

Welcome to the first status report for the 2019 season of the BC Invasive Mussel Defence Program for the period of March 1 to May 31, 2019. The Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) is a shared delivery between staff from the B.C. Conservation Officer Service (COS) and the Environmental Sustainability & Strategic Policy Division (ESSPD) within the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV). The Program would like to recognize the ongoing funding provided by BC Hydro, Fortis BC, Columbia Power Corporation, and Columbia Basin Trust to support the delivery of the program. For more information about the Program please visit [www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasivemussels). Suspected invasive mussels should be reported immediately to the Conservation Officer Services Report All Poachers and Polluters: 1-877-952-7277 (RAPP).

## Program Operations

### Watercraft Inspection Stations

Watercraft inspection stations opened on April 1, 2019 and 64 auxiliary conservation officers are now operational across the twelve inspection stations and one roving crew. The 24hr operations at the Golden inspection station started in mid-May, and the remaining stations are operating either from dawn to dusk or 10hrs/day.

As of May 31, ~5,500 inspections have been completed and crews have interacted with approximately 9,000 people to promote Clean, Drain, Dry. Of the total, 99 were identified as high risk, 21 Decontamination Orders have been issued, and 18 watercraft were issued quarantine periods to meet the required 30-day drying time.

Of ~5,500 watercraft inspected to date, 5 have been confirmed to have adult invasive mussels. These came from Ontario (2), Michigan (1), Utah (1) and North Carolina (1) and were destined for Vancouver Island (2), Okanagan (1), Lower Mainland (1), and the Kootenays (1). The Program received advanced notification on 3 of the 5 mussel fouled boats either from another jurisdiction (e.g., AB, MT, Idaho, WA) or by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) agents.



*Minister Heyman, K9 Major and Sgt. Mann at Shelter Bay Marina on May 31<sup>st</sup> 2019*

	May 31 2018	May 31 2019
<b>Total Inspections</b>	~4,500	~5,500
<b>People Interacted with</b>	8,000	9,000
<b>High Risk Watercraft</b>	200	99
<b>Decontamination Orders Issued</b>	83	21
<b>Quarantine Periods Issued</b>	61	18
<b>Mussel fouled watercraft</b>	8	5

*Comparison of watercraft inspection totals as of end of May for the 2018 and 2019 seasons.*



*Laidlaw inspection crew with the local full time conservation officer attending the Paddle Expo at Cultus Lake, Chilliwack (top) and AIS inspectors being trained on watercraft inspection and decontamination using boats supplied by Kingfisher boats and GA Checkpoint Marine (bottom).*



## Lake Monitoring

In 2018, the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) launched a new granting program in partnership with the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. The grant program is designed to fund community efforts to monitor lakes in BC for the presence of invasive freshwater mussels. For the 2019 season, applications were received in January 2019 and have been allocated to support lake monitoring efforts. Analysis for samples for veliger monitoring will continue to be administered through ENV and results will be shared by the Ministry.

## Highlights

For the 2019 season we have hired an additional Sergeant (supervisor) for the program. Sergeant Dan Bartol is located in Golden, BC. This will enhance the level of operational supervisory capacity for the program. In addition, our new K9 "Major" has joined the team which brings the number of mussel detection dogs to two for the Province. Major's handler is Sergeant Cynthia Mann located in Nelson, BC. Having Major on board will enhance K9 presence in the Southeast part of BC.

An exciting new partnership the program formed in 2019 was with Kingfisher Boats and GA Checkpoint in Port Coquitlam, BC. They were instrumental in providing various watercraft and a marine technician at our two provincial AIS training events in March and May, 2019. Our program would like to recognize them both for their support and generous contribution towards mitigating the spread of AIS in BC.

## Key Milestones/Events

March 1-3 2019 – Outreach booth and trailer at the BC Sportsman Show (Abbotsford)

March 18-22 2019 – First round of Program training for 28 returning inspectors (Pacific Region Training Centre, Chilliwack)

April 01 2019 – Watercraft inspection stations open (10 southern inspection stations)

April 7 2019 – Outreach booth at the BC Interior Sportsman show (Kelowna)

April 28 2019 – Outreach booth at the Paddle Expo (Chilliwack)

Apr 30 – May 10, 2019 – Second round of Program training for 36 new and returning inspectors (Chilliwack)

May 16-18, 2019– Additional inspection stations operational (two northern inspection stations)

May 31, 2019 – Minister's event at Shelter Bay Marina (Kelowna)