



<http://www.castanet.net/edition/news-story-128939-10-.htm#128939>

Letters to the editor

RE: Tools to fight invasive species

by Contributed | Story: 128939 - Dec 15, 2014 / 7:03 pm

Thank you for your recent coverage of the proposed new federal regulations to ban importation of invasive zebra and quagga mussels into Canada. It was great news, and a significant honour to have the announcement made in the Okanagan, recognizing the intense concern expressed by local residents for the health of our lakes. The new rules allow border agents to screen boats for aquatic hitchhikers, and for the federal and provincial governments to coordinate emergency response procedures.

Significant further actions are needed to ensure ongoing vigilance and reasonable protection for our valley. As we know from the Okanagan's 40-year experience with invasive milfoil weeds, one innocent deposit of an invasive species can cause headaches, heartbreaks, and high maintenance costs for decades to come. These mussels could form a whole new category of super-pests.

Following on last week's federal announcement, we hope to soon see the roll out of the Province of B.C.'s new invasive species response plan. We also hope to see adequate federal and provincial budgets set aside for monitoring and enforcement, and an on-the-ground plan for how boat inspections and decontaminations will proceed.

Boaters, fishers, and all lake goers are an important part of the solution. We invite you to learn more about the threat posed by invasive mussels to Okanagan waters and how to avoid inadvertently transporting these creatures into our lakes and streams at www.DontMoveAMussel.ca.

Sincerely,

Doug Findlater

Chair, Okanagan Basin Water Board