

District of Sicamous

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November 29, 2017

Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Via E-mail: ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca
PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Govt
Rm 112, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8W9E2

Re: Prevention of Quagga and Zebra Mussels

Dear Honourable Heyman,

On behalf of the District of Sicamous we write to express our concern about the threat of Quagga and Zebra mussels. Sicamous submitted a resolution at UBCM that was endorsed requesting more funding from the Provincial Government to increase awareness and Education for the threat of Quagga and Zebra mussels into BC Lakes.

The effects to ALL BC Lakes would be devastating:

- Zebra and quagga mussels filter water to the point where food sources such as plankton are removed, altering food webs. This also causes clearer water, allowing sunlight to penetrate deeper, increasing growth of aquatic vegetation. One mussel can produce one million mussels per year.
- Impact fish and wildlife by increasing toxic algal blooms.
- Large colonies affect spawning areas, impacting the survival of fish eggs.
- Affects recreational activities by cutting swimmers feet as a result of their sharp shell
- Non-reversible once infested with mussels, all BC Lakes will be contaminated and there is currently no solution to destroy them.
- Cost to British Columbia will be Billions, to government, taxpayers and businesses if mussels manage to get into our eco-system
- Eco-system compromised, water intakes plugged, fish destroyed, beaches destroyed
- No long-term research provided on drinking water quality
- Negative tourism impact

Solutions:

- Guard the borders - cost British Columbia Millions to guard the borders 24/7 365 days per year to prevent infestation or Boat border crossing hours, that work.
- Train border patrols - this is a serious issue, they must collect the correct information from boaters (of all kinds such as zodiacs, blow up paddle boards)

- More conservation officers, with more authority
- This is no longer a campaign, it should now be a department of the government with funding to continue prevention
- This is no longer a provincial problem, it is a federal problem, lakes that are contaminated in Canada should not be allowed to let boats leave without inspection to prevent contaminating other lakes.
- Transport Canada should now prevent float planes from hopping provinces and states
- Education – Major Media campaign announcing BC’s commitment to keep our waters pristine. TV, Billboards, News paper, social media
- All Municipalities and Regional Districts should run a banner on their website home pages – “British Columbia is Committed to keeping their lakes Quagga and Zebra Mussel free. Please respect our Lakes and boarder crossing patrols, STOP at the boat inspection stations”. This should have a link to a website explaining the seriousness of this issue, and explain fines for breaking the law by transporting invasive species.
- All British Columbia tourism sites should also announce and run the banner on their sites. Tourism will stay healthy if BC lakes stays healthy.
- Boaters registration, should include education
- Immediate allocations of funds dedicated to research, to enable BC biologists to work on a solution with Manitoba & US studies research groups. Let’s work on removing them, together.
- Collaborate with infested US bordering Lakes on research and prevention of cross contamination.
- Collaborate with Alberta and Saskatchewan to stay mussel free

Funding:

BC government will find the funds (billions) if we lose the battle against mussels, as we’ll need to manage the problem. This is how can we help fund the prevention now (millions):

- Out of province user pay at all BC boat ramps
- Lake passes for BC boaters
- All fines are allocated back to the program
- Boat registration increase some funding back to project

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Regards,



Terry Rysz, Mayor
DISTRICT OF SICAMOUS

Cc: Mark Zarcharias, Deputy Minister (via email: DM.ENV@gov.bc.ca)
Wendy Booth, UBCM President (via email: wndbooth@gmail.com)
UBCM Members (via emails)