



Reference: 45742

May 7, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Hello:

Thank you for your letter and for your advocacy towards keeping B.C.'s lakes and rivers free of invasive mussels. Through the Invasive Mussel Defence Program, delivered by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS) and partners, our government remains committed to preventing invasive mussels from establishing in our beautiful province.

We recognize the longstanding requests from the Okanagan Basin Water Board, First Nations, local governments and other partners for stronger regulatory tools to address the threat of invasive mussels. I am pleased to say that our government has tabled amendments to the *Wildlife Act*, now under consideration by the Legislature, which will create authorities for Conservation Officers to:

- Enforce "Pull the Plug," a requirement for all drain-plugs on vessels to be pulled prior to moving from the waterbody; and
- Require motorists transporting a watercraft in B.C. to stop at open watercraft inspection stations.

These proposed amendments are intended to commence for the 2025 summer boating season. There is an additional proposed amendment to enable mandatory inspections for watercraft entering B.C. from another jurisdiction prior to launch. This authority will be brought into force through regulations following further analysis and engagement.

WLRS continues to recognize our shared responsibility to keep our land and water environments safe from the threat of aquatic invasive species. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners to strengthen existing prevention efforts to mitigate the threat of invasive mussels in B.C.

Sincerely,

Randene Neill
Minister