

MP Ken McDonald
Chair, House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans
Sent via e-mail to ken.mcdonald.a2@parl.gc.ca

13 December 2018

Re: Review of Aquatic Invasive Species component of the Fisheries Protection Program

Dear Mr. McDonald,

I am writing to thank you and the members of the Standing Committee for your support of MP Mel Arnold's motion on October 30th to review the aquatic invasive species component of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' Fisheries Protection Program.

We believe this is an important review, and are very much looking forward to the results. Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are a significant threat to waterways and communities, and in some cases are imposing significant ecological damage and costly restoration.

In the Shuswap watershed in the interior of British Columbia, we are primarily concerned with the threat of Zebra and Quagga Mussels. While these aquatic invasive mussels do not exist in BC, they do exist in nearby provinces and states. Our proximity to infested waterways, combined with high boat traffic in and out of the Shuswap and ideal water quality conditions for an infestation puts our watershed greatly at risk. Economic studies have indicated maintenance costs for managing a mussel infestation will cost over \$40 million annually in British Columbia, and as much as \$500 million in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region.

The Shuswap Watershed Council has corresponded with the Province of BC and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans to express our concerns about Zebra and Quagga Mussels, and ask for additional measures to prevent an invasion in BC. Most recently, we sent a letter to Minister Jonathan Wilkinson to express our appreciation for new funding in BC for education and outreach related to aquatic invasive species. In that letter, we also shared our sentiments that federal investment for aquatic invasive species has been disparate, and that cost-effective opportunities for prevention in British Columbia have not been maximized.

It is our hope that the committee will study the scope, mandate, and capacity of the Aquatic Invasive Species Component of the Fisheries Protection Program to ensure that government resources to fight AIS are allocated equitably and effectively. Thank you, again, for embarking on this timely review.

Sincerely,



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About the Shuswap Watershed Council

The Shuswap Watershed Council (SWC) was established in 2014 as a watershed-based partnership that enhances water quality and safe recreation in the Shuswap. There are 17 SWC members that represent three regional districts, two municipalities, the Secwepemc Nation, two provincial government agencies, and Shuswap communities. The SWC is a collaborative, non-regulatory group. It works alongside organizations that have regulatory roles in managing the Shuswap watershed, complimenting their work and carefully avoiding duplication. Its primary mandate is to enhance, protect, and advocate for water quality in the Shuswap watershed.