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Residents asked to help keep Okanagan lakes free from invasive mussels

A group has been monitoring the lakes for nine years to prevent a mussel infestation

ISABELLA HARMEL / Jul. 28, 2021 5:30 p.m. / [COMMUNITY](#) / [LOCAL NEWS](#)



The Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS) is asking the community for help keeping the Okanagan's ecosystems safe.

This August, OASISS is asking any residents with private docks on Kalamalka, Wood, Okanagan, Skaha and Osoyoos lakes to volunteer for their second annual citizen science project. Participants will be provided with a pair of monitors that should be attached to their docks starting Aug. 1 through the end of September. Residents will be required to check the monitors every two weeks to see if any Zebra and Quagga mussels have been attached to them.

Zebra and Quagga mussels are two varieties of invasive mussels that were first spotted in the Great Lakes Region in the 1980s. They are known to damage sensitive ecosystems, clog water pipes, contaminate beaches and affect water quality. The Okanagan Basin Water Board estimated a mussel infestation would cost the Okanagan at least \$42 million a year to manage.

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"We are extremely concerned about the possibility of invasive mussels arriving here," says Lisa Scott. "They are nearly impossible to get rid of once they become established. It's imperative as a community to do everything we can to protect our lakes from an invasion."

To register for the project, contact oasiss.register@gmail.com or call 250-718-7901.