

News

Tougher stance on mussels

RICHARD ROLKE
Morning Star Staff

The Okanagan Basin Water Board is strengthening its case against invasive mussels.

On Tuesday, directors upgraded their position on zebra and quagga mussels and the potential risk the species poses to Okanagan waterways.

"We are trying to put pressure on the provincial government to do more and have five inspection stations," said director Juliette Cunningham.

"There is a cost if we don't stop them (mussels) from arriving here."

It's believed the annual impact to government, businesses and residents could be more than \$43 million if the mussels take hold in local lakes.

"This scenario has played out across watersheds throughout North America, where ecosystems and local economies have been drastically altered by these invaders," states OBWB's position statement.

Zebra and quagga mussels are native to eastern Europe and they have spread across North America since the 1980s.

They clog water intake pipes, pumps and boat motors. They also deplete food sources for fish and produce toxins that kill fish and birds and contaminate drinking water.

nate drinking water.

As part of the changes to the position statement, the board is calling on the provincial government to fund permanent, mandatory inspection stations for boats at the five major crossings between B.C. and Alberta.

In March, Victoria announced three mobile stations.

"OBWB strongly urges the provincial government to consider the cost to the province and local governments for the long-term treatment, mitigation or control of zebra or quagga mussels if the province fails to enact appropriate prevention measures and consequently the species are introduced," says the position statement.

"We call on the province to commit to funding all treatment and containment programs in infested waters should an invasion occur."

While the government may be concerned about the cost of running monitoring stations, Cunningham says the budget could come from a boater-pay sticker program, similar to those in the U.S.

"Those with watercraft pay and it seems effective. I'm not sure why the province is reluctant to look at that," she said.

OBWB also wants water utilities to review what upgrades and maintenance measures will be needed if the mussels arrive and ways to prevent service interruptions.



Cunningham

ALL YOU CAN EAT FISH & CHIPS ON TUESDAYS

DAILY FOR ONLY **\$12⁹⁹** +TAX

ONLY **\$10⁹⁹** +TAX

WITH THIS COUPON. EXPIRES JULY 28, 2015

Pop, Coffee **\$1.00** with coupon

Upgrade to COD for an extra **\$5.00**

250.503.3800
4400 - 32nd St., Vernon

JOEY'S RESTAURANTS

2014 Best RESTAURANTS in the OkanaganLife
VOTED BEST SEAFOOD IN NORTH OKANAGAN

ARE YOU PAINTING THIS YEAR?

WHAT WE DO:

- ✓ Interior
- ✓ Exterior
- ✓ Residential
- ✓ Commercial
- ✓ Small & Large Jobs
- ✓ Pressure Washing
- ✓ Colour Consultations

Call STUDENT WORKS PAINTING Today!

ABOUT MY BUSINESS:
My name is Ryan Beach & I am a student at the University of British Columbia. Last year alone we completed more than 100 projects throughout the summer and over 99% of our clients said they would happily choose Student Works again in the future. I am proud of the quality of my team's work and am excited to help improve your home or business this summer!

THE STUDENT WORKS PAINTING DIFFERENCE:

- ✓ Three Year Warranty
- ✓ Full WCB Coverage
- ✓ \$5 Million Liability
- ✓ Top Quality Products
- ✓ Fully Trained Painters
- ✓ Satisfaction Guaranteed

RYAN BEACH

LAST 10% OFF CHANCE! ANY JOB if booked by August 1st!

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

Call **RYAN BEACH** for your **FREE Estimate!** **250-463-1922**

Office: 1-800-665-4992 • ryanb@studentworks.ca
www.studentworks.ca

OBWB pushes for algae protocol

RICHARD ROLKE
Morning Star Staff

New measures are being demanded to fight a potential threat to water quality.

Okanagan Basin Water Board directors voted Tuesday to write the Ministry of Health and request that a blue green algae response protocol be completed for communities.

"There's nothing in place for municipalities or water utilities to react," said Anna Warwick Sears,

OBWB executive director.

"There's a draft (of the protocol) in place, sitting on the desk of the deputy minister of health."

It was anticipated the ministry's response protocol would be released in the spring.

The process began after a blue green algae bloom on Osoyoos Lake in 2013 and blooms on high elevation lakes near Summerland and West Kelowna.

Growth of blue-green algae is often triggered by phosphorus pollution combined with stable weather and warm water temperatures.

"The one-celled organisms divide rapidly, forming a noxious, pea soup or oil slick appearance on the water. Wind or wave action can disperse the bloom. Only certain species produce toxins, but it's not possible to identify them by sight, so lab tests are necessary," states the OBWB website.

There is a concern that an outbreak of the algae could negatively impact beaches and water intakes.

While the Ministry of Health continues to review the proposed protocol, some OBWB officials believe they should notify municipal staff about the issue.

"We should take a leadership role," said director Tracy Gray.

"It's important to reiterate that those people know what to look for."

Response to an algae bloom appears limited. "You can't disperse the bloom but you can close a beach," said Warwick Sears.



Tracy Gray

RECYCLE TO WIN

AN ECO-FRIENDLY RIDE AT THIS RETURN-IT™ DEPOT.

GET RECYCLING. GET SOME NEW WHEELS.

A PAIR OF PELICAN KAYAKS | A BRAND NEW 2015 TOYOTA PRIUS C | A BRAND NEW STROMER E-BIKE

APRIL 22 - JULY 31, 2015

CHASERS BOTTLE DEPOT 4702 31st Street, Vernon BC 250-503-1311

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK "FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED"

North Okanagan WEATHER FORECAST

The Weather Network For the latest weather on-line, visit the Weather Office at www.theweathernetwork.com

Sunday A few showers High 27°, Low 16°	Monday Chance of a shower High 25°, Low 15°	Tuesday Chance of a shower High 26°, Low 14°	Wednesday Mainly sunny High 27°, Low 14°