



IN REPLY, REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Isle Royale National Park
800 East Lakeshore Drive
Houghton, Michigan 49931-1869

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September 6, 2011

The Honorable Goeff Hansen, Chair and
Members of the Committee
Senate Committee on Outdoor Recreation and Tourism
The Michigan State Senate
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Chairman Hansen and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 508-510 during this hearing by the Michigan Senate Outdoor Recreation & Tourism Committee. The Bill to amend 1994 P.A. 451, entitled "Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act" establishes an Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Council to develop recommendations for reducing the risk of invasive species introductions and spread from the two primary vectors: organisms in trade and ballast.

The National Park Service would like to commend the State of Michigan for their leadership in aquatic invasive species risk reduction by being the first state in the Great Lakes to implement ballast water permits for salt water vessels, for having key personnel participate in the development of basin-wide protection plans for Lake Superior and for developing this legislation to try to further limit the spread of invasive species.

Nationally there are 58 maritime parks in 25 states with 75 million visitors. There are 12 parks with water resources within the eight states of the Great Lakes with 21,703,716 visitors in 2010. The two national lakeshores and Isle Royale National Park within Michigan encompass spectacular shorelines with rich fisheries and rare aquatic resources from freshwater sponges to large populations of native mussels that are being lost to invaders in other areas of the State.

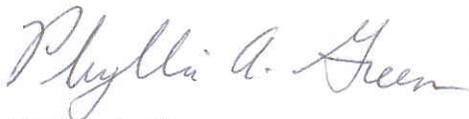
The costs of invasive species are well known. The sea lamprey has caused extensive harm to Great Lakes fisheries and costs millions of dollars every year to control. Zebra mussels, perhaps the most well known invader introduced by ballast water, have caused significant harm to the Great Lakes ecosystem and have spread to the western United States. One study found that impacts from zebra mussels have created costs of over \$20 million per year to raw water users.

In addition to these invasive species, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration team has identified 53 potential invaders that are likely to reproduce in the Great Lakes if they were introduced.

In the absence of federal regulation, overall coordination of multi-jurisdictional entities remains based on the good will and opportunities for coordination that the various agencies and governments have time to engage in. We need to create a framework for emergency response in a timely manner, work toward parallel and complementary regulatory standards and engage in meaningful dialog that results in rapid response to prevent the spread of new invasive species.

The National Park Service strongly supports the passage of Senate Bill 508-510 for the following reasons: 1) to create both a framework for resolving differences that are counterproductive to rapid response, 2) to evaluate and disseminate current actions that are working to prevent the spread of AIS 3) to provide a forum for dialog to help standardize the diverse regulatory environment , and 4) to help initiate early adoption of mitigation techniques by industries that work across state boundaries. We would be proud to support this committee by providing expertise and recommendations in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phyllis A. Green".

Phyllis A. Green
National Ballast Water Vector Response Coordinator