

## Citizen scientists needed for monitoring invasive species

editor

Feature Slider, News

July 23rd, 2020

0 Comments



Zebra mussels (pictured here) have spread to Manitoba and quagga mussels have reached the Southwest United States. Now mussel larvae have been detected on reservoirs in Montana, the first time invasive mussels are known to have reached waterways in the Pacific Northwest. (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photo)

### Aberdeen Publishing

The Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS) is launching a citizen science initiative to help monitor for zebra and quagga mussels, and Asian clams in Okanagan lakes.

The project offers two types of volunteer positions during the months of August and September that involve community members in aquatic invasive species detection.

The first position seeks homeowners who have private docks on Kalamalka, Wood, Okanagan, Skaha, Vaseux and Osoyoos lakes to monitor for zebra and quagga mussels. Volunteers will receive a pair of mussel monitors to be attached to their docks and will be required to check them every two weeks.

“Our society has been checking for invasive mussels for eight years, however, this initiative will greatly expand our efforts to regions of the lakes that were previously inaccessible,” said Lisa Scott, executive director of OASISS.

The citizen science initiative also offers an opportunity for shoreline surveys looking for Asian clams along Osoyoos Lake.

“Asian clams are already established on the Washington side of Osoyoos Lake,” states Scott. “The shoreline surveys will allow us to monitor and protect this high risk lake from further infestations on the Canadian side.”

Invasive mussels and Asian clams have yet to show up in the Okanagan valley. If they were to arrive they could cause irreversible damage, activists have been saying for years. In regions where the invasive species are already established, mussels and Asian clams damage sensitive ecosystems, clog intake pipes and water infrastructure, affect water quality, impact tourism and the local economy.

“We are extremely concerned about the possibility of invasive mussels or Asian clams arriving here,” Scott said. “It’s imperative as a community to do everything in our power to protect our lakes from an invasion.”

The current project is being funded in part by the Okanagan Basin Water Board and is being run in conjunction with their Don’t Move A Mussel initiative. The society has also received a grant from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation to support the monitoring of Okanagan lakes for invasive mussels through both water sampling and monitoring stations.

To register for the project, contact [oasiss.register@gmail.com](mailto:oasiss.register@gmail.com) or call Sierra at 250-718-7901.

ADVERTISE



ADVERTISE

**Chad**  
Going Above  
to Find You

**250 8**  
chad@ch  
www.ch  
14-1470 H

**COL**  
HO

Each office is independ

ONLINE E

**PEA**

Legion  
Gives Back

Have a safe  
long we

PEACHLA

**2020**

shoppeachland

Toy Wright Centre  
Fire

250

RECREATI

**REC**  
GUIDE