operate water supply systems to control the spread of golden mussels, including biology, ecology, and feasibility studies for golden mussel prevention, mitigation, control, and eradication methods. **Guidance shall also include mussel handling standards for mussel handling to minimize any potential negative impacts of the possession and transportation of golden mussels.**

(2) ~~The guidance shall include, but is not limited to, a process for a~~ **A** public or private agency that operates a water supply system **and is not in possession of an approved control plan, may** ~~to~~ submit to the department a streamlined project proposal for scientific **research that investigates the biology, ecology, and feasibility studies for golden mussel prevention, mitigation, control, and eradication methods.** ~~to control the spread of golden mussels., to which the department shall respond with suggested best management practices for the possession and transport of golden mussels to minimize any negative impacts of the scientific research.—The project proposal shall comply with the guidance adopted pursuant to paragraph (1).~~

(3) ~~A public or private agency that operates a water supply system conducting scientific research, or having scientific research conducted on its behalf, to control the spread of golden mussels in the water supply system is encouraged to comply with the guidance adopted pursuant to paragraph (1) or provided to it in response to a project proposal pursuant to paragraph (2).~~

(3) (4) ~~Scientific research to control the spread of golden mussels conducted by or for public and private agencies that operate water supply systems, including, but not limited to, as part of a project~~ **A project** proposal submitted pursuant to paragraph (2), is exempt from scientific collecting permits under Section **1002 and restricted species permits pursuant to Section 2150 .** ~~1002 if the public or private agency participates in the Golden Mussel Task Force, as that participation may be determined by the department.~~

(4) The exemption pursuant to paragraph (3) shall terminate upon submission of a control plan to the department pursuant subdivision (d) of Section 2301.

(c) The department shall update the spatial distribution maps of golden mussel-infested water bodies posted on its internet website no less than quarterly based on monitoring and reported detections. The maps shall distinguish between reported and confirmed detections of golden mussels and include the date of the most recent map update to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information. ~~The purpose of the maps shall be to inform water agency decisions for water supply system projects, maintenance, and operational activities.~~

- 5) **Arguments in support.** San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority and Contra Costa Water District write as co-sponsors of this measure. They note that water agencies must remove mussels from pipes, screens, filters, and related infrastructure to preserve system reliability. They believe this bill will provide needed “flexibility to conduct pilot studies and feasibility research on prevention, mitigation, and in-system eradication methods. Streamlined project review, exemption from duplicative permit requirements, and practical handling guidance for scientific work will accelerate development of effective response strategies while minimizing environmental risk.”
- 6) **Double referral.** This bill is also referred to the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee.
- 7) **Related legislation.** AB 1772 (Papan) of the current legislative session requires CDFW, in consultation with State Parks and CDFW, to develop a voluntary framework to prevent the overland spread of invasive mussels through the conveyance of watercraft overland. AB 1772 is also set for hearing in this Committee.

AB 1894 (Rubio) of the current legislative session establishes that, notwithstanding any other law, the state has exclusive authority to regulate invasive mussels. AB 1894 is also set for hearing in this Committee.

AB 2787 (Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife) of the current legislative session, among other things, provides that a person who operates a Nevada-registered vessel on the waters of Lake Tahoe or Topaz Lake shall not be cited for operation of a vessel without a valid state-issued invasive mussel sticker, provided that Nevada has a program in effect for the management of aquatic invasive species. AB 2787 is also set for hearing in this Committee.

AB 149 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 106, Statutes of 2025, among other things, expanded statute and programs from “dreissenid mussels” to “invasive mussels,” establishes a requirement for CDFW to review and approve updated invasive mussel control plans, and increased the invasive mussel fee.

AB 1150 (Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife), Chapter 831, Statutes of 2023, among other things, distinguished that the issuance and collection of the quagga and zebra mussel infestation and prevention fee from the biennial registration renewal.

AB 2443 (Williams), Chapter 485, Statutes of 2012, establishes the quagga and zebra mussel infestation prevention program, which required payment of the invasive mussel fee on vessels and permitted the use of the funds for, among other things, a grant program.

AB 1929 (Hall), Chapter 152, Statutes of 2010, determines that a water manager is indemnified from the penalty of possessing and transporting a restricted species, if the water manager is in compliance with an approved control plan.

AB 2065 (Hancock), Chapter 667, Statutes of 2008, requires reservoir managers to undertake certain measure to prevent invasive mussel infestation, in reservoirs in which invasives mussels have not been detected.

AB 1683 (Wolk), Chapter 419, Statutes of 2007, prohibits a person to possess, import, ship, or transport in the state, or place, plant, or cause to be placed or planted in any water within the state, dreissenid mussels, unless authorized by CDFW. Additionally, authorizes the Director of CDFW, or the Director's designee, to conduct inspections of conveyances (e.g., vehicles and boats), order that the conveyance be drained, dried, or decontaminated, impound or quarantine conveyances, and conduct inspections of waters of the state and facilities that may contain invasive mussels. Further, required water managers to implement measure to avoid dreissenid mussel infestation and develop a control plan upon infestation, among other things.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Contra Costa Water District (co-sponsor)
San Luis Delta-Mendota Water Authority (co-sponsor)
Association of California Water Agencies
California Chamber of Commerce
National Marine Manufacturers Association

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Stephanie Mitchell / W., P., & W. / (916) 319-2096