

ENVIRONMENT

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# More muscle needed in fight against mussels



By **Blaine Gaffney**  
Reporter Global News

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KELOWNA - It's a good effort but not good enough.

That's the position of the Okanagan Basin Water Board regarding provincial government initiatives to prevent invasive zebra and quagga mussels from entering BC waterways.

The OBWB is asking the government to expand the operational hours of newly created mobile inspection units from 10 hours a day to at least all daylight hours.

It also wants more conservation officers hired for the units and new legislation making it mandatory for all watercraft entering the province to report to an inspection centre.

The board would also like the federal government to provide funding to help contain the mussel infestation in two Manitoba lakes and prevent them from getting into other western provinces.

“We’ve definitely seen movement on this issue from the province and the feds but we’re also seeing that more needs to be done, and done now,” says OBWB chairperson Doug Findlater in a news release.

So far this year, about 3200 watercraft have been checked for zebra and quagga mussels in BC.

Six were carrying adult mussels with a good chance they were still alive.

The invasive species pose a serious threat to ecosystems, fish populations and infrastructure facilities.

