



## Michigan Waterfront Alliance

### Matt Kurta

### February Update

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#### **Proposed Fiscal Year 2015-2016 State Budget Announced**

Governor Snyder earlier this month unveiled his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. The Governor proposed maintaining the \$5 million annual appropriation in the DNR budget for aquatic and terrestrial invasive species management in both the upcoming budget year as well as in Fiscal Year 2016-2017. Recall that last year, the Governor proposed \$6 million for this line item, an amount the Legislature ultimately reduced to \$5 million. Of this annual amount, no less than \$3.6 million must be appropriated annually towards grant funding, with the remainder dedicated to Departmental staffing.

The Department recently announced \$4 million in Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program funding for 20 projects throughout the state. The largest of the grants went to the Ottawa Conservation District and West Michigan Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area for planning efforts in Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Muskegon, Kent, Montcalm, Ottawa, and Allegan counties. Central Michigan University received grant funding for efforts in Kalamazoo, Barry, Allegan, Ionia, Alpena, Livingston, Wayne, Bay, Cass, and Van Buren counties.

Appropriations subcommittees are meeting weekly on their respective areas of the state budget to consider the Governor's recommendation. While the proposed FY 2015-2016 state budget overall represents increased spending and gross revenue as compared to the current year, the Governor and Legislature were recently forced to enact cuts in the current year budget as actual General Fund revenue fell short of projections due to increased redemption of business tax credits by businesses allowed to continue filing returns under the now-repealed Michigan Business Tax (MBT). Recall that throughout the past decade or so, the state regularly awarded significant tax credits to companies promising to create jobs. The actual cost of past tax credits is now being realized, and there is continued concern going forward that increased redemptions will continue to erode state tax revenues in the near future as the economy continues to improve and businesses meet job creation targets, placing financial pressure on all areas of the state budget.

#### **Sen. Casperson Reintroduces Local Aquatic/Invasive Species Ordinance Legislation**

MWA worked closely with Senator Tom Casperson (R-Escanaba) last session on reforms to the state aquatic and invasive species permitting process. While Senator Casperson was successful in winning adoption of those reforms, the ability of local units of government to adopt aquatic or invasive species ordinances on local bodies of water unfortunately did not gain sufficient legislative support was left out of the final version of the bill.

Sen. Casperson earlier this month reintroduced the legislation as Senate Bill 104. Similar to last session’s effort, the legislation would allow local units of government to adopt ordinances for the prevention, control, or eradication of aquatic invasive species, and authorize fees for usage of boat launches or washing stations. MWA appreciates Senator Casperson’s efforts, and we look forward to working together again this situation to develop legislation that not only provides additional resources towards prevention and eradication of aquatic invasive species, but that can pass legislative muster as well.

BILL	SPONSOR	PARTY	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
SB 16	Sen. Casperson	R	Expand allowable uses of MI Natural Resources Trust Fund	Senate Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Committee
SJR C	Sen. Casperson	R	Expand allowable uses of MI Natural Resources Trust Fund, and place question on ballot for voters to decide	Senate Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Committee
SB 39	Sen. Casperson	R	Suspend cap on DNR land purchases if 5-year strategic plan is approved by Legislature and PILT payments are made	Senate Natural Resources Committee
SB 40	Sen. Booher	R	Expand allowable uses of Land Exchange Facilitation Fund revenues	Senate Natural Resources Committee
SB 104	Sen. Casperson	R	Authorize adoption of local aquatic invasive species ordinances	Senate Natural Resources Committee
SB 145	Sen. Hune	R	Exempt tangible personal property utilized for harvesting, handling, transferring, or packaging of aquatic vegetation from waters of the state from taxation	Senate Finance Committee
HB 4149	Rep. Sheppard	R	Accelerate phase-out of sales & use tax on the difference for motor & recreational vehicle trade-ins	

HB 4150	Rep. Webber	R	Accelerate phase-out of sales & use tax on the difference for motor & recreational vehicle trade-ins	House Tax Policy Committee
SB 10	Sen. Hildenbrand	R	Accelerate phase-out of sales & use tax on the difference for motor & recreational vehicle trade-ins	Senate Finance Committee
SB 11	Sen. Hune	R	Accelerate phase-out of sales & use tax on the difference for motor & recreational vehicle trade-ins	Senate Finance Committee