

PARCS UPDATE #85

April 26/2018

Introducing lake-based meetings

MEETING ABOUT INVASIVE MUSSELS AT LAKE DIEFENBAKER



Christina Taylor,
director for PARCS
south-west region,
welcomes delegates.



See page 2 for a Guest
Editorial about this
meeting.

COMMUNITIES ATTENDING - Starting in the southwest, and travelling clockwise around the lake)

- Sask Landing Provincial Park (Mgr.)
- Sask Landing Marina (Mgr.)
- Prairie Lake Regional Park (Board rep.)
- Village of Beechy (Mayor)
- OH of Hitchcock Bay (Board)
- Hitchcock Hideaway (Mgr.)
- RV of Coteau Beach (Councillor)
- Danielson Provincial Park (Mgr.)
- Village of Elbow (Councillor) and several citizens
- Lakeside RV Park at Elbow (several residents)
- Lakeside Marina (mgr.)
- RV of Mistusinne (Councillor) and several citizens
- Douglas Provincial Park (Mgr.)
- Town of Central Butte (Mayor)
- RV of Beaver Flat (Councillor)

And down the river to:

- Town of Outlook (Mayor)
- RV of Thode (Councillor)
- Town of Dundurn (Mayor)

And the following organizations:

- **Lake Diefenbaker Tourism**
(3 Board members)
- **South Sask River Watershed Stewards** (Board member)
- **Waterwolf Regional Planning Authority** (Vice-Chair)
- **Saskatchewan Irrigators** (Exec. Director)

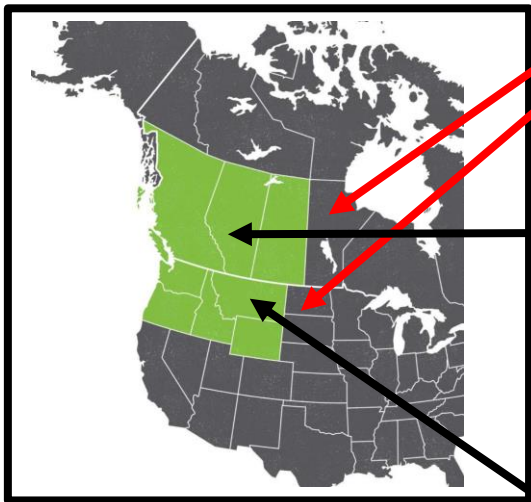
GUEST EDITORIAL ABOUT THE AIM MEETING IN ELBOW

History provides us with the ability to understand how past decisions affect our future. Myself and over 60 other concerned water users were given a history lesson in Elbow, Saskatchewan, on Saturday, April 21, by Lynne Saas (PARCS coordinator of member services) on AIM (Aquatic Invasive Mussels).

We were told how zebra mussels arrived on the eastern seaboard of North America and began their march across the continent hitchhiking on watercraft or riding the flow of the current in river systems. Lynne went into detail explaining how states and provinces attempted to deal with the invaders and the money spent on cleanup, attempted containment measures and education -- as water intake pipes for irrigation, for power generation and for water treatment plants clogged up with adult mussels. Beaches became unusable with piles of razor-sharp dead mussel shells the size of a fingernail that cut human flesh like glass littering their shores. Boats hulls and motors were coated with the mussels.



Randy Fernets, Councillor for the RV of Thode, listened attentively and later agreed to write this guest editorial.



We learned that the province of **Manitoba** and the state of **North Dakota** have mussel infestations and currently pose a clear and present danger to our Saskatchewan water systems.

Alberta, however, has been a leader in the battle against mussels, hiring a specialist and putting border inspections stations in place to protect themselves from the infected provinces and states to the **east** and **south-east**.

That same specialist was enticed by the state of **Montana** to implement a similar border inspection strategy in Montana with the addition of **internal inspection stations to contain their two previously infected reservoirs** (Montana has written the guidebook on containment plans, while at the same time protecting their borders).

Lynne then updated us on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment's efforts in forming a task force of concerned agencies, as well as installing signage and producing information kits outlining the dangers, plus purchasing decontamination units (although they were not in place until September of last year due to delivery problems).

Lynne emphasized that the Ministry of Environment foot soldiers have done an admirable job with little monies. She also praised the Ministry's collaboration with our border service agents at our southern border crossings.

The Ministry had previously announced that 2018 was expected be the year for implementing inspections stations in Saskatchewan.

Alas, although PARCS had been lobbying for six border inspection stations, when the budget was released it included plans for only two. PARCS was pleased to learn that the Ministry had, however, hired a full-time AIM Coordinator and 6 more summer staff (for a total of eight) to operate these inspection stations. The locations of deployment for the stations were of concern to Lynne as they **do not protect the province's "Ground Zero"** (Lake Diefenbaker which, if infected, would spread downstream to Last Mountain Lake, the Qu'Appelle Lakes and ultimately even to Tobin Lake).

The province's new AIM Coordinator is **Jeri Geiger**, a Conservation Officer with 15 years of experience who was one of the original team of COs who were trained in Minnesota on how to do boat inspections. She will continue to work out of her Estevan office. Welcome Jeri.

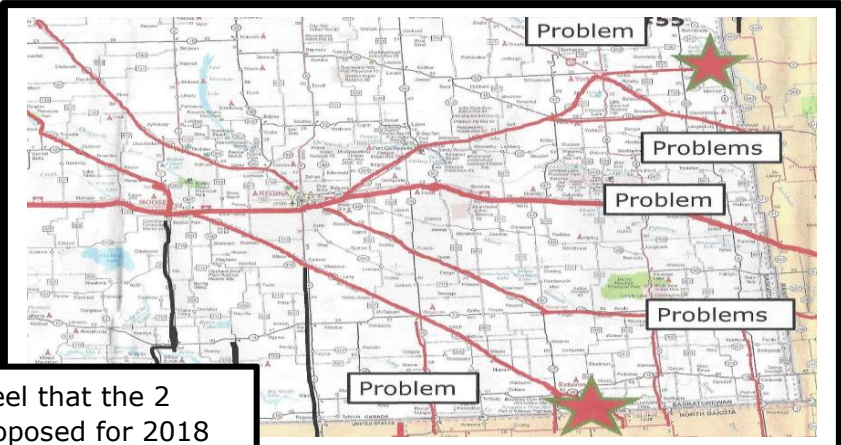
My personal thoughts on a quick course of action would be for our government to introduce emergency legislation **to raise the fine from the current \$500 to \$5,000 and include confiscation of boat, trailer and towing vehicle** if the boat has been found to be carrying zebra mussels into our province - an immediate awareness program after the legislation passes, to inform both Canadians and Americans we are not fooling around.

The next lake-based meeting to talk about what local communities can do to fight back against zebra mussels is scheduled for **Saturday, June 2nd**, at 1:00 pm, in Fort Qu'Appelle - for the **Qu'Appelle Lakes**. Watch for your invitations.

The danger to our waterways, to tourism and to the fishing industry that we promote around the world is too great not to move swiftly and decisively to protect our future. Let history show we made the right decisions.

MEANWHILE THE LAKE DIEFENBAKER FOLKS . . .

It's been 5 days since the meeting and the Lake Diefenbaker folks have moved quickly. The Waterwolf Regional Planning Board met and approved the formation of a committee to head up a Lake Diefenbaker Protection Plan. Joanne Brochu, vice-chair of Waterwolf, is heading up the committee and met last night with PARCS coordinator, Lynne Saas, who agreed to act as advisor to the committee. The Waterwolf committee will begin by seeking a meeting with Environment Minister Dustin Duncan. Stand by for more.



The Lake Diefenbaker folks feel that the 2 border inspection stations proposed for 2018 leave big access routes open to their Lake.