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watercraft invasive mussel inspections Environment minister says other options being pursued BARRY GERDING / Apr. 5, 2022 5:40 a.m. / NEWS

Province rejects mandatory

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approach is very challenging to enforce and as a result, their focus has been on education and awareness."

is not being actively pursued by the province, says Environment Minister George Heyman. Heyman says the province has learned from other jurisdictions with similar legislation in place that "this

A proposal requiring all watercraft

entering B.C. to be inspected for

invasive zebra and quagga mussels

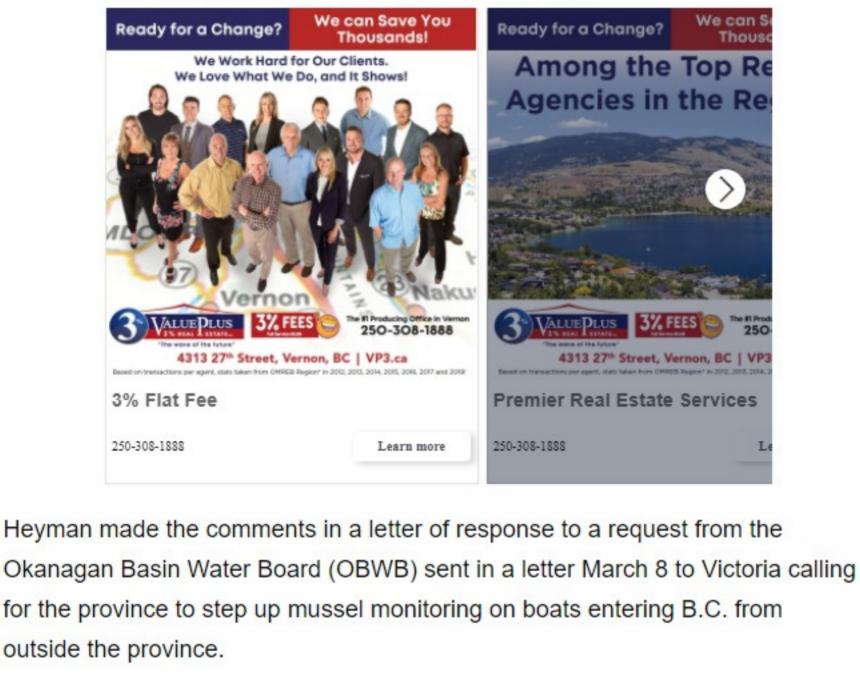
The minister says the government will continue to prioritize public education and

remove the drain plug from their boat every time it is pulled out of the water and being transported. ADVERTISEMENT Sponsored by KCN - Value Plus 3% Call us for a Free Market Evaluation! We are a full-service Real Estate Brokerage,

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outreach, optimize a perimeter defence approach and investigate the potential

of 'pull the plug' legislation, which exists in Alberta requiring watercraft owners to



In his response, Heyman said the government is "working hard" to maintain the \$3.5 million budget for the Invasive Mussel Defence Program in 2021. Saying negotiations are underway to renew agreements with funding partners that expire this year, Heyman also revealed a \$100,000 funding commitment

from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and \$250,000 from the B.C. Ministry of

He added that the hiring and training of Aquatic Invasive Species inspectors

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

being confirmed, Heyman noted.

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some points for debate.

IMPD program," stated his report to the board.

practices.

have been initiated for this year, and several inspection stations will be operational in early April along the province's eastern border. The level of IMDP operations for the boating season, May to September, is still

Heyman said mussel inspectors were in place at seven inspection stations and two roving stations from April 1 to Oct. 24 in 2021.

Crews completed about 33,300 inspections and interacted with more than

61,600 people to promote Clean, Drain and Dry mussel transportation protective

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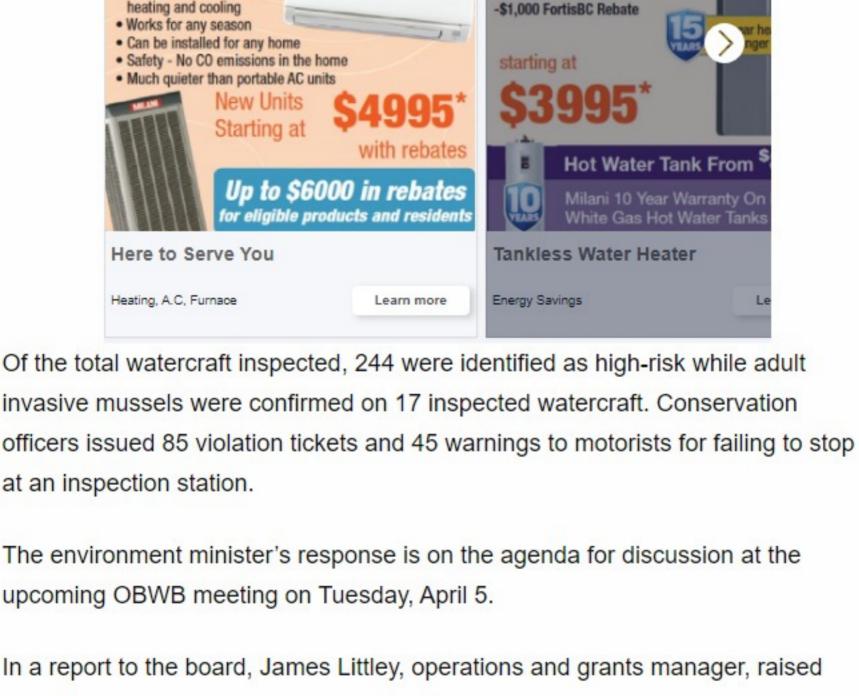
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"The process by which we engage with our partners has not yet been finalized,

and we appreciate your early thoughts," he told the OBWB.

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for out of province watercraft, it may be possible for Okanagan local governments to restrict local lake access sites to in-province watercraft and to out of province watercraft that have proof of inspection through the provincial

"As the provinces continue to be reluctant to implement mandatory inspections

The OBWB has actively pushed for more stringent watercraft inspection protocols because of concerns that a mussel infestation in Okanagan Lake would have a devastating economic impact.

A study for the OBWB found an invasive mussel infestation would cost the Okanagan at least \$42 million annually to just manage.

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