

Welcome to the first status report for the 2018 season of the BC Invasive Mussel Defence Program for the period of March 1 to May 31, 2018.

## New for the 2018 season

The BC Conservation Officer Service (COS) is leading the delivery of program operations for the Invasive Mussel Defence Program. This includes the addition of two dedicated sergeants to the program. The sergeants will be touring the inspection stations throughout the season to provide increased capacity to address non-compliance at the stations. The science, policy, and lake monitoring components of the Program will continue to be led by staff within the Environmental Sustainability & Strategic Policy Division (ESSPD). Several components of the program such as outreach/education and partnerships/collaboration will be jointly delivered between the COS and ESSPD staff.

Under budget 2018 the Program received \$1 million of dedicated annual funding, with another \$750,000 sourced internally from the Conservation Officer Service and \$2 million additional from partners (BC Hydro, Fortis BC, Columbia Power Corporation, and Columbia Basin Trust), for a total of \$3.75 million.

Through partnership with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) the program developed new watercraft inspection signs for the 2018 season. The signs have been designed to improve visibility and awareness for motorists transporting watercraft.

Program staff also worked directly with MOTI staff to identify two new inspection stations for the 2018 season to address safety concerns and operational requirements that came forward during the 2017 season. The two new stations are located in the East Kootenays, on Hwy 93, just north of the Roosevelt border crossing, and on Hwy 3 west of Sparwood. These new locations will maximize capturing high-risk traffic from both the southern and eastern jurisdictions.

A number of updates have been made to the program website including links to all the program's past reports, information about the 2018 inspection stations, the BC/AB passport program, and how to contact the program when bringing a boat from outside BC. This information can be found at [www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels)



*Invasive mussels found on watercraft traveling from Lake Havasu, AZ and stopped by CBSA at the Osoyoos border*

## Program Operations



Watercraft being decontaminated by the Surrey (top) and Castlegar (bottom) inspection crews.



### Watercraft Inspection Stations

Nine invasive mussel inspection stations opened on April 1, 2018 and an additional three inspection stations opened in mid-May. A total of 62 auxiliary conservation officers are now operational across the twelve inspection stations. The 24hr operations at the Golden inspection station started in mid-May, and the remaining stations are operating either from dawn to dusk (5 stations) or 10hrs/day (6 stations).

As of May 31, ~4,000 watercraft have been inspected and crews have interacted with approximately 8,000 people to promote Clean, Drain, Dry. Of the total watercraft inspected, 200 were identified as high risk, 83 Decontamination Orders have been issued, and 61 watercraft were issued quarantine periods to meet the required 30-day drying time.

Of ~4,000 watercraft inspected to date, 8 have been confirmed to have adult invasive mussels. These came from Ontario (3), Arizona (3), Michigan (1) and Manitoba and were destined for the Okanagan (3), Lower Mainland (2), Thompson-Nicola (2) and the Kootenays (1). The Program received advanced notification on 7 of the 8 mussel fouled boats either from another jurisdiction (e.g., AB, MT, Idaho, WA) or by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) agents.

### Lake Monitoring

In February 2018, the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) announced a new granting program in partnership with the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV). This new granting program is designed to fund community efforts to monitor lakes in BC for the presence of invasive freshwater mussels. Applications were received in spring 2018 and grants have been allocated to support lake monitoring efforts for 2018. Analysis for samples for veliger monitoring will continue to be administered through ENV and results will be shared by the Ministry.

	June 5th 2017	May 31 2018
<b>Total Watercraft Inspected</b>	<b>3,019</b>	<b>~4,000</b>
<b>People Interacted with to promote CDD</b>	<b>5,350</b>	<b>8,000</b>
<b>High Risk Watercraft</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>Decontamination Orders Issued</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Quarantine Periods Issued</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Mussel fouled watercraft</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>

Comparison of watercraft inspection totals as of end of May for the 2017 and 2018 seasons.

## Highlights

The Program continues to work with the CBSA to receive notifications of high-risk watercraft at the southern border crossings. To date during the 2018 season, CBSA has sent over 80 notifications and the program has responded to each. This includes a watercraft that came through the Osoyoos port on April 21<sup>st</sup> from Lake Havasu, AZ. The watercraft was denied entry by CBSA until provincial inspectors were available to respond the following day. Upon inspection adult invasive mussels were found and the watercraft was fully decontaminated by provincial inspectors. The mussels were confirmed to be dead as the watercraft had been out of the water for several years prior to transport.

Another big announcement for 2018 is the expansion of the program's K9 unit with the addition of K9 Major who will be joining Kilo in the 2019 season, once he has completed his training.



*K9 Major – the newest addition to the program.*

## Key Milestones/Events

March 3-5 2018 – Outreach booth and trailer at the BC Sportsman Show

March 19-23 2018 – First round of Program training for 34 returning inspectors

April 01 2018 – Watercraft inspection stations open

April 7/8 – Outreach booths and trailer at the BC Interior Sportsman show

April 28/29 – Outreach booth at the Kelowna Boat show

May 01-10, 2018 – Second round of Program training for 30 new and returning inspectors

May 11, 2018 – Minister's event at Shelter Island Marina, Richmond.

May 14-18, 2018 – Additional inspection stations operational



*Program funders, partners and staff with Minister Heyman at the May 11 Program event at Shelter Island Marina, Richmond, BC.*