OHIO COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
POLICY 15 – EXOTIC SPECIES

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE STATE OF OHIO TO PREVENT INTRODUCTION OF AND CONTROL EXOTIC SPECIES TO PRESERVE THE BALANCE AND DIVERSITY OF NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS OF OHIO'S LAKE ERIE REGION BY:

A. REGULATING THE SALE AND PROPAGATION OF PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE (O.R.C. 927.682);

B. REGULATING THE IMPORTATION, SALE AND POSSESSION FOR PURPOSES OF INTRODUCTION INTO WATERWAYS OF EXOTIC SPECIES OF FISH OR HYBRIDS THEREOF (O.A.C. 1501:31-19-01);

C. ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING CONTROL MEASURES FOR NON-NATIVE FLORA AS PART OF MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR ODNR-MANAGED PRESERVES AND WILDLIFE AREAS;

D. INFORMING THE PUBLIC REGARDING PROPER PROCEDURES TO PREVENT FURTHER SPREAD OF ZEBRA MUSSELS;

E. CONDUCTING AND SUPPORTING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO ASSIST IN UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF ZEBRA MUSSELS AND CARP UPON THE LAKE'S ECOLOGY AND TO ASSESS A VARIETY OF MEANS TO CONTROL THE SPECIES; AND

F. PARTICIPATING ON THE GREAT LAKES PANEL ON AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES AND CONDUCTING OTHER ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT AND MAINTAIN CONSISTENCY WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE NONINDIGENOUS AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT OF 1990.

A. The Director of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) prohibits the sale and propagation of purple loosestrife pursuant to O.R.C. э 927.682. No person or governmental entity may sell, offer for sale or plant *Lythrum salicaria* without a permit issued by the director. The director may issue a permit only for controlled experiments and may exempt from the permit requirement any variety demonstrated not to be a threat to the environment (O.R.C. 927.682).

B. The State of Ohio's fishing regulations provide that exotic species of fish or hybrids thereof may not be imported, sold or possessed for the purposes of introduction into any body of water that is connected to or drains into a flowing stream or other body of water that would allow egress of fish into public waters in the state. In addition, the possession and importation of grass carp capable of reproducing is prohibited. Importers and sellers of grass carp are required to certify that all grass carp handled are of the sterile triploid variety and must have prior written

authorization from the Chief of the Division of Wildlife (DOW) to import and sell this variety (O.A.C. 1501:31-19-01).

C. Each preserve and wildlife area managed by ODNR, DOW and DNAP, is governed by a management plan specific to that area. Each plan incorporates a statement of policy regarding treatment of nonnative plant species identified as problems within the preserve or wildlife area. In the coastal area, plants identified include purple loosestrife, garlic mustard, European buckthorn, bush honeysuckle and Hungarian brome. Although Phragmites is a native species, there is the belief in the scientific community that a more aggressive European form exists. This European form of Phragmites is considered to be very invasive, and its ability to out-compete less-invasive native wetland species in recent years has caused this plant to be a problem species for coastal resource managers. Generally speaking, guidelines call for manual removal, burning and treatment with herbicides. Management plans include provision for monitoring and assessment to determine the extent of growth and nature of the disturbance, if any. Management plans are tailored to the specific preserve or wildlife area and prescribe the treatment appropriate for each species depending upon the habitat type, extent of invasion and management goals for the area.

D. Spread of the zebra mussel cannot be prevented entirely, but it can be slowed. Because anglers and recreational boaters inadvertently contribute to transport and spread of the mussel, ODNR informs them of proper procedures for inspecting, draining, washing and drying equipment. Information regarding storage techniques and the use of antifoulants and coatings is also provided.

E. ODNR, DOW is conducting and supporting numerous scientific studies of zebra mussels and carp and their effects on water clarity, pollutant uptake, predator/prey relationships, and other interactions of organisms at various trophic levels. Several methods of control are being investigated, including artificially inducing spawning at inappropriate times. Monitoring for the presence of ruffe and adult and larval sea lamprey has been conducted and will continue. Ruffe has not yet been found in Lake Erie, and sea lamprey have been controlled in the past and are confined to upper reaches of two coldwater streams in the eastern Ohio coastal area. Carp are controlled on DOW-managed areas by drawing down in early summer and placing screens on pump inlets and culverts in diked marshes. Rotenone is used in deep channels to eliminate remaining carp.

F. ODNR, through DOW, participates on the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species, which was established to identify Great Lakes priorities and make recommendations to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force. The Task Force was established as a result of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act (NANPCA) of 1990. The goals of that act are to prevent unintentional introductions; coordinate research; disseminate information; develop and implement environmentally sound control methods; minimize economic and ecological impacts; and establish a research and technology program to benefit state governments. The Great Lakes Panel has been instrumental in establishment of new Coast Guard regulations to stop imports and is assisting in development of research protocol,

educational strategies, and management and research priorities. The State of Ohio also is represented on the panel by the Ohio Sea Grant Program.

Ohio has developed a State Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan as called for by NANPCA. The plan is patterned after the Model Comprehensive State Management Plan for the Prevention and Control of Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Species developed through a May 1995 Great Lakes regional workshop funded under Section 308 of the CZMA. The steering committee that developed the plan includes ODNR staff from the Divisions of Wildlife and Natural Areas and Preserves, OCMP staff from REALM and staff from Ohio EPA, Sea Grant, the Lake Erie Office and The Ohio State University. The management plan and first annual work plan were submitted to the National Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force in late 1996.