

CASTANET NEWS Tuesday, Aug 29

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Vernon

Combatting mussels spread

Kate Bouey - Aug 3, 2017 / 5:00 am



Photo: Contributed

MP Mel Arnold to hold stakeholders meeting on what to do about the invasive mussels threat.

While fires are on everyone's minds this summer, North Okanagan Shuswap MP Mel Arnold is concentrating on another threat to the region – zebra and quagga mussels.

Arnold met with members of the Okanagan Basin Water Board this week to discuss the hot button issue and what can be done to prevent the spread of the invasive species to Southern Interior lakes.

"I think we should make it illegal to bring these things into the province," said Arnold.

The Conservative MP, who is also a member of the standing committee for fisheries and oceans, believes Canada's border guards should play a lead role in stopping watercraft from entering the country if there is any possibility they are carrying the mussels.

Last year, invasive mussels were found in Montana, leaving activists to say B.C.'s freshwater lakes were in imminent danger.

Next week, Arnold will host a stakeholders' meeting in Vernon with representatives from all levels of government from across the Okanagan and Shuswap regions.

"How do we collaborate and make the best use of what we've got and what must we do?" asked Arnold, who added that all levels of government must be engaged. "How do we prevent the spread and, if we cannot, what are the next steps?"