



City of Parksville
Office of the Mayor

December 19, 2017

The Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Heyman:

RE: Prevention of Quagga and Zebra Mussels

At the December 18, 2017, regular meeting, Parksville City Council passed a resolution to express concern regarding the threat that quagga and zebra mussels pose to BC lakes.

The District of Sicamous submitted a resolution at UBCM that was endorsed requesting more funding from the provincial government to increase awareness and education regarding this issue. Quagga and zebra mussels are highly invasive; only one mussel can produce one million mussels per year. Should BC become infested with these mussels, the impact will not ever be reversible. All BC lakes would be contaminated and there is currently no solution to destroy the mussel population.

It is our belief that the effects of these mussels would be devastating to BC freshwater eco-systems. Zebra and quagga mussels filter water to the point where food sources such as plankton are removed, altering food webs. This also causes clearer water, allowing sunlight to penetrate deeper, increasing growth of aquatic vegetation. Toxic algal blooms may negatively impact native fish and wildlife. Large mussel colonies affect spawning areas, impacting the survival of fish eggs.

With the eco-system compromised, beaches will be destroyed. Water intakes may become clogged with mussel colonies and there is no research on how these mussel populations may affect water quality. Recreational users may no longer wish to access lakes due to the environmental changes, which would negatively impact the vital tourism industry in BC. The cost to British Columbia government, taxpayers and businesses will be billions if these mussels manage to infiltrate our eco-system.

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Fortunately, there is still time to prevent this disaster. The District of Sicamous submitted a comprehensive list of preventative measures to keep these mussels out of BC waterways, including stricter border patrols, increased conservation staffing, inter-governmental collaboration and improved boater education. It is our hope that the Government of BC will heed this warning and implement some of these suggestions before it is too late.

Yours truly,



MARC LEFEBVRE

Mayor

Cc: Council Members
Mark Zarcharias, Deputy Minister (via email: DM.ENV@gov.bc.ca)
Wendy Booth, UBCM President (via email: wndbooth@gmail.com)
UBCM Members (via email)