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## OBWB share important lessons with public

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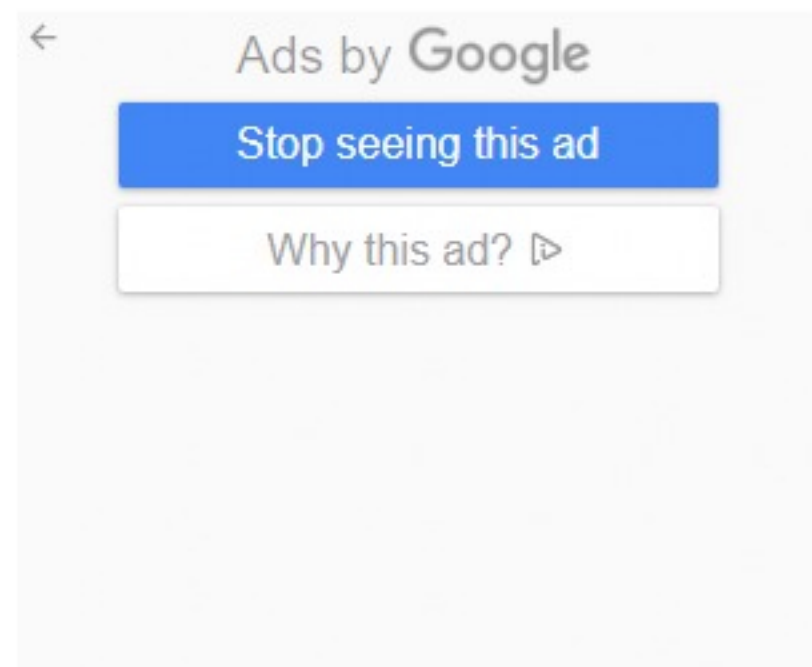
*Quagga mussels encrust a boat propeller in this shot from the short film Mussel Threat. The Okanagan Basin Waterboard (OBWB) is warning that if the province fails to take adequate measures to stop mussels from invading Okanagan waters, local taxpayers must not be on the hook for an estimated \$43 million annually to mitigate the problem. (Photo supplied)*

**By Madeline Baker, Times Chronicle**

Along with their continual work to educate the public about invasive freshwater mussels, the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) has also been busy looking into the impacts of boating on Okanagan Lake and developing educational events for the fall.

The provincial government recently spoke to the OBWB about their efforts to inspect waterborne vessels for invasive mussels before they can cross the border, as reported by the Times Chronicle, and OBWB are spreading the message locally with their “Don’t Move A Mussel” campaign.

In their words, the campaign is “aimed at raising public awareness of invasive zebra and quagga mussels, and how to keep them out of Okanagan and B.C. water” with ads on social media and other digital platforms, billboards, and radio that target tourists and visitors to the region.



More broadly, their Okanagan Waterwise program, which can be found at [okwaterwise.ca](http://okwaterwise.ca), seeks to educate locals about the concerns and strategies surrounding the protection of Okanagan Lake and to help them feel like active parts of the solution.

The “Boating Benefits, Impacts and Solutions Workshop” on June 22 addressed one of these concerns: the impacts that widespread use of boats can have on a lake’s drinking water quality, shoreline erosion, and aquatic plants and wildlife, and how to counterbalance those impacts with the benefits to recreation and tourism.

Attendees included local Syilx Knowledge Keepers Pamela and Grouse Barnes, who opened the workshop with a special welcome, and staff members from the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the BC Ministry of Land Water and Resource Stewardship, as well as aquatic biology and conservation consultants.

Their next big event will be the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum in late October, for which registration has now opened at [OBWB.ca/olwsf](http://OBWB.ca/olwsf).

The event’s theme is “Bringing Indigenous and Western approaches to Knowledge, Science and Management” and will be co-hosted by OBWB, the Osoyoos Indian Band, and Okanagan Nation Alliance.

Finally, after two years of online meetings due to COVID-19 restrictions, the OBWB’s upcoming annual public meeting will be held in person on Friday, Sept. 9.