



# BC Invasive Mussel Defence Program Status Report

## CLEAN DRAIN DRY

Reporting Period September 28<sup>th</sup>-November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 (Season End – Final Status Report)

### Program Operations

#### *Watercraft Inspection Stations*

Watercraft inspection stations closed on October 15<sup>th</sup>. This date was selected based on data from the 2015 season which showed that boater traffic decreased significantly in the month of October. Following the closure of the inspection stations the program has continued to work with CBSA staff at the southern border crossings to receive notification of high risk watercraft through the Conservation Officer Services Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) hotline.

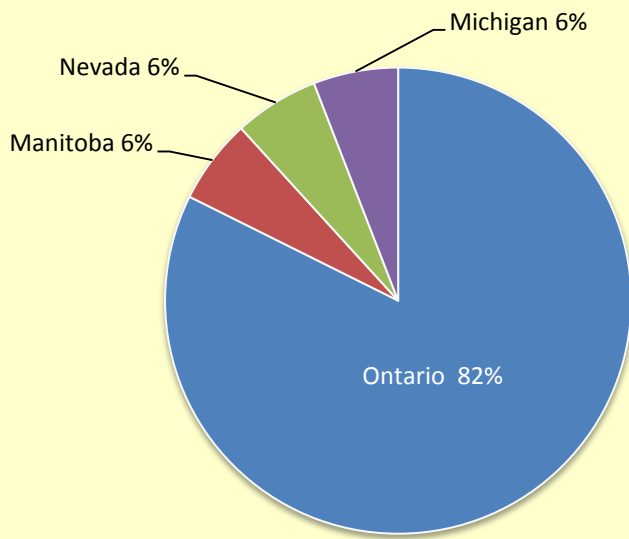
During the 2016 season just over 24,500 watercraft were inspected across all the inspection stations and the crews interacted with approximately 50,000 people to promote the message of Clean, Drain, Dry. The watercraft inspected were identified as traveling into B.C. from 58 different provinces, territories and states which represents an increase from the 2015 pilot season which saw boats traveling from 33 different provinces and states into BC.

Of the total watercraft inspected 684 were identified as coming from a high risk province or state, 90 watercraft were issued Decontamination Orders, and 68 watercraft were issued quarantine periods to meet the required 30 day drying time. Of the total watercraft inspected, 17 were confirmed to have adult invasive mussels.

Of the mussel fouled boats 14 (82%) came from Ontario, 1 from Lake Winnipeg (6%), Manitoba, 1 from Lake Michigan (6%), and 1 from Lake Mead, Nevada (6%). Commercially hauled boats represented 53% (9 boats) of the mussel fouled boats but made up less than 1% of all watercraft inspected illustrating the increased risk with the large commercially transported boats.

BC received advanced notification for 10 of the 17 mussel fouled boats which had been through a previous inspection in another jurisdiction. This demonstrates the efficacy of the joint perimeter defence approach for protecting the western provinces and states from these invasive mussels.

The destination of the mussel fouled boats by region was highest for the Lower Mainland/South Coast with 11 boats (59%), followed by the Thompson Nicola, Okanagan and Vancouver Island regions at 2 boats each (12%), and the Kootenay region with 1 mussel fouled boat (6%).



*Origin of the 17 mussel fouled boats intercepted during the 2016 season.*

## Lake Monitoring

To date a total of 200 water samples from 78 different lakes have been collected and analyzed for early detection monitoring and all samples have come back negative for zebra and quagga larvae. Samples are still being analyzed and the complete list of lake monitoring results and locations will be available in the fiscal year-end final report in March 2017.

## Program Effectiveness

Inspection crews interacted with an estimated 50,000 people across all the inspection stations during the 2016 season to promote the message of Clean, Drain and Dry. The Inspectors recorded if the watercraft owner had any previous knowledge of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) or Clean, Drain, Dry (CDD) as a measure of the efficacy of the program to educate the public about AIS and CDD. On average, 62% of watercraft owner's had previous knowledge of Aquatic Invasive Species and/or Clean, Drain, Dry during 2016, which is similar to levels in the 2015 pilot season.

Over the entire season a total of 419 people travelling without watercraft voluntarily stopped at the watercraft inspection stations to simply get more information about Invasive Mussels and other Aquatic Invasive Species.

The number of vehicles that failed to report at an inspection station was recorded for every shift at each inspection station as a measure of compliance. The average compliance rate for watercraft stopping at inspection stations for the 2016 season was 81%. This represents an increase in compliance of 9% over the 2015 pilot season, and is higher than the compliance rates for similar programs in other jurisdictions.

A total of 46 tickets and 36 warnings were issued to motorists for failing to stop at a watercraft inspection station.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) also made numerous social media posts about the Program to promote the message of Clean, Drain, Dry and the importance of stopping at the mandatory inspection stations. MOTI tracked approximately 25,900 reaches/visits across eight Facebook posts, four Tweets and one post on the Tran BC blog between April and September 2016.

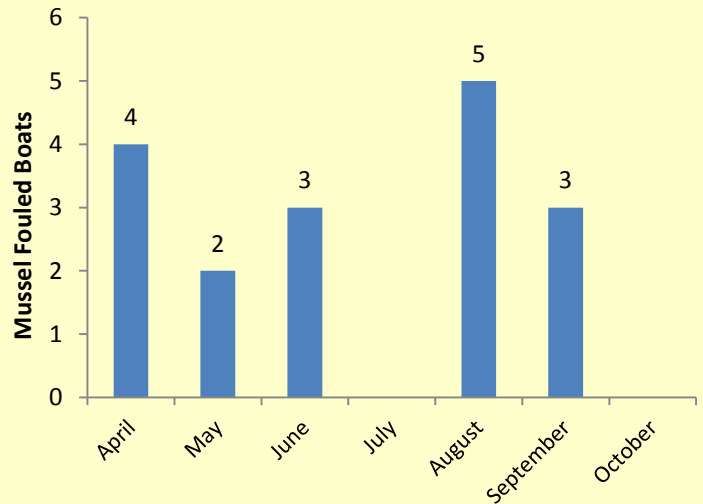


*Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Invasive Mussel Program Facebook post*

## Updates

On November, 8<sup>th</sup> 2016, Montana Department of Fish and Wildlife announced the detection of zebra or quagga mussels in Tiber Reservoir/ Lake Elwell. Detections were made in several locations of the reservoir at different times, suggesting an established mussel population. In another waterbody, Canyon Ferry Reservoir, a single mussel larvae has been detected making it suspect for a potential mussel infestation. Both of these reservoirs are within the Missouri drainage, without hydrological linkages to the Columbia River Basin.

The BC Invasive Mussel Program, along with other jurisdictions, has offered to provide support to Montana Fish and Wildlife if requested. Currently Montana is developing a specific response to this new situation, which was presented to the other jurisdictions in the Pacific Northwest including BC, on December 6-7<sup>th</sup> at the Columbia River Basin Team meeting in Portland, OR. Based on this information and ongoing discussions, the BC Invasive Mussel Program will determine what needs to be changed during the operations of next year's program. Program staff are also evaluating watercraft inspection data from the 2016 to assess any adjustments that can be made to further improve program operations for the 2017 season.



*Number of mussel fouled boats intercepted by month during the 2016 season.*

## Key Upcoming Dates

**Dec 6/7<sup>th</sup>** - 100th Meridian Initiative Columbia River Basin Team Meeting (Portland, OR)

**Dec 9<sup>th</sup>** – PNWER, ISCBC, AISC call to action meeting (Vancouver, BC)

**Jan-Feb 2017** – Hiring of mussel inspectors for 2017 season

**March 6th-17th 2017** – Training of mussel inspectors

**March 31st 2017** – 2016 Watercraft Inspection Data & Financial Final Report received by program funders

**April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017** – Watercraft inspection stations open