

Nevada considering boat inspections at all lakes

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada's waters urgently need protection from invading mollusks, fish and plants, but funding a program to do so could be politically touchy.

That fact became clear Thursday during a hearing before a panel of state lawmakers discussing proposed legislation to inspect boats statewide to prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels, voracious Northern pike and other aquatic invasive species.

"Our state is in a battle, and we need your help in protecting our waters," Assemblywoman Irene Bustamante Adams, D-Las Vegas, told the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture and Mining.

Bustamante Adams spoke in support of Assembly Bill 167, which would establish a boat inspection program similar to one already in place at Lake Tahoe and prohibit launching of boats contaminated with invasive species into any of Nevada's lakes, streams and reservoirs. It also would make deliberate introduction of invasive species – such as what occurred at eastern Nevada's Comins Lake, where northern pike have destroyed a trophy trout fishery – a felony with fines of up to \$250,000.

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