

# PARCS UPDATE #64 JUNE, 2016



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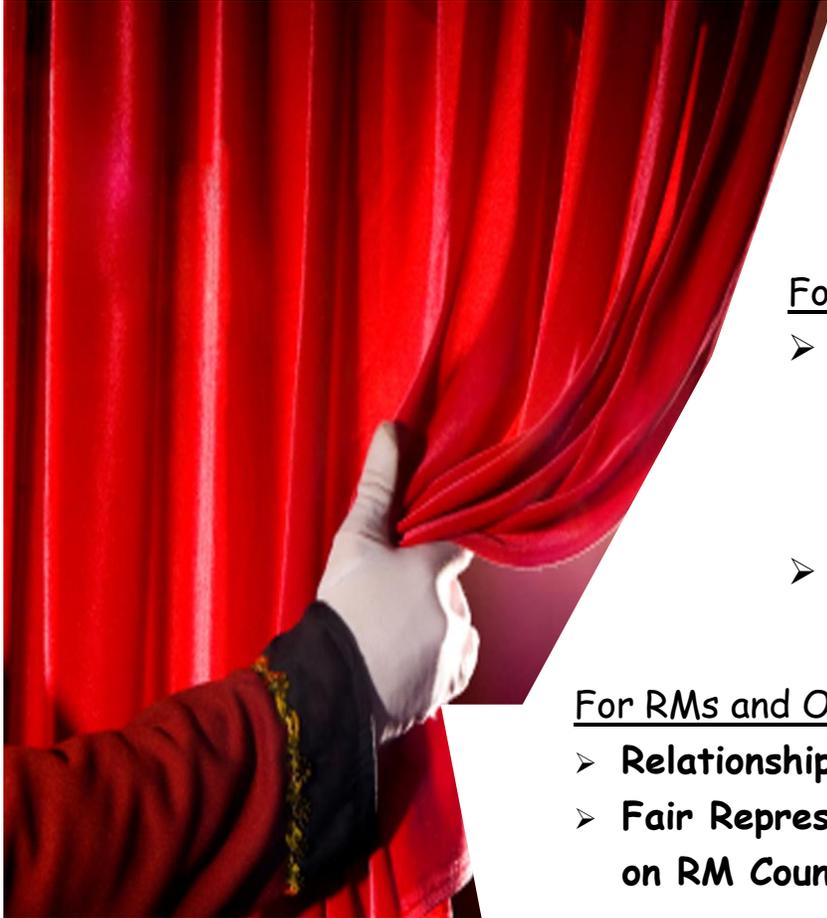
Page 2 to 4 - AIM TO STAB Update

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## 1. A SNEAK PEEK AT CONVENTION 2016



### FRIDAY, OCT. 21

- **KEYNOTE SPEAKER** about **Fraud and Ethics**

#### For Resort Villages:

- **Effective Councils** - Orientation for new councillors, and refresher for experienced councillors.
- **Human Resources** - Dealing with staff

#### For RMs and Organized Hamlets:

- **Relationships between councils and OHs**
- **Fair Representation of cottage communities on RM Councils.**

### SATURDAY, OCT. 22

- **A SURPRIZE KEYNOTE SPEAKER** all the way from Alberta
- **A dialogue with Sask Environment officials about Aquatic Invasive Species**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** – Program and registrations to follow mid-July

### MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Rooms are being held on a first come, first served basis. **You must reserve before September 15.** Rooms will be released after that date. Both hotels are 5 minutes from The Willows. Both are located on the same city lot at 105 Stonebridge Rd (off Clarence Avenue, south of the Ring Road).

#### **THE HAMPTONS 665-9898**

- 10 kings (**\$139**) or 20 double queens (**\$139**)
- Complimentary hot breakfast
- When registering state code: **YXESS**

#### **FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON 933-9889**

- 20 kings (**\$129**) or 20 double queens (**\$134**)
- Restaurant on site
- When registering state code: **PJ21AA**

## 2. UPDATE on "AIM to STAB"

### 2.1 - WHAT HAVE PARCS MEMBERS DONE?

Thank you to the following folks who have sent letters:

#### RVs

RV Manitou Beach (Feb. 10)  
RV of District of Katepwa (Feb. 10)  
RV of Candle Lake (Feb. 17)  
RV of Aquadeo (Feb.)  
RV of Beaver Flat (Feb 11, May 16)  
RV of Mistusinne (March 15)  
RV of Pebble Bay (March 25)  
RV of Alice Beach (March 31)  
RV of Tobin Lake (May 16)  
RV of Etter's Beach (March 7)  
RV of Lumsden Beach (May 14)  
RV of Bird's Point (May 13)  
RV of South Lake (May 19)

#### RMs and others

RM of Meota (Feb. 9)  
RM of Good Lake (Feb. 10)  
District of Lakeland (Feb.)  
RM of Hoodoo (Feb.)  
RM of Grayson (May 13)  
Village of Beechy (May 12)  
J/T Brennan, Riverhurst (May 15)  
P. Donnelly, Last Mtn. Lake (May 11)  
Twin Lakes Planning District  
Town of Dundurn (May 31)

#### Organized Hamlets

OH of Spruce Bay (March)  
OH of Burgis Beach (March 16)  
OH of West Chatfield (May 22)  
OH of Evergreen Beach (May 10)

**For more information about AIM to STAB consult our website [skparcs.com](http://skparcs.com), on the newsletter page, #63**

**Add your voice to ours. Write to the Premier.  
See letter template on last page.**

#### **Have you done your share?**

Your executive and staff have been busy on your behalf. We cannot win this battle on our own. We are calling on EVERY RESORT VILLAGE, EVERY ORGANIZED HAMLET COTTAGE COMMUNITY and EVERY RM WITH COTTAGE COMMUNITIES.

### 2.2 - WHAT HAS PARCS BEEN DOING, ALONG WITH OUR ALLIES?

- **May 12, 2016** – PARCS press releases across the province (see page 6, follows).
- **June 1, 2016** - Article for summer issue of The Rural Councillor (see p. 5, follows)
- **June 6, 2016** - Joint meeting of concerned allies, included representatives from:
  - PARCS (*President Garry Dixon*)
  - SUMA (Sask Urban Municipalities Assoc.)
  - SARM (Sask Assoc. Rural Municipalities)
  - SAW (Sask Association of Watersheds)
  - Sask Irrigation Projects Association
  - Sask Chamber of Commerce
  - Sask Wildlife Federation
  - Ducks Unlimited
  - Sask Power

Participants shared current information, concerns & initiatives. Examples:

- Sask Power is doing sampling around 5 dams; they have hired a firm to do an assessment about what else they need to do.
- SAW (Watersheds Assoc.) is reeling from recent budget cuts of 19%.
- In the US, every lake has huge yellow signs ("DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL") every lake has inspection stations.
- On the US border, infected boats from the US are denied entry and sent back to the US, infected Canadian boats are tagged and sent to one of our two Saskatchewan decontamination sites.
- Nothing happens on the 13 border crossings on the Sask/Manitoba border.

Participants planned the **presentation that these allies will put forward to the Deputy Minister of Environment at their meeting of June 23<sup>rd</sup>**.

## 2.3 HAS THERE BEEN ANY RECENT ACTION FROM THE PROVINCE?

- **June 6, 2016** - Inter-Provincial Agreement to Battle Invasive Aquatic Species

The following is the exact text of the press release from Minister Cox's office:

The Government of Saskatchewan has signed an agreement with Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and the Yukon Territory to form a coordinated regional defense against invasive species, with an initial focus on aquatic invasive species.

Aquatic invasive species, specifically zebra and quagga mussels, pose a major threat to the health of western Canada's aquatic ecosystems and, if established, have the potential to severely impact aquatic habitats, recreational and commercial fisheries, valuable recreational resources and water-related infrastructure.

"Preventing the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species requires the collaboration and co-operation amongst many agencies, organizations and jurisdictions," Environment Minister Herb Cox said. "As part of Canadian Environment Week, we are pleased to announce this agreement as one of the many actions being taken to ensure a healthy environment for all to enjoy."

The agreement increases co-ordination between jurisdictions in western Canada, resulting in shared resources and planning related to both prevention and response to aquatic invasive species.

Collaborative activities will include:

- **planning of watercraft inspection stations to maximize efforts on shared highway crossings;** and
- increased ability to connect with resources from other provinces, such as people and expertise, to assist in a rapid response in the event of any mussel detections.

Saskatchewan supports several other initiatives that raise awareness about aquatic invasive species and the importance of prevention through the CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY Your Boat awareness program.

More information about fishing and aquatic invasive species can be found in the Saskatchewan Anglers' Guide, and online at [www.saskatchewan.ca/environment](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/environment).

*To date the words in the press release are just words. Hopefully the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of our allies and Minister Cox's Deputy may reveal whether there are any plans for systematic action to accompany this announcement.*

- **June 11, 2016** – Provincial Auditor supports our cause (Press ctrl + click to follow link)

<https://auditor.sk.ca/publications/public-reports/item?id=142>

The provincial auditor devoted Chapter 7 of his recent report to Preventing Aquatic Invasive Species in Saskatchewan. The following are some quotes from that report:

(Page 57) The introduction of aquatic invasive species is one of the most significant threats to biodiversity in Saskatchewan waters. If introduced, aquatic invasive species (e.g., zebra mussels) could also have costly consequences (millions of dollars) for remediation of water treatment plants, power plants, and dams in Saskatchewan.

(Page 57) Environment developed annual action plans to prevent entry of high-risk aquatic invasive species (e.g., zebra mussels) into Saskatchewan. Environment spent **\$264,000** in 2015-16 (2014-15: \$252,000) on initiatives related to preventing entry of aquatic invasive species. Alberta and Manitoba spent **\$2.1 million** and **\$0.5 million** in 2015, respectively.

Without a clear assignment of roles and responsibilities and commitment from key partners over the long term, Environment may not undertake and prioritize aquatic invasive species prevention efforts in the right areas. Effective use of resources is key to achieving maximum benefits. Partnerships can leverage the full value of each dollar spent, and maximize opportunities to pool expertise and resources for preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species.

- 1. We recommend that the Ministry of Environment collaborate with partners to develop a long-term multi-agency aquatic invasive species strategy.**
- 2. We recommend that the Ministry of Environment measure the effectiveness of its aquatic invasive species public education and awareness campaign regularly.** (Page 62)

- **June 11 – The first real movement in 2016! Press release about one actual border inspection.**

**Saskatchewan government inspects boats for quagga mussels - Inspectors set up a check point on the highway to look at boats moving from storage to lakes**

Inspectors check boats on Highway 6 in Saskatchewan for invasive aquatic species. (CBC) [Zebra mussels, quagga mussels causing headaches in Saskatchewan](#)

Inspection stops were set up in Saskatchewan Friday to check for quagga mussels on boats.

The Saskatchewan government talked this past week about how zebra mussels and quagga mussels are a huge problem in other provinces, especially in the Great Lakes region. The mussels can disrupt ecosystems and clog water intake systems.

**[Saskatchewan government cracking down on pesky zebra mussels](#)**

This has prompted border guards to watch for contaminated boats entering the province, but on Friday inspection crews checked boats being moved from storage to the lakes.

The Ministry of Environment set up a roadside watercraft inspection near the community of Corinne, Sask., Friday afternoon, on Highway 6. The crew stopped several vehicles.

It's all part of the ministry's aquatic invasive species prevention program. The government says the program is focusing on increased watercraft inspections, disinfecting high-risk watercraft found entering the province and additional education and awareness efforts to protect fish populations.

A press release from the Ministry of Environment (see text above and photo) was posted by CBC on Friday, June 11. This is the **FIRST REAL NEWS about an actual border inspection carried out in 2016 by Sask Environment.**

**Did you know that last year, there were 36 conservation officers trained in Saskatchewan to inspect watercraft inspections . . .**



- **In 2015 those officers inspected a total of ONLY 8 BOATS at 2 SITES?**
- **Of those 8 boats inspected at 2 sites, 1 infected boat was found at each site.**
- **THAT'S (2 of 8 boats) AN INFECTION RATE OF 25% !**

**WHAT HAPPENED AT ALL THE SITES WHERE THERE WERE NO INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED?**

- **In 2014 Alberta conducted 4,000 border inspection!**
- **In 2015, 11 contaminated boats from Ontario crossed Saskatchewan and were stopped at the Alberta Border. Think what would have happened if one of those boats had stopped and launched into a Saskatchewan Lake.**

PARCS press Release to daily, weekly and monthly newspapers, television and radio, May 2016

## PARCS HAS MIXED REACTIONS TO ENVIRONMENT MINISTER'S RECENT PRESS RELEASE

Released May 12, 2016

While the Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan (PARCS) is encouraged by the Ministry of Environment's increased attention to aquatic invasive species and also their enhanced program for monitoring for the presence of these mussels, the recent press release from Minister's Cox's office, dated May 10, makes no mention of the comprehensive systematic program for border inspections proposed by the AIM to STAB coalition led by PARCS. AIM to STAB (Aquatic Invasive Mussels – Stop Them at the Border) is a coalition of Saskatchewan communities with broad representation across the province.

Although the Minister's press releases speaks about public education and random boat inspections, in fact Saskatchewan is the only western province that has not allocated funds or hired staff for the implementation of a comprehensive systematic border inspection program. During the summer of 2015, 11 infected boats, travelling from Ontario across Saskatchewan to Alberta, were stopped at Alberta's eastern border and decontaminated. "Had only one of those boats been launched into one of our Saskatchewan lakes, that lake could now be irreversibly contaminated," states Garry Dixon, President of PARCS. "Once a single mussel enters a lake, there is no way to stop their spread throughout that lake, and other connected waterways."

"If that lake were Lake Diefenbaker, for example, the contamination would likely spread through the entire North and South Saskatchewan river systems, north into Tobin Lake and south into the connecting systems of Buffalo Pound Lake, Last Mountain Lake and ultimately the entire Qu'Appelle Chain. Once introduced into our province, there is no cure," Dixon warned. "Actually, all of our lakes are currently at risk."

An infestation of these mussels could have a huge economic effect on water-operated infrastructure due to the blockage of intake pipes (irrigation, hydroelectricity, and drinking water), plus the effect on tourism with formerly pristine beaches covered in layers of contaminated mussel shells. In 2013, the Alberta Department of Environment and Renewable Resources estimated that the *annual cost* of an invasive mussel infestation would be at least \$75 million. For this reason Alberta's Ministry of Environment has implemented mandatory boat inspection sites along their east and south borders.

PARCS was a signatory to a recent letter to Minister Cox asking for a meeting to discuss mandatory boat inspections at our east and south border crossings. "We are looking forward to that meeting and are considering suggestions for ways to finance such a program," adds President Dixon. "Meanwhile, PARCS is committed to ongoing public education, the direction set by its membership."

"Mussels don't read press releases," said PARCS Director Joe Jozsa. "They hitchhike on boats and destroy lakes. Only responsible leadership from our government can keep them out of our province."

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For more information about the STAB program, visit the PARCS website at:  
[http://www.skparcs.com/rsu\\_docs/aim-to-stab.pdf](http://www.skparcs.com/rsu_docs/aim-to-stab.pdf)

Or contact:

Lynne Saas, Coordinator of PARCS Member Services

Phone: 306-630-9698

Email: [parcs@sasktel.net](mailto:parcs@sasktel.net)

From *The Rural Councillor*, summer 2016

# HAVE BOAT, WILL TRAVEL

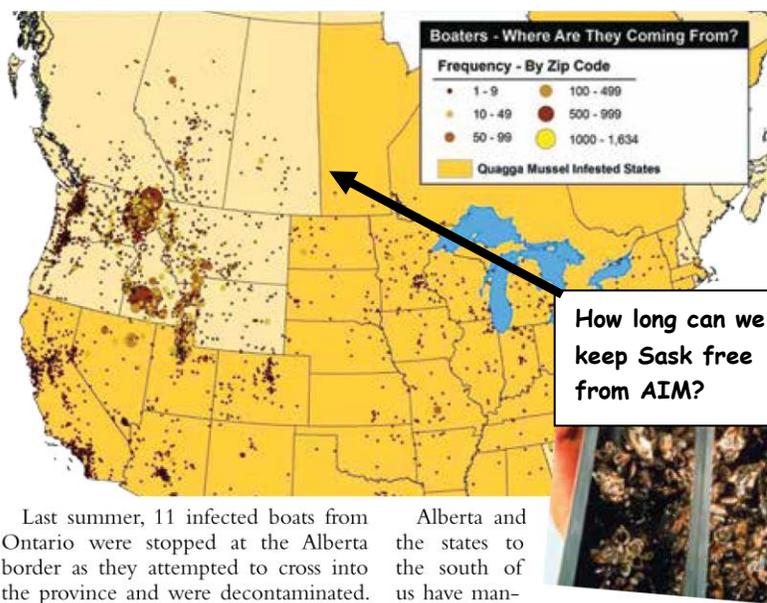
BY LYNNE SAAS PARCS MEMBER SERVICES

THE theme of this issue, *Tourism and Recreation*, leads perfectly into an explanation of an issue that is near the top of the list of concerns for the cottage community members of PARCS (Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan), along with SARM and SUMA – namely the threat of Zebra and Quagga Mussels which attach themselves to boats and hitchhike to new lakes. Unlike native mussels that bury into the bottoms of lakes and rivers, these foreign mussels attach themselves to hard surfaces like the hulls of boats.

It is believed that these tiny foreign mussels arrived in the USA in 1986 via the ballast water of overseas cargo vessels, soon spreading into Ontario and, in 2011, into the Red River, North Dakota. By 2013 Lake Winnipeg, Cedar Lake and the Red River in Manitoba were all infected.

Once one tiny mussel finds its way into a lake, the future of that lake becomes grim. Not only do these mussels interfere with the recreational use of the lake by coating the undersides of boats, docks and the bottoms of the lakes, they have a huge economic effect on water-operated infrastructure due to the blockage of intake pipes, clogging of irrigation lines and screens, and interruption of dam operations – requiring new capital and huge maintenance costs for water users. In 2013, the Alberta Department of Environment and Renewable Resources estimated that the annual cost of an invasive mussel infestation is \$75 million.

The worst news is that once they are introduced, it is virtually impossible to eradicate them, making prevention key to stopping their spread from Manitoba to Saskatchewan. Biologists feel that the ecological risk of their spread into Saskatchewan is high. We have the correct water quality for mussels to survive and a growing number of boats both leaving and coming into our province. Most of Saskatchewan is classified as having “a very high probability of invasion.”



How long can we keep Sask free from AIM?

Last summer, 11 infected boats from Ontario were stopped at the Alberta border as they attempted to cross into the province and were decontaminated. If just one of those boats had stopped off in a Saskatchewan lake, that lake would now be infected.

We know that about half of Saskatchewan's drinking water comes from the fresh waters coming into our province through the South and North Saskatchewan Rivers, flowing north out of Gardiner Dam, through Saskatoon and on to Tobin Lake, and flowing south through Buffalo Pound which provides water to Moose Jaw and Regina, into Last Mountain Lake and the Qu'Appelle chain of lakes. If one of these lakes were to become infected, all of these people could face higher utility bills for drinking water. The effect on the hydroelectric power could have a similar effect on electrical bills. The impact on the irrigation industry, the decrease in property values for cottage owners, and the loss of tourism and fisheries would be devastating on any lake and result in significant costs for all taxpayers in Saskatchewan. An impact study in Ontario shows that they are spending \$75 to \$91 million annually as a result of their mussel invasion.

Alberta and the states to the south of us have mandatory inspection and decontamination at their borders. Saskatchewan is the only western province refusing to allocate the funds necessary to implement border inspections. Manitoba's government recently allocated \$1 million dollars annually to fight further spread within their province. It has been estimated that, for the same annual amount, Saskatchewan lakes and our water-operated infrastructures could be protected. The AIM to STAB movement (*Aquatic Invasive Mussels – Stop Them at the Border*) is a coalition of communities formally supported by SAW (Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds), PARCS, SUMA and SARM. The latter three organization recently wrote a letter to the Minister of Environment, requesting a meeting “to discuss this issue in further detail to ensure work and action begins in time to protect our waterways for the 2016 boating season.”

Can our province afford to keep boats from infecting our lakes and water-based infrastructure? Can we afford not to?

From: *Name of your community*  
*Your email address (or mailing address)*

Date: June , 2016

To: Hon. Brad Wall, Premier of Saskatchewan  
226 Leg. Building, Regina, SK, S4S 0B3  
[premier@gov.sk.ca](mailto:premier@gov.sk.ca)

Dear Premier Wall,

This letter is to tell you how concerned our community is about the threat posed by Zebra and Quagga Mussels to our lakes in Saskatchewan and **to urge your government to implement a mandatory comprehensive border inspection program for boats entering our province from the east or south, as soon as possible.**

We know that your government has invested in the 'Clean, Drain, Dry' educational program – a worthwhile start. Unfortunately, we feel that educating Saskatchewan boaters will have little impact on the actions of out-of-province visitors.

We know that your Ministry of Fisheries is considering a pilot initiative this summer. Unfortunately, without a comprehensive border inspection program, a pilot is likely to be too little too late.

We know the presidents of SARM, SUMA and PARCS have requested a meeting with your Minister of Environment. However, please do not refer this letter to your Minister for his reply. We are asking for your reply as the leader of our provincial government regarding this issue which is of critical importance to all Saskatchewan residents.

Please consider:

Your reasons may vary, but may include:

- There is no way to kill these mussels once they infect a lake.
- They will have a devastating effect on lakeshore recreation and fisheries due to the coating the undersides of boats, docks, and the bottoms of the lakes. There will be a huge loss to tourism.
- There will be huge economic effect on water-operated infrastructure due to the blockage of intake pipes (irrigation, hydroelectricity, and drinking water). In 2013, the Alberta Department of Environment and Renewable Resources estimated that the *annual cost* of an invasive mussel infestation would be \$75 million.
- Biologists feel that the ecological risk of their spread into Saskatchewan is high. We have the correct water quality for mussels to survive and a growing number of boats both leaving and coming into our province. Most of Saskatchewan is classified as having "a very high probability of invasion".
- There is a real potential for higher utility bills for drinking water and electrical bills due to the infrastructure costs.
- Last summer, 11 infected boats from Ontario were stopped at the Alberta border as they attempted to cross into Alberta and they were decontaminated. If just one of those boats had stopped off in a Saskatchewan Lake, that lake would now be infected.
- Saskatchewan has been the only western province to refuse to allocate the funds necessary for implementing border inspections. (The Manitoba government has recently allocated one million dollars.)

Mr. Premier, we await your reply regarding the implementation of a comprehensive systematic border inspection program to protect our Saskatchewan lakes.