



JAN 03 2024

File: 0400.40

November 29, 2023

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
200 Kent St Station 15N100
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Lebouthillier:

RE: Prevention of Invasive Mussel Introduction to B.C.

At the November 16, 2023, Board meeting of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, the Board of Directors resolved to support the Okanagan Basin Water Board's Calls to Action on invasive mussel prevention.

The Board of Directors shares OBWB's concern over the threat of invasive mussels and the damage to infrastructure and the ecosystem that follows. Immediate action is required. I respectfully request the federal government implement the actions requested by OBWB in the October 18, 2023 letter to your office. I have included a copy for your reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pendergraft', is written over a white rectangular area.

Mark Pendergraft
Board Chair



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Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC V1W 3Z4
P 250.469.6270 F 250.762.7011
www.obwb.ca

Honourable Dominic LeBlanc
Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs
269 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P8
ps.ministerofpublicsafety-ministredelasecuritepublique.sp@ps-sp.gc.ca

Oct 18, 2023

Honourable Diane Lebouthillier
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
200 Kent St Station 15N100
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6
DFO.Minister-Ministre.MPO@df-mpo.gc.ca

Re: CALL FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION TO PREVENT INVASIVE MUSSEL INTRODUCTION TO B.C.

Dear Ministers,

We are again writing to express our extreme concern over the threats posed by invasive mussels to B.C. waters, recognizing the September 18th announcement that invasive quagga mussels were found in Idaho in the Snake River, a tributary to the Columbia River. A May 2023 report by the Province of B.C., *Potential Economic Impact of Zebra and Quagga Mussels in B.C.*, shows that both the Fraser River and Columbia River watersheds are at moderate to high risk of a mussel infestation based on water chemistry. In order to protect Pacific salmon habitat in both of these major river systems, and protect the economy of the west, the Government of Canada must act now.

1. We ask that you issue immediate direction to all Canada Border Service Agency locations between Saskatchewan and the Pacific that all watercraft entering Canada in that region be inspected for invasive mussels following provincial protocols.
2. We have asked the Government of B.C. to issue a temporary moratorium on out-of-province boats until the full extent of the infestation is known, and until the success of chemical treatments in Idaho is determined. We ask you to use your authority to support any such temporary moratorium.

In response to the mussel detection in Idaho, state officials released more than 116,000 litres – almost four large tanker-trucks - of a copper-based pesticide into a 26 km stretch of the Snake River, killing invertebrates, algae, plants, and fish, including 2-meter-long hatchery sturgeon. This will be followed up with another chemical treatment and a biocontrol treatment. This was considered a better option than allowing the mussels to take hold, but there is still no guarantee that it will have the desired affect. It is possible that mussels have already escaped the containment area, and if so, they will spread throughout the Columbia Basin over the next several years.

Chemical treatments in most large lakes in B.C. are unlikely to be effective. Instead, we need senior governments to take strong immediate action to close the obvious gaps in inspections and legislation to prevent invasive mussels in the first place.

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The Okanagan Basin Water Board will continue our own efforts in public awareness and education, providing a vulnerability assessment guide to prepare infrastructure, and working with local governments and First Nations to promote these calls to action, and the Clean, Drain, Dry message for boat owners.

The critical time to act is now.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna L. Warwick Sears".

Anna Warwick Sears, Ph.D. — Executive Director
Okanagan Basin Water Board
1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, B.C. V1W 3Z4
Email : anna.warwick.sears@obwb.ca
Office: 250.469.6251

CC:

- Okanagan MPs: Mel Arnold, Tracy Gray, Dan Albas, Richard Cannings
- Okanagan MLAs: Harwinder Sandhu, Norm Letnick, Renee Merrifield, Ben Stewart, Dan Ashton, Roly Russell
- Okanagan Nation Alliance, Chiefs Executive Council
- Okanagan Local Government Chairs and Mayors
- Pacific Northwest Economic Region: Matt Morrison, Chief Executive Officer
- Invasive Species Council of B.C.: Gail Wallin, Executive Director
- Okanagan Chambers of Commerce
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association
- Union of BC Municipalities
- Shuswap Watershed Council
- Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society

From: Minister of Public Safety / Ministre de la Sécurité publique (PS/SP)
<ps.ministerofpublicsafety-ministredelasecuritepublique.sp@ps-sp.gc.ca>
To: 'info@rdos.bc.ca'
Subject: Confirmation of Referral - LEB-000949
Attachments: Incoming - LEB-000949 (4724662).PDF

Dear Mark Pendergraft,

This is in response to your correspondence of November 29, 2023, addressed to the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions, and Intergovernmental Affairs.

As the matter falls under the purview of the Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, I have taken the liberty of forwarding your correspondence to her office for response.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Ministerial Correspondence Unit
Public Safety Canada

From: Minister of Public Safety / Ministre de la Sécurité publique (PS/SP)
<ps.ministerofpublicsafety-ministredelasecuritepublique.sp@ps-sp.gc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 4:44 PM
To: Minister / Ministre (DFO/MPO)
Subject: Referral to DFO - LEB-000949
Attachments: Confirmation of Referral - LEB-000949; Incoming - LEB-000949 (4724662).PDF; FW: Requesting confirmation of Referral - LEB-000949

Unclassified | Non classifié

The attached correspondence addressed to the Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions, and Intergovernmental Affairs, is forwarded to your office for action or information as appropriate.

La correspondance ci-jointe adressée au Ministre de la Sécurité publique, des Institutions démocratiques, et des Affaires intergouvernementales, vous est transmise pour suite à donner ou par information.

Unclassified | Non classifié