

## United States Senate

November 18, 2016

Major General Donald E. Jackson Jr., P.E.  
Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations  
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers  
441 G Street NW  
Washington, DC 20314

Dear General Jackson,

I write to request that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) expedite implementation and distribution of funds for watercraft inspection stations as codified in Section 1039 of the Water Resource Reform Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014. Congress has continued to reiterate its intent explicitly in both Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 Energy and Water Development Appropriations report language, as early as May 2015. These preventative measures are critical to maintaining a healthy ecosystem as well as economic and recreational activities in Montana.

News last week of invasive mussel larvae being detected in Montana waters was alarming. Should the larvae propagate, it will have detrimental impacts on Montana's ecosystem, obstruct irrigation and hydropower infrastructure, and negatively impact our economy. Following this discovery, boating has been temporarily banned on both Glacier National Park and Blackfoot Tribe waters.

WRRDA requires the non-Federal share to be 50 percent of constructing, operating, and maintaining watercraft inspection stations. My understanding is the State of Montana has already spent nearly \$1 million on operating 16 inspection stations this year. Montana has plans to expand the number and hours of inspections stations to further mitigate this threat. However, the federal match is urgently needed by April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, before next year's water recreation season begins and Montana sees an exponential increase in boat traffic and risk.

With these factors in mind, I urge the Corps to expeditiously complete any necessary guidance documents and release these critical funds to states, so they can conduct this imperative work. Further, the Corps should concurrently execute any authorized activities to support state action while formalizing these documents. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your prompt response and staying in close contact on this crucially important issue.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES  
United States Senator

cc: Colonel John Buck, Commander, Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers