

# BC Invasive Mussel Defence Program 2017 Season End Final Status Report



Reporting Period September 28th-December 12th, 2017 (Season End – Final Status Report)

## Program Operations

Watercraft inspection stations closed on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Due to the difficult winter conditions experienced at many of the inspection stations at the end of this season, stations will likely close at the end of October for the 2018 season. Following the closure of the inspection stations, the program has continued to work with CBSA staff and neighboring jurisdictions to receive notification of high risk watercraft.

For the 2017 season 35,500 watercraft were inspected and crews interacted with approximately 73,000 people to promote Clean, Drain, Dry.

Of the total watercraft inspected, 2,071 were identified as high risk, 286 Decontamination Orders were issued, and 200 watercraft were issued quarantine periods to meet the required 30-day drying time. Between June 11 and November 10, 122 watercraft were inspected between 12 a.m. to 5 a.m. at the Golden inspection station. Of those, six were identified as high risk and came from Saskatchewan (4), Manitoba (1), and Ontario (1).

Of the more than 35,500 watercraft inspected, 25 were confirmed to have adult invasive mussels. These came from Ontario (14), Quebec (2), Michigan (2), Texas (2), New York (2) Arizona (1), Ohio (1), and Illinois (1), and were destined for the Lower Mainland (11), Okanagan (7), Vancouver Island (4), Kootenays (1), Thompson-Nicola (1) and Alaska (1).

The Program received advanced notification on 20 of the 25 mussel fouled boats either from another jurisdiction (e.g., AB, MT, Idaho, WA) or by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). For two of the boats the owners actually contacted the Program in advance to arrange for inspection when they arrived in BC.



*Winter conditions at the Golden inspection station at the end of the 2017 season.*

	Oct 13 2016	Nov 10 2017
<b>Total Watercraft Inspected</b>	24,500	<b>35,500</b>
<b>People Interacted With</b>	49,200	<b>73,000</b>
<b>High Risk Inspections</b>	683	<b>2,071</b>
<b>Decontamination Orders</b>	92	<b>260</b>
<b>Quarantine Periods</b>	69	<b>180</b>
<b>Mussel fouled watercraft</b>	17	<b>25</b>

*Comparison of the watercraft inspection totals for the 2016 and 2017 seasons.*

## Program Effectiveness

Of the boaters whose watercraft were inspected, approximately 63% had previous knowledge of Clean, Drain, Dry and/or aquatic invasive species. A total of 480 people without boats voluntarily stopped at the watercraft inspection stations to get more information about invasive mussels and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Average compliance at the inspection stations for the 2017 season was 77%. Of the watercraft that failed to stop at the inspection station, 76% were non-motorized watercraft such as canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards which pose a much lower risk than motorized watercraft. This metric illustrates that compliance of higher risk motorized watercraft at inspection stations is very high. For the 2017 season, 59 tickets and 86 warnings were issued by Conservation Officers to motorists for failing to stop at inspection stations.

Watercraft operators who fail to stop at an inspection station are being reported to the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) hotline and full time Conservation Officers are responding and following up.

The BC & AB pilot Passport program was successfully launched in July and over the course of the 2017 season 1,390 passports were issued across the BC inspection stations. An additional 400 passports were issued across the Alberta inspection stations. In addition, passport holders were surveyed on their overall experience when they stopped at an inspection station. Survey results showed that 99% of passport holders found it to be a positive/neutral experience. The passport pilot was a huge success in the 2017 season and BC and AB will be continuing the program in the 2018 season.

## Lake Monitoring

Sampling for the early detection lake monitoring program is complete for the 2017 season. To date 400 samples from just over 100 lakes have been analyzed and all have come back negative for invasive mussel veligers. A complete list of samples collected will be included in the 2017 final report that will be released in spring 2018. In addition, the program is partnering on several research projects assessing new and emerging tools for early detection monitoring.



*Local RCMP assisting with enforcement of blow by's at the Cranbrook inspection station on Hwy 3.*



*Invasive mussel fouled boat intercepted during the 2017 season.*

## Collaboration

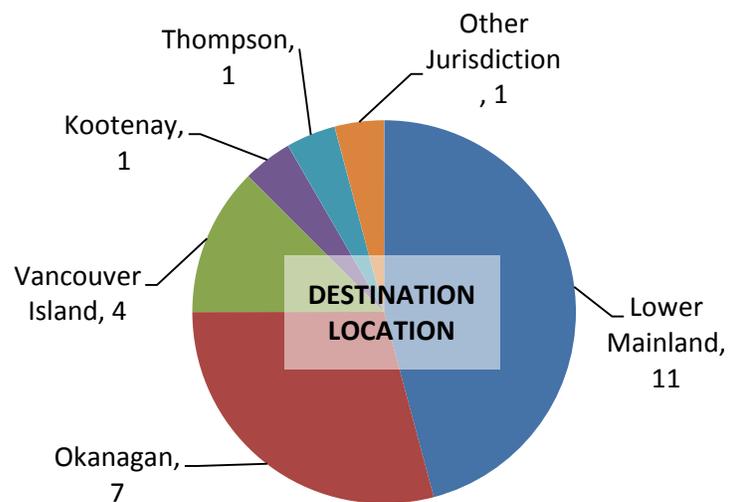
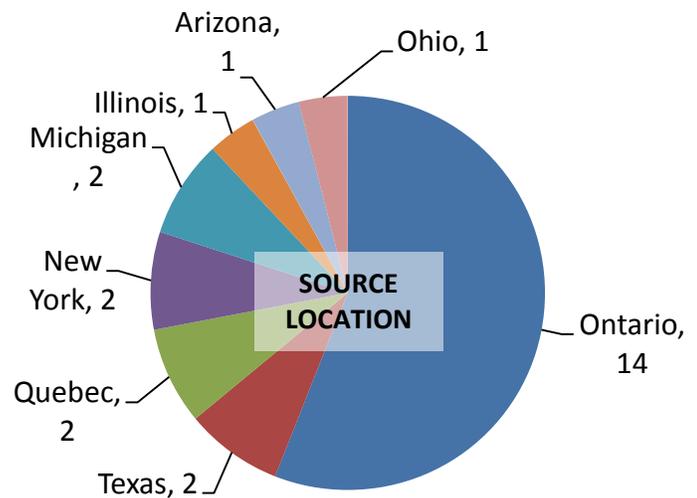
The Program worked closely with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to receive notifications of high-risk watercraft at the southern border crossings. For the 2017 season, CBSA sent 317 notifications to the Program from the southern border crossings.

The Program partnered with the COS to conduct several joint watercraft and hunting road checks this fall. The AIS inspectors provided important support and resources to the full time Conservation Officers and allowed for additional road checks to be completed through this partnership.

Program manager Martina Beck attended the Columbia River Basin team meeting in late-November, along with representatives from across the western states. This is one of several meetings that the Province attends annually to provide opportunities for cross-border collaboration and partnerships on invasive mussel prevention and other AIS prevention and research efforts.

The AIS K9 unit - Sgt. Josh Lockwood and Kilo presented at the Shuswap Watershed Council meeting on October 25 and the Christina Lake Stewardship Society Annual Review meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup>.

Program manager Martina Beck presented at the BC Boating Association Annual Conference in Richmond on November 21<sup>st</sup> 2017. With over 150 participants in attendance from across the BC boating industry this was a unique opportunity to develop new program partnerships.



*Source and destination location of the 25 mussel fouled boats intercepted during the 2017 season.*

## Key Upcoming Dates

**January 17-21<sup>th</sup>, 2018** – Exhibitor booth at the Vancouver International Boat Show

**Jan-Feb 2018** – Hiring of mussel inspectors for 2018 season

**March 2-4<sup>th</sup> 2018** – Exhibitor booth at the BC Sportsmen’s Show in Abbotsford

**March 19-24<sup>th</sup> 2018** – Training of mussel inspectors

**March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018** – 2017 Watercraft Inspection Data & Financial Final Report received by program funders

**April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018** – Watercraft inspection stations open