

Hon. Nathan Cullen  
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (Fisheries)  
Room 310, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

January 13, 2022

Dear Minister Cullen,

**Re: Shuswap Watershed Council's request for more resources to prevent an invasion of zebra and quagga mussels in British Columbia**

We're writing to support the Shuswap Watershed Council's recent request for increased funding and expanded inspection stations to prevent an invasion of zebra and quagga mussels in British Columbia waters. There is a high risk of these mussels infiltrating B.C. waters due to boat traffic, and the consequences of such an invasion would be devastating to the Shuswap and Okanagan regions and the environment as a whole. The request for more support to combat these risks is also echoed by regional organizations like the Shuswap Waterfront Owners Association and the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

British Columbia's Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) needs a boost in resources to increase the number of watercraft inspections and decontamination stations on all routes into the province from Alberta and the U.S.A. The Watershed Council notes in its letter to you dated November 15, 2022, that these stations are the first line of defence to protect our waters, and this year there were only six permanent stations and two roving stations set up. This is concerning when you consider that back in 2016 under the B.C. Liberal government, eight base inspection stations served fourteen different locations. The reduction in the number of inspection stations only increases the imminent risk and threat of a zebra or quagga mussel invasion.

We urge you to strongly consider the request by the Shuswap Watershed Council, Okanagan Basin Water Board and other stakeholders to increase inspection rates and accessibility; update legislation to meet emerging trends; and work at a national level to ensure that B.C. is protected from the harmful consequences of these invasive species. This urgent matter requires immediate action to further prevent any risks to our waters. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Greg Kylo  
MLA for Shuswap



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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Lorne Doerkson  
MLA for Cariboo-Chilcotin and Official Opposition Critic for Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

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