

Invasive species are moving across BC and Canada at a rapid pace:

- Aquatic invasive species are non-native plants, fish, and mollusks that have the potential to harm the environment, economy and society.
- Once established, aquatic invasive species are some of the most difficult to control and manage, due to sensitive wetland ecosystems – prevention is critical!
- There are approximately 133 different aquatic invasive species in British Columbia, many of which continue to spread causing serious damage, such as clogging waterways, reducing habitat, outcompeting native fish and wildlife populations, and impacting recreation, fishing and swimming. These include:

- Eurasian watermilfoil
- Yellow flag iris
- Purple loosestrife
- Largemouth bass
- Northern pike
- American bullfrog

- Quagga and zebra mussels are a **High Alert** species in BC. They have invaded the Great Lakes, causing significant economic and environmental damage through their ability to spread rapidly and establish in underwater infrastructure such as hydroelectric intakes and irrigation pipes.



Aquatic invasive species must be prevented and controlled

- Ten years ago, the cost of invasive species to Canada was between \$16 and \$34 billion per year. That cost is likely higher today.
- Compared to other threats to biodiversity, introduced invasive species rank second only to habitat destruction, and are a greater threat to native biodiversity than pollution, harvest, and disease combined.
- It is estimated that the introduction of zebra and quagga mussels would cost \$43 million per year in BC, in damages to infrastructure, hydropower facilities, water extraction activities and recreational boaters, beside having significant impacts on native fish stocks..
- Invasive mussels are tiny – about the size of your fingernail when full grown. One zebra mussel can lay up to one million eggs a year. They attach to boats and trailers and can be spread in ballast water. It is

extremely important to 'Clean, Drain, Dry' (<http://bcinvasives.ca/resources/programs/clean-drain-dry/>) your boat and equipment before launching into another waterbody.

- The BC Government is hosting mobile boat decontamination units and watercraft inspection stations to prevent the establishment of invasive mussels in BC.
- Sightings of invasive species should be reported immediately to your **regional invasive species committee** (<http://bcinvasives.ca/about/partners/bc-stakeholders/>). Report any quagga or zebra mussel sightings to the RAPP hotline at 1-877-952-7277.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT ISCBC:

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