

District of Sicamous

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March 18, 2021

Honourable Katrine Conroy
Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

DELIVERED VIA EMAIL

Re: Aquatic Invasive Species Enforcement

Dear Minister Conroy,

At its February 10, 2021 Regular Council meeting, the Council for the District of Sicamous passed the following resolution:

"WHEREAS Canada is home to 20 percent of the world's fresh water, and the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) poses irreparable environmental, social and economic threats that will cost Canadian taxpayers billions of dollars in lost tourism and economic opportunities, and other unknown costs;

AND WHEREAS the spread of AIS is largely connected to human activity, including the unsafe transport of watercraft and floatplanes between bodies of water;

AND WHEREAS current government efforts through fines for failing to stop at a B.C. Watercraft Inspection Station, there is a lack of specific provincial or federal regulation and enforcement that is directed at watercraft owners who fail to prevent the spread of AIS by cleaning, draining, and drying their watercraft before transport;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial and federal governments adopt increased and stricter enforcement measures for watercraft and floatplane owners including the introduction of a significant fine for watercraft and floatplane owners that fail to Clean, Drain and Dry their watercraft or floatplane before transporting it to another body of water and an increase in the fine issued to motorists who fail to stop at a Watercraft Inspection Station."

We kindly request your consideration and support of this resolution and have enclosed background information on the resolution for your reference.

Regards,
DISTRICT OF SICAMOUS

cc: Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Premier Horgan
UBCM Member Municipalities

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Memo

To: Southern Interior Local Government Association

From: District of Sicamous Council

Date: February 22, 2021

Re: Certified Resolution 21-068
Enforcement for the protection of waterways from Aquatic Invasive Species

District of Sicamous Council's concern for the wellbeing of its community, province, and country inspired Resolution 21-068 which calls for tougher enforcement measures to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in Canada.

While Sicamous, home to Shuswap and Mara lakes, is particularly vulnerable to the spread of AIS, the detrimental effects are not limited to our community and would have environmental, economic, and social consequences province- and country-wide.

Council has long supported federal and provincial prevention efforts that have largely focused on educating the public through awareness campaigns and voluntary compliance. The Canadian Action Plan to Address the Threat of Aquatic Invasive Species states: "...there are few specific regulations directed at recreational and commercial boating related to preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species."

Watercraft inspection stations, like those in BC that target recreational boaters through awareness and compliance, are simply unable to inspect all watercraft transported between waterways due to limited operational hours. Fines are issued to motorists who fail to stop at these mandatory inspection stations; however, the fine is minimal considering the potential consequences of spreading AIS. While the federal Fisheries Act and provincial Wildlife Act, both contain sections which make unauthorized fish introductions illegal and include prosecution for such activity, there is no legislation around the transport of watercraft without proper decontamination.

Council, therefore, submits Resolution 21-068 which calls on the province and federal government for increased enforcement, tougher penalties and the introduction of legislation that criminalizes the transport of watercraft and floatplanes between waterways without first decontaminating.

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Certified Resolution # 21-068

It was moved and seconded:

THAT Council submit the following resolution to the Southern Interior Local Government Association:

WHEREAS Canada is home to 20 percent of the world's fresh water, and the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) poses irreparable environmental, social and economic threats that will cost Canadian taxpayers billions of dollars in lost tourism and economic opportunities, and other unknown costs;

AND WHEREAS the spread of AIS is largely connected to human activity, including the unsafe transport of watercraft and floatplanes between bodies of water;

AND WHEREAS current government efforts through fines for failing to stop at a B.C. Watercraft Inspection Station, there is a lack of specific provincial or federal regulation and enforcement that is directed at watercraft owners who fail to prevent the spread of AIS by cleaning, draining, and drying their watercraft before transport;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial and federal governments adopt increased and stricter enforcement measures for watercraft and floatplane owners including the introduction of a significant fine for watercraft and floatplane owners that fail to Clean, Drain and Dry their watercraft or floatplane before transporting it to another body of water and an increase in the fine issued to motorists who fail to stop at a Watercraft Inspection Station.

Carried

Certified a true and correct copy of a resolution endorsed by the Council at its Regular Council Meeting held on February 10, 2021.

Dated this 18th day of February, 2021.


Jennifer Bruns
Corporate Officer