

**RCW 77.135.020 Department is lead agency for managing invasive species—Responsibilities—Limitation of chapter.** (1) The department is the lead agency for managing invasive species of the animal kingdom statewide. This lead responsibility excludes pests, domesticated animals, or livestock managed by the department of agriculture under Titles 15, 16, and 17 RCW, forest invasive insect and disease species managed by the department of natural resources under Title 76 RCW, and mosquito and algae control and shellfish sanitation managed by the department of health under Titles 69, 70, and 90 RCW.

(2) Subject to the availability of funding for these specific purposes, the department may:

(a) Develop and implement integrated invasive species management actions and programs authorized by this chapter, including rapid response, early detection and monitoring, prevention, containment, control, eradication, and enforcement;

(b) Establish and maintain an invasive species outreach and education program, in coordination with the Washington invasive species council, that covers public, commercial, and professional pathways and interests;

(c) Align management classifications, standards, and enforcement provisions by rule with regional, national, and international standards and enforcement provisions;

(d) Manage invasive species to support the preservation of native species, salmon recovery, and the overall protection of threatened or endangered species;

(e) Participate in local, state, regional, national, and international efforts regarding invasive species to support the intent of this chapter;

(f) Provide technical assistance or other support to tribes, federal agencies, local governments, and private groups to promote an informed public and assist the department in meeting the intent of this chapter;

(g) Enter into partnerships, cooperative agreements, and state or interstate compacts as necessary to accomplish the intent of this chapter;

(h) Research and develop invasive species management tools, including standard methods for decontaminating aquatic conveyances and controlling or eradicating invasive species from water bodies and properties;

(i) Post invasive species signs and information at port districts, privately or publicly owned marinas, state parks, and all boat launches owned or leased by state agencies or political subdivisions; and

(j) Adopt rules as needed to implement the provisions of this chapter.

(3) The department may delegate selected and clearly identified elements of its authorities and duties to another agency of the state with appropriate expertise or administrative capacity upon cooperative agreement with that agency. This delegation may include provisions of funding for implementation of the delegations. The department retains primary authority and responsibility for all requirements of this chapter unless otherwise directed in this chapter.

(4) This chapter does not apply to the possession or introduction of nonnative aquatic animal species by:

(a) Ballast water held or discharged by vessels regulated under chapter 77.120 RCW; or

(b) Private sector aquaculture operations, transfers, or conveyances regulated under chapter 77.115 RCW.

(5) This chapter does not preempt or replace other department species classification systems or other management requirements under this title. However, the department must streamline invasive species requirements under this chapter into existing permits and cooperative agreements as possible. [2014 c 202 s 103.]

**Findings—2014 c 202:** See note following RCW 77.135.010.