



# FACT SHEET

## DEVELOPMENT OF INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR EPA'S OFFICE OF WETLANDS, OCEANS, AND WATERSHEDS (OWOW)



### BACKGROUND

If left unchecked, the number, density, and rates of nonindigenous species introductions to the nation's aquatic ecosystems and to terrestrial ecosystems dependent on healthy aquatic ecosystems are expected to increase, as will their impacts on ecosystems, human health, and socio-economic well-being. The prevention, monitoring, management, and control of introduced aquatic species that become established (Aquatic Nuisance Species or ANS) cost the economy many billions of dollars per year.

### DEVELOPMENT OF INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR OWOW

EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (OWOW) is developing a Draft Invasive Species Action Plan (Plan) to improve OWOW's effectiveness at countering invasive species that adversely impact the nation's aquatic systems. The Plan will articulate OWOW's invasives species priorities and will help OWOW effectively contribute to Federal efforts aimed at combating invasive species. For example, it will:

- recommend full utilization of all available and appropriate programmatic tools to prevent introductions and to manage and control invasive species, and
- identify new opportunities for action and partnerships.

### PLAN'S PRIORITY ACTIONS

Six priority actions are likely to be addressed in the Plan. They are described in the box below.

#### LIKELY PRIORITY ACTIONS IN OWOW'S INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. Review Authorities and Tools: Review existing regulatory authorities and non-regulatory tools to identify opportunities for preventing introduction and spread of invasives.
2. Monitoring: Encourage inclusion of invasive species in existing monitoring programs.
3. Education and Outreach: Prevent introduction of invasive species and promote public understanding using education and outreach tools.
4. Barriers to Rapid Response: Take lead role in identifying and analyzing barriers (statutory, regulatory, policy) to rapid response.
5. Review OWOW Project Funding: Review all uses of OWOW funding, to ensure that OWOW does not fund activities causing or promoting invasions and to explore uses of OWOW assistance agreements to target invasive species impacts on aquatic systems.
6. Economic Impact: Estimate economic impacts of invasive species affecting aquatic environments.