

THE DAILY COURIER



SPORTS - ROCKETS WIN GAME 3 - B4

3-0 LEAD



TOP 40 UNDER 40 BUSINESS B1

9 C

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

\$1.43 + GST
www.dailycourier.ca

Boaters will get to know their local inspectors

Province implementing random checks to keep out invasive mussels

By RON SEYMOUR
The Daily Courier

The propellers and hulls of some boats being brought into B.C. this spring and summer will be checked for an invasive mussel that poses a risk to provincial waterways.

Government officials in Kelowna on Tuesday announced a \$1.3-million expansion of an ongoing program to detect and prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels.

Precise details of the program are still to be worked out, but it's likely to consist of random checks at popular boat launches in areas favoured by visitors from Alberta and the U.S. Six auxiliary conservation officers and three mobile decontamination units have been assigned to the program.

The mussels have never been found in B.C., but they exist in nearby jurisdictions. Officials say they could threaten native marine species, clog water intake pipes, foul beaches and increase maintenance costs for power-producing dams.

"This is a major step in our ongoing efforts to keep the province's ecosystems, hydro stations, drinking water facilities and salmon populations safe," Environment Minister Harry Patek said in a press release. The Okanagan Basin Water Board has been campaigning for a more aggressive plan to deal with a potential mussel invasion. Among other things, the OBWB has suggested checkpoints be set up on all roads leading into the province so conservation officers can check boats being towed into B.C.

"We still want to see inspection stations at all entry points on the Alberta border," OBWB chairman and West Kelowna Mayor Doug Findlater said.

But he derided the government's booby-trapped random inspection program as a "good start."

"We're going to be monitoring this program closely for its effectiveness - how many boats are stopped and how many are mussel-infested," Findlater said.

The government will also put up more roadside signs alerting boaters to the dangers posed by mussels, and encouraging them to make sure their vessels are cleaned, drained and dried before being transported.



GARY FRYLANDER/The Daily Courier
Kelowna's much-photographed Ogopogo sculpture downtown: According to a new poll, most people don't believe the Okanagan's famous lake monster really exists.

POLL

Like Ogopogo, its believers are becoming harder to find

More British Columbians believe in Bigfoot than Ogopogo, according to Insights West poll

By RON SEYMOUR
The Daily Courier

Ogopogo is a polidrome, which means it's spelled the same backward and forward. The versatility of the word is matched by the reality of the creature, which exists in popular imagination despite never being captured by a really good camera or really big fishhook.

But Okanagan Lake's famous sea serpent may be dying out, as measured by the number of people who believe he/she/it is real.

Just 16 per cent of British Columbians believe in Ogopogo, according to a new poll released just in time for April Fool's Day.

That's far less than the number of people who believe in UFOs (46 per cent), believe that a cure for cancer has been discovered but is being deliberately withheld from the public (32 per cent), or believe that Princess Diana was murdered (27 per cent).

More British Columbians even believe in Bigfoot (29 per cent) than think Ogopogo is real, according to the survey from Insights West.

Almost any crazy conspiracy theory you can name has more adherents than there are Ogopogo believers.

The numbers might be considered disappointing for those who have faith in Ogopogo. But Arlene Gaal, a Rutland woman who counts herself among those who believe there's something fishy in the lake, is undaunted.

"There's a certain logic at work in the poll results," Gaal, who has advised many film and TV crews on their so far vain quest to find Ogopogo, said Tuesday.

"If you've had an experience, if you've seen something strange out there on Okanagan Lake, you probably believe," she said. "If you haven't, you probably don't."

"I think that figure of 16 per cent probably reflects those who've had some kind of experience they can't explain," she said.

For her part, based on talking to countless Ogopogo enthusiasts over the years, Gaal says she definitely believes it exists. "I think it's a large animal that just hasn't been identified yet."

But she acknowledges the reports of Ogopogo sightings have dropped off significantly in the past few summers, something she attributes to the creature seeking deeper, quieter depths to escape the sound of noisy boats.

"I believe it has a place where it keeps itself safe, away from all that horrific noise," Gaal said. "But we'll just wait and see what happens this summer." As ever.

Lack of meat inspectors a risky proposition for consumers: union

By The Canadian Press

EDMONTON The union representing Canada's meat inspectors says a critical shortage of inspectors is putting the safety of consumers at risk.

Dob Kingston, president of the Agricultural Union, told a news conference in Edmonton only 12 of 18 meat hygiene inspection positions are filled at processing plants in northern Alberta. The numbers are the same in the Calgary region.

In January, he said, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency instructed staff in the northern part of the province to cut general sanitation inspection work by 50 per cent.

Kingston said a lack of funding is creating similar problems and concerns at facilities across Canada, and the federal

government needs to put more money into meat safety.

"The entire beef basket of Canada is in the same car," he said Tuesday.

"This government has a lot to say about protecting Canadians and I'm hoping they realize that these are more than just numbers on paper ... There are lives at risk - the real likelihood that people are going to die."

The union, part of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, released a CFIA document from December 2014 that calls for a reduced work plan for inspectors in northern Alberta. Kingston said some inspectors are worried sick about declining safety standards and others have quit.

"They just can't take the pressure anymore."

The union has been raising the staff

shortage issue for more than a year, said Kingston, and the government promised money would be coming to fill vacant inspector jobs. Instead, he said, the government decided to cut back on inspections.

Last week, the CFIA announced that Tallyble was recalling packages of roast chicken breasts over concerns about possible *Listeria* contamination. The product was distributed in Ontario, Alberta, B.C., Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

The Edmonton plant that processed the chicken is getting three inspections a week and less monitoring, Kingston said. But all meat destined for the United States comes from plants that are inspected every 12 hours while they are open, he added.

"This government and the agency is

Continued on page A4

INDEX

Disse	B3
Business	B1-2
Canada	A1
Capitalist	B6-7
Comics	B8
Columns	B8
Opinion	A3
Sports	B4-5
Weather	A2
World	A7

Wise Counsel

DOAK SHIRREFF

Telephone 250-761-4323
www.doakshirreff.com

Wise words

There is much pleasure to be gained from useless knowledge.

— Bertrand Russell



Scan with your smartphone for links to our website, social media, contact info and more



GAS WATCH

Lowest price in the Kelowna area as of 7 p.m.

110.9 at several stations



BATHS BY DESIGN

250.762.7771
451 Banks Road, Kelowna
www.bathsbydesign.net



[Previous Story](#)

[Next Story](#)

Article rank | 1 Apr 2015 | The Daily Courier | By RON SEYMOUR | The Daily Courier

Boaters will get to know their local inspectors

Province implementing random checks to keep out invasive mussels

The propellers and hulls of some boats being brought into B.C. this spring and summer will be checked for an invasive mussel that poses a risk to provincial waterways.

Government officials in Kelowna on Tuesday announced a \$1.3-million expansion of an ongoing program to detect and prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels.

Precise details of the program are still to be worked out, but it's likely to consist of random checks at popular boat launches in areas favoured by visitors from Alberta and the U.S. Six auxiliary conservation officers and three mobile decontamination units have been assigned to the program.

The mussels have never been found in B.C., but they exist in nearby jurisdictions. Should they establish a presence here, officials say they could threaten native marine species, clog water intake pipes, foul beaches and increase maintenance costs for power-producing dams.

"This is a major step in our ongoing efforts to keep the province's ecosystems, hydro stations, drinking water facilities and salmon populations safe," Environment Minister Mary Polak said in a press release.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has been campaigning for a more aggressive plan to deal with a potential mussel invasion. Among other things, the OBWB has suggested checkpoints be set up on all roads leading into the province so conservation officers can check boats being towed into B.C.

"(We) still want to see inspection stations at all entry points on the Alberta border," OBWB chairman and West Kelowna Mayor Doug Findlater said.

But he described the government's beefed-up random inspection program as a "good start."

"We're going to be monitoring this program closely for its effectiveness — how many boats are stopped and how many are mussel-infested," Findlater said.

The government will also put up more roadside signage alerting boaters to the dangers posed by mussels, and encouraging them to make sure their vessels are cleaned, drained and dried before being transported.

This article was shared by a user of PressReader - an online source of publications from around the world. PressReader contains copyrighted material, trademarks and other proprietary information. Receipt of this article should not be interpreted as grant of any licenses express or implied, to the intellectual property of PressReader or publishers of publications presented. PressReader - Connecting People Through News PressReader, 200-13111 Vanier Place, Richmond BC V6V 2J1, Canada Phone: +1 604 278 4604 © 2003-2014 NewspaperDirect Inc. dba PressReader. All rights reserved. Terms of Use: http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/showlink.aspx?pageid=ins_terms Privacy Policy: http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/showlink.aspx?pageid=ins_privacy

[Previous Story](#)

[Next Story](#)