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Mussel Checks Get Support

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A Vernon program to prevent invasive species from entering local waterways, could catch on in other Okanagan communities.



RCMP volunteers are checking boats for zebra and quagga mussels during safety checks at Paddlewheel Park on weekends this summer.

Okanagan Basin Water Board chair Doug Findlater says the local checks serve several purposes.

"This is a great awareness raising tool as well as another level of inspection and protection, so I applaud it. I think it's a good idea to do wherever the RCMP and their volunteers have the manpower."

Findlater says he's pleased with the province's response to the mussel threat, although he says only having the inspection stations open 10 hours a day, does leave a big gap.

"I don't see the need for conservation officers to be standing by the road at 3 in the morning. That doesn't seem quite right, but certainly they could go a longer period of time and that would provide a higher level of protection," says Findlater, who is also West Kelowna's mayor.