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Water board pushes for longer hours for mussel inspection stations



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VERNON - The Okanagan Basin Water Board wants the provincial government to expand the hours of mobile inspection stations where highway travellers entering the province with boats are checked for invasive mussel species.

"They've done an excellent job. Our one comment would be we just need more of it," says water board chairperson Doug Findlater.

The eight stations operate 10 hours a day.

“This time of year people are travelling early and late because of daylight and we’re concerned the hole in the net is the fact it’s only 10 hours a day. We could have a boat slip through,” says Findlater.

The coordinator for the invasive mussel program says trying to keep zebra and quagga mussels out of BC waterways is a collaborative effort.

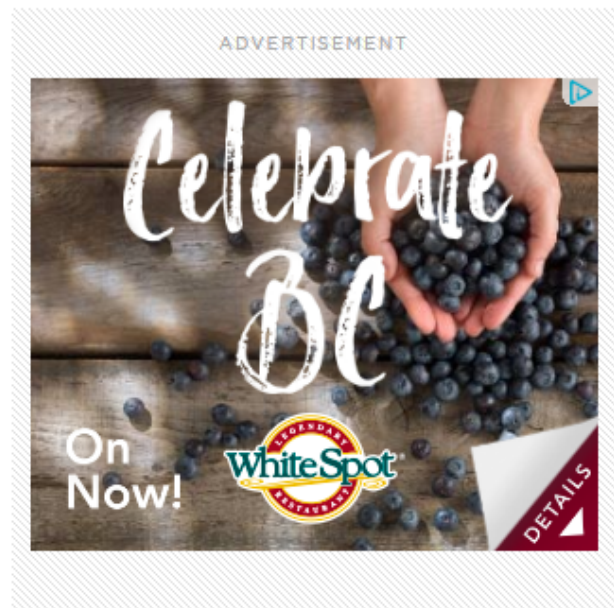
“We work very closely with our Canadian Border Services agents who notify us of all high risk watercraft across our southern border stations,” says Martina Beck. “We also work with Alberta very closely, as well as all the other neighbouring jurisdictions, on notifications of watercraft. So there’s a lot of inspection stations set up throughout the Pacific Northwest.”

Findlater says even one contaminated boat getting into the province is one too many.

“The only way to counter zebra and quagga mussels, there’s no technological solution to them, is to keep them out.”

The mussels are invaders to North America from Europe.

They have caused significant economic losses and ecological damage in waters they have infested.



Video link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2805779/water-board-pushes-for-longer-hours-for-mussel-inspection-stations/>