

NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN TO BE RELEASED; HEARINGS TO BE HELD

A presidential advisory committee of experts has prepared a draft National Invasive Species Management Plan that will be released for public comment in late June. The National Invasive Species Advisory Council will then hold a series of "listening sessions" beginning in early July seeking public comment on the draft management plan.

The Invasive Species Advisory Committee, which includes representatives of state and local agencies, academia, private and public interest groups, environmental groups, the agriculture industry and the maritime industry, is drafting the management plan under an executive order issued by President Clinton in February 1999.

The president asked for a plan with "...approaches and authorities for preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species, including those pathways by which invasive species are introduced..."

Port of Long Beach Planning Director Dr. Robert Kanter is a member of the advisory committee, representing the maritime industry. The committee is working under the supervision of the Advisory Council, which includes the Secretaries of Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce. The council's listening sessions will be held in states throughout the country, including California, New York, Florida and Colorado. The California listening session will be held July 12 in Oakland, at the Elihu Harris State Building.

The management plan is aimed at preventing the introduction of, and controlling, non-native species that threaten human health and the ecology of the nation's waters and land. One of the potential sources of invasive species is the ballast water of ocean-going vessels. Accordingly, it is important for the maritime industry to participate actively in the preparation of the management plan.

In a related matter, the California Association of Port Authorities is managing an EPA-funded study on "Feasibility of Onshore Treatment of Ballast Water" The report should be available in late July. For information, contact Tim Schott at (916) 444-7158.