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Invasive Mussels Stopped from Entering Okanagan Lake



Canadian Customs Officers discovered what appeared to be zebra and quagga mussels attached to a boat trying to cross the border into Osoyoos.

According to the Okanagan Basin Water Board, on March 12th a large pleasure craft tried to make its way from the U.S into Canada and would be moored in Okanagan Lake.

Canadian Border Services Agency has no legislative authority to refuse entry but luckily the commercial carrier was cooperative. Conservation officers were brought in to decontaminate the boat the following day.

“Of concern to the Okanagan is the impact these mussels could have on our water quality, ecosystems and economy – estimated by the OBWB at \$40 million a year to just manage,” says Corinne Jackson with OBWB.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has been urging the federal government to pass legislation, that is pending, that will allow border guards to stop, inspect and prohibit contaminated watercrafts from entry.

The mussels have not been found in B.C. to date and is viewed as a major threat to water quality in the Okanagan.