

PARCS UPDATE #71
ADDENDUM
MARCH 22, 2017



NOTE:

UPDATE #71 was released on Monday March 20

This ADDENDUM is released on Thursday March 23

1. UPDATE TO MARCH 20TH FRONT PAGE STORY ABOUT **INVASIVE MUSSELS**

On Tuesday March 21, PARCS President Garry Dixon was in attendance at the Legislative Building to deliver to the Premier a large chart displaying postcards from residents in many different cottage communities in our province. Both the Leader Post and CBC attended. We quote their stories below (*editorial corrections in italics*):

Story in Regina Leader Post – March 21

Garry Dixon, president of the Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan, holds up some sample postcards that were presented to government. They are an appeal to Premier Wall to stop the threat of invasive mussels by implementing border checkpoints.

Lakes in southern Saskatchewan could be invaded, and that is a concern for many.

Garry Dixon, president of Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan (PARCS), hand-delivered a poster for Premier Brad Wall to look over.



The poster consisted of about 36 postcards that outline the concerns from different organizations and residents of the province about the potential invasion of aquatic invasive species like the Zebra and Quagga mussels.

He said the mussels are originally from *the Black Sea* but have come into the waterways of North America.

“They gather and clog off pipes or they attach themselves to boats or anything that might be in the water in a lake or a river,” said Dixon. “So they tend to plug off water intakes to cities and hydroelectric plants, dams and boat motors.”

PARCS is calling on the government to stop the threat of invasive mussels by implementing checkpoints on the Manitoba and U.S. borders.

To date, the mussels have not found their way into Saskatchewan lakes, but they are dangerously close.

“They have been found in Cedar Lake just across the border in Manitoba, and Lake Winnipeg, and recently in two reservoirs in Montana at Helena and *Shelby*,” said Dixon. “So they are very close.”

PARCS wants legislation passed now to make it mandatory for boats entering Saskatchewan to be inspected and decontamination units used when the species are found.

The zebra mussel looks like a small clam with stripes, while the quagga mussel is about the size of a human thumbnail.

"They lay about a million larvae, or veligers as they call them, every year, and these veligers become productive in about six to eight weeks, and the average life of an adult mussel is three to five years," said Dixon. "That's a lot of eggs."

The eggs and mussels can survive out of water for up to five days, so transporting larvae from Manitoba or Montana is a real possibility, which is why on the first day of spring Dixon was at the Saskatchewan Legislative Building to make the government aware of the situation.

He said prevention is a lot cheaper than potential cleanup costs. Last year, the U.S. spent \$257 million in cleanup costs, and Alberta has *estimated* \$75 million to clean up contaminated lakes *should their lakes become contaminated*. *Alberta has no contaminated lakes and has check stations on all border crossings.*

"The longer we can keep them out the better," he said. "There is ongoing research to find ways to eradicate them, but to date nothing is sustainable in larger bodies (of water)."

Although some fish and birds do prey on them, the mussels have no natural predators because the bodies of the mussels can become very toxic.

Dixon is hoping for some good news on Wednesday when the province delivers its budget.

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Story on CBC website – March 21

Group wants pre-emptive measures from province to prevent zebra mussel invasion

Invasive species can clog drains and pipes, sharp shells washing ashore can cut swimmers' feet

They're not quite spawned from the depths of the underworld but for people living in Saskatchewan's resort communities, they're still an abomination.

Zebra mussels are an aquatic invasive species which can attach to any solid structure, survive out of water for days on end and can result in costly infrastructure maintenance by clogging drains, pipes and waterways.

The mussels can migrate by attaching to the bottom of boats. If they multiply unchecked, they could clog paths to waste water treatment plants or drinking water facilities.

"The clogging could also then lead to some fouling to where then these animals die off and release some toxins," says Bjoern Wissel, a biologist at the University of Regina.

Last summer, Saskatchewan's environment minister said the province was cracking down on boats which may be travelling to the province with unsavoury critters clinging to them. He also said conservation officers in Saskatchewan are trained to inspect boats for invasive species such as zebra mussels, and have two mobile decontamination units.

A preventative measure which has been employed — and the group would like to see expanded — is known as clean, drain and dry. Whenever a boat is removed from water, any water should be removed and it should be cleaned and scrubbed with hot water, dried and kept out of water for five days or so.



Zebra mussels coat a boat's stainless steel trim tab and cylinder on Saturday at Gimli Harbour, Man. (Courtesy of Dean Thorkelsson)

Story link on CBC web page

The invasive zebra mussel could yet get into Saskatchewan waters, a risk that is of concern to researchers.

Zebra mussels reproduce quickly and can damage ecosystems if unchecked.

"We found that the western provinces, including Saskatchewan, were at very high risk for invasion and that's because the lakes in southern Saskatchewan and Alberta have fairly high calcium levels," Scott Higgins, a research scientist with the International Institute for Sustainable Development's Experimental Lakes Area, said.



Higgins said the risk in Saskatchewan relates to how the zebra mussel could advance its territory by attaching to boats. **Governments (need to implement) measures, such as boat inspections, to reduce the risk.**

2. YESTERDAY WAS BUDGET DAY

We noted that the budget expenses for Environment increased by \$10.9 million over last year's budget. However, in searching for specifics in the Ministry of Environment's Plan for 2017-18 we found one sentence buried on page 9 within the 10 page document:

"The budget maintains \$100,000 in funding for aquatic invasive species prevention and monitoring and Ministry will continue to utilize partnerships with other agencies, jurisdictions and organizations to increase the effectiveness of its risk management efforts." <http://finance.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=a0d6ec8f-0651-40e5-9200-1af261339071&l=English>

(When PARCS offered, in a letter to the Minister in February of 2017, to fund-raise to conduct a pilot project inspection site, our letter went unanswered.)

PARCS is committed for the long haul, to continuing to keep the public and the Premier informed about the threat to our lakes. **Please keep your postcards coming** – Postcard charts will continue to be delivered to the Premier.

On April 13, PARCS will be represented at the first meeting of the Ministry of Environment's multi-agency Task Force on Aquatic Invasive Mussels. We will speak about the imminent danger to our lakes. We will ask for the Ministry's assessment as to the "most at-risk' lakes in our province". We will ask about the controls that the province has over the border entries from the US and the extent of the checks happening there. We will ask why our proposal for a pilot project was ignored. We will quote from your postcard remarks. We will report on that meeting in April's PARCS UPDATE #72.

In other provinces and states it took an actual mussel infestation to shake loose funding for boat checks. Let's hope that when our first infestation occurs it is not in one of our interconnected waterways (like Diefenbaker Lake, Buffalo Pound Lake, Last Mountain Lake, the Qu'Appelle Lakes and Tobin Lake). Let's hope it happens in a small isolated lake or reservoir!

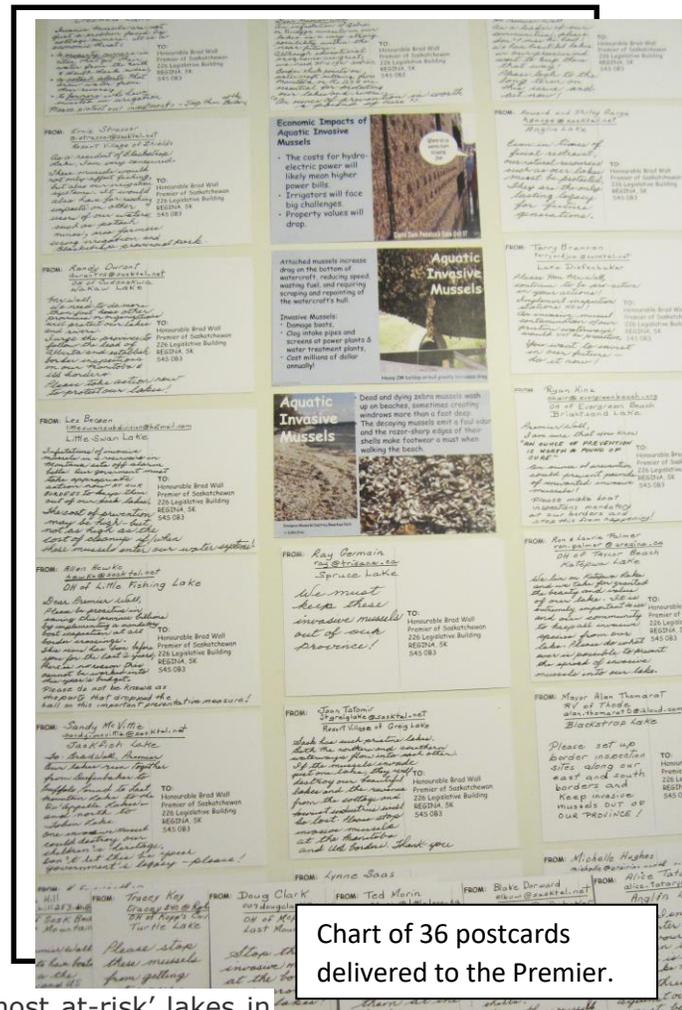


Chart of 36 postcards delivered to the Premier.

3. UPDATE TO OUR REMINDER ABOUT CIF GRANTS

In Monday's newsletter, we reminded you that April 1st was the deadline for applying to the Community Initiatives Program and provided their web site: <http://www.cifsask.org/grants>. Since then, we have heard from CIF stating that the "**Community Grant Program** supports projects and initiatives that provide positive opportunities for children and youth to grow and develop skills, self-esteem, and a healthy lifestyle; include physical activity and problem gambling initiatives; ensure families have access to support and resources to create healthy, caring and safe environments; celebrate the history and accomplishments of Saskatchewan communities; encourage and support individuals to become involved as active citizens, volunteers, and community leaders; and strengthen Saskatchewan's non-profit sector."

In other words, this grant is for **SPECIAL EVENTS** BUT **NOT** for CAPITAL PROJECTS (that grant has been discontinued). It is also NOT for SUMMER PROGRAMS OR SUMMER DAY PROGRAMS (the deadline for those grants was on February 1st).

Resort Villages are eligible for these grants.

4. ANOTHER COMMUNITY REQUEST

In Monday's newsletter, we sent a request for information from the RV of Lumsden Beach.

Today, we include an advertisement from another resort village.¹

FOR SALE BY RESORT VILLAGE OF BEAVER FLAT

Dock with 17 fingers with approximately 200' of walkway docks, all piano hinges, 9 screw piles and pile huggers. Has complete aluminum composite decking. Originally purchased for a new marina, however, project is not proceeding. Contact Bill Bresett at (306)741-1284.

Dianne Hahn, Administrator, Resort Village of Beaver Flat
Box 991, Swift Current, SK, S9H 3X1

rvbeaverflat@gmail.com
www.beaverflatsk.ca

306-741-3362

5. LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 2017 CONVENTION

Watch our future newsletters for details and changes about our fall convention. Meanwhile here are a few details:

- DATE: Friday, Saturday, October 20/21 (**Mark your calendar**)
- LOCATION: **Hilton Garden Inn** (connected by underground parking to the Midtown Shopping Plaza in **downtown Saskatoon**)
- BANQUET: **Informal party**, lots of refreshments and finger food
- THEME: Communication – "**Sharing our Stories**"
- Stand by for more details in next newsletter about reserving your rooms (\$124 double queen, \$134 King)
- Lynne will be phoning resort villages for your input about the sharing sessions.

¹There is no charge for announcements or advertisements from PARCS members.