

PROPOSED BY: Public Works
INTRODUCED: December 9, 2025

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE BELLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL, AND LAKE WHATCOM WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ADOPTING THE LAKE WHATCOM INVASIVE FRESHWATER MUSSEL RAPID AND EXTENDED RESPONSE PLAN

WHEREAS, Lake Whatcom is the source of drinking water for more than 120,000 people, valuable habitat for plants and animals unique to our region, a recreational destination for outdoor enthusiasts, and its watershed is home to more than 19,000 people; and

WHEREAS, in 1992 and again in 1998 the City of Bellingham (the "City"), Whatcom County (the "County"), and the precursor to the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District (the "District") formed the Lake Whatcom Management Program and thereby declared their intention to work together to protect and manage Lake Whatcom; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Legislature has designated the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (the "Department") as the lead agency for managing invasive species in the animal kingdom statewide in Chapter 77.135 Revised Code of Washington; and

WHEREAS, quagga (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*), zebra (*Dreissena polymorpha*), and golden (*Limnoperna fortunei*) mussels ("Invasive Mussels") pose an imminent and serious threat to the water supply infrastructure, ecology, recreational use, and water quality of Lake Whatcom; and

WHEREAS, should Invasive Mussels become established, significant resources must be expended to control the damage to water supply infrastructure, habitat, property, watercraft, recreation activities, and water quality with potentially severe economic impacts; and

WHEREAS, if any Invasive Mussels are detected in Lake Whatcom, a prompt, coordinated, efficient, and effective response is necessary to defend against these threats and impacts; and

WHEREAS, the City funded development of the Lake Whatcom Invasive Freshwater Mussel Rapid and Extended Response Plan with input from the Department, County, District, partners and stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the Lake Whatcom Management Program partners desire to jointly adopt and, if necessary, implement the Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Whatcom County Council that:

The Lake Whatcom Invasive Freshwater Mussel Rapid and Extended Response Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A, is hereby adopted.

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council

Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Christopher Quinn by email (10/20/25-gs)
Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor