



## SB18- 275

**SHORT TITLE:** Evaluate Prerequisites Seaplanes Operation in Colorado

**LONG TITLE:** Concerning the ability of seaplanes to operate in Colorado.

**SPONSORS:** Sen. Scott

**COMMITTEES:** Senate Committees – State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

**PURPOSE OF THE BILL:** To provide preliminary framework and evaluation of seaplane usage in Colorado state park waters.

**PROPOSERS OF THE BILL:** Seaplane Pilots Association

**POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS:** State of Colorado, Department of Natural Resources (including CWCB), public and private water providers, recreation groups that use state park reservoirs.

**BACKGROUND:** Seaplanes are not allowed to land in waters under the ownership or management of Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife. This is due in large part to the concern over potential introduction of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) such as quagga mussels and zebra mussels. Opponents of such use have expressed concern that seaplanes may not be subject to the rigorous inspection and decontamination processes as vessels and that once the ANS are established in Colorado waters they cannot be eradicated, leading to high costs for water providers and the state.

**Is this bill necessary this year?** No.

**How does the bill change current law?** The bill itself does not change current law; however, the results of the two processes to be undertaken by CPW may result in recommended statutory changes in subsequent years.

**Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system?** No.

**How is the bill implemented?** . This bill begins a formal process of evaluating the potential for such use by directing CPW to establish proposed procedures for the mandatory inspection and decontamination of seaplanes landing on water bodies in the state and report on those measures to the General Assembly by September 1, 2019. It also directs CPW to establish a stakeholder process to identify two lakes in state parks identified by CPW and report the results of the stakeholder process to the General Assembly by Sept. 1, 2019.

The bill also clarifies that any statutory prohibitions against seaplanes does not apply to planes serving in emergency operations including firefighting.

**Practical considerations:** Maintenance of an inspection and decontamination program for vessels (boats) has led to funding challenges for CPW, requiring legislation to establish a new funding program. Funding for seaplane inspection and decontamination could be problematic since it would be spread over far fewer users and would be difficult to justify financial support from the general public.

**Fiscal Impact:** None identified

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