



## CLSS ENCOURAGES LETTER CAMPAIGN TO PROV. TO ADDRESS INVASIVE MUSSELS

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*by Brenda LaCroix*

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Attached are the letter templates that the Okanagan Basin Water Board sent out. The RDKB did send a letter already back in April.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has sent the attached letters to Premier Clark/Minister Polak, and to federal Ministers Shea/Blaney, on the need for urgent action to prevent invasive zebra and quagga mussels from entering B.C. On behalf of the Water Board, I would like to invite and encourage other local government Boards and Councils to consider sending letters of their own to these elected officials.

The economic, environmental, social and infrastructure impacts of these mussels are likely to be common and widespread in most freshwater lake and river systems in southern BC.

The actions requested in these letters are consistent with a recommendation endorsed by UBCM in 2013. The urgency of this issue was highlighted by the recent near-miss in Osoyoos, when a boat with visible invasive mussels was stopped and voluntarily decontaminated on March 12th.

The allocation of more funds, and rapid action by the federal and provincial governments, leading to mandatory boat inspections (trans-boundary and provincially) and ramped up public outreach, is necessary to help ensure that these invaders do not enter BC's freshwater systems.

The Federal Government does not have current concrete action plans to inspect and hold boats (with invasive mussels) at the US border. Draft regulations are being developed (Federal Aquatic Species Regulation) which would authorize CBSA agents to hold boats with evidence of invasive mussels to be held at the border and call BC Ministry of Environment experts to confirm and take action if necessary.

The western provinces share information on current initiatives and information related to invasive species, including mussels. Manitoba is doing some eradication of invasive mussels in Lake Winnipeg and has requested (provincial) funds to decontaminate boats found to have the invasive mussels.

They have committed to increased monitoring. Saskatchewan is trying to increase the profile of the threat of invasive mussels, but are just starting to ramp up their efforts. Alberta has allocated funds for five (voluntary) boat inspection stations, but has no legislation. All four western provinces are requesting provincial funding be allocated for invasive species initiatives.

Even if there are inspections south and east of BC, it is desirable to run our own boat inspections for several reasons including: a) no inspections station is open 24hrs and not all roads are monitored; b) each inspection does not only mean an opportunity to find mussels, but it is also an outreach effort to inform individuals moving boats, either recreationally or commercially, about BC's regulations and the risk these mussels pose to BC's freshwater environment.

The attached (above) YouTube link is a short introduction to the impacts that these mussels have on freshwater systems. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ablmgDzXBo>

Attachment

[140410 ltr to dfo re urgency of invasive mussels.pdf](#)