

DOWNTOWN KELOWNA
**WINTER
STREET MARKET**

December 4th, 2021
Water Street at Stuart Park



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Vernon

17 mussel boats stopped

Okanagan Basin Water Board reveals 17 boats contaminated with invasive mussels were stopped this year

Jon Manchester - Dec 2, 2021 / 12:17 pm



Photo: OBWB

A wrap-up of B.C.'s invasive mussels monitoring program for 2021 reveals approximately 33,000 vessel inspections were conducted – and 17 were found to be infested.

A report to the Okanagan Basin Water Board gives a review of the inspection program, which ran from mid-May to October.

- 244 watercraft coming into B.C. were identified as high-risk for invasive zebra or quagga mussels
- 153 were decontaminated
- 100 were given decontamination orders
- 18 were quarantined to meet the required 30-day drying time
- 17 were confirmed carrying the mussels

That compares to 16 mussel-fouled watercraft intercepted in 2020. In 2019, there were 22, and 25 in both 2018 and 2017.

Of the infested vessels this year, seven came from Ontario, two from Manitoba, and one each from Quebec, Colorado, Michigan, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

Almost half of those boats were headed for the Okanagan (8), while four were bound for the Lower Mainland, three to Vancouver Island, and one to the Kootenays and Skeena regions.

Water board staff met with Ministry of Environment invasive fauna unit head Martina Beck last week, who provided the update on invasive mussel defence efforts.

Insp. Dave Webster with the B.C. Conservation Officer Service noted compliance appears to be increasing as public awareness continues to grow.

"Most who are unaware seem to have only acquired a watercraft since the beginning of the pandemic, as people were staying closer to home," the report notes.

Provincial staff and invasive species groups collected 900 plankton samples from 75 waterbodies – all came back negative for invasive mussel and clam larva.