
This act summary is provided for the convenience of the public and members of the General Assembly. It is intended to provide a general summary of the act and may not be exhaustive. It has been prepared by the staff of the Office of Legislative Council without input from members of the General Assembly. It is not intended to aid in the interpretation of legislation or to serve as a source of legislative intent.

Act No. 67 (S.75). Conservation and land development; aquatic nuisance control

An act relating to aquatic nuisance species control

This act amends requirements related to the control of aquatic nuisances in waters of the State. The act adds additional aquatic nuisance species to the ban on the transport of aquatic nuisances. The act requires a vessel operator visually to inspect a vessel, trailer, and motor vehicle for aquatic nuisances when entering or leaving a water. Identified aquatic nuisances shall be removed. The act requires a person leaving a water to drain the vessel, trailer, and other equipment.

The act requires a person transporting a vessel to a water or leaving a water to have the vessel and trailer decontaminated at an approved aquatic nuisance species inspection station if: a station is maintained at the water; the station is open to the public; and an individual operating the station identifies the vessel for decontamination. The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) shall establish a training program regarding: inspection of vessels, trailers, and motor vehicles; decontamination of vessels; and response to violations. Lake associations and towns shall apply to ANR to operate an aquatic nuisance inspection station for decontamination of vessels.

The act also requires ANR to issue a general permit for nonchemical control of aquatic nuisance species. Prior to adoption of the general permit, the act allows the use of up to 15 bottom barriers on an inland lake without an ANR permit if: the barriers are managed by a lake association; each barrier is no larger than 14 feet by 14 feet; the barriers are not a public health hazard or impediment to navigation; the lake association notifies ANR; and ANR can require removal if the barriers threaten endangered or threatened species.

The act requires posting of signs at State access areas and marinas about the transport ban on aquatic nuisances and about the requirements to inspect or decontaminate vessels. ANR shall provide marinas with the necessary signage. ANR shall conduct outreach and education regarding the requirements for inspection of vessels, trailers, and motor vehicles for aquatic nuisance species. ANR shall report to the General Assembly regarding aquatic nuisance control in Lake Champlain. In addition, the act amends how aquatic nuisance species violations are enforced by allowing a violation to be brought in the Judicial Bureau by any law enforcement officer.

Multiple effective dates, beginning on June 8, 2017.