



2019-5

JAN 24 2019

Beverly van der Breggen, Secretary Treasurer  
Calling Lakes Planning Commission  
PO Box 99  
FORT QU'APPELLE, SK S0G 1S0

Dear Ms. van der Breggen:

Thank you for your letter regarding aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention in Saskatchewan. We believe the ministry has been able to make significant accomplishments with our AIS prevention program and appreciate the positive feedback on the effectiveness of the program to date.

The Ministry of Environment shares your concerns related to AIS threats and has increased prevention efforts considerably since the confirmation of zebra mussels in the western United States and in Manitoba in 2013. The AIS prevention program continues to be a priority for the ministry, and we have put significant effort into public education and awareness programming, promoting science-based prevention practices, strengthening provincial legislation related to AIS, implementing a strategic watercraft inspection program and developing strong partnerships and coordinating efforts with other government and non-government agencies, both within Saskatchewan and across Canada and the western United States (US).

Effective prevention through watercraft inspection remains a high priority for Saskatchewan and, based on our efforts in 2018, we were able to inspect more than 2,900 at-risk watercraft entering our province. This included watercraft entering our province across provincial borders, as well as watercraft crossing the Saskatchewan-US border. In fact, all watercraft crossing the Saskatchewan-US border undergo a preliminary AIS inspection by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) in coordination with our provincial prevention program, and all boats at risk for transporting AIS are immediately referred to the province and are subject to detailed inspection by our trained officers. Our strong relationship with CBSA has helped us prevent introductions from high-risk watercraft entering our province from states where AIS prevention is less of a priority. In addition, we coordinated watercraft inspection with neighbouring provinces in order to ensure maximum coverage of AIS inspection throughout western Canada. Watercraft inspection continues to be a main focus of our prevention program, and as we look to expand our inspection program in 2019 we will certainly give strong consideration to your recommendation for an inspection station on Highway 1.

... 2

Beverly van der Breggen

Page 2

JAN 24 2019

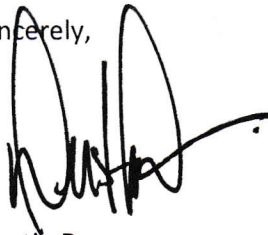
---

In addition to expanding our inspection program, we also greatly expanded our AIS monitoring program in 2018. As a result, we were able to sample more than 130 waterbodies across the province for early detection of potential AIS introductions. All samples collected this year are negative for AIS. The ministry also established an AIS taskforce, which is made of government and non-government partners all interested in helping to prevent the introduction and spread of AIS. We are committed to working with strategic partners in all aspects of our program, and have plans to leverage these relationships as an opportunity to significantly expand our AIS education and awareness campaigns in 2019.

The ministry understands your concerns related to the AIS program, specifically as it relates to protection of the Qu'Appelle Lakes. These risks will be considered as the ministry evaluates the 2018 prevention program efforts and begins the strategic planning process for the program moving forward into 2019. If the Calling Lakes Planning Commission would like to participate in AIS programming or discuss these matters further, please contact Ms. Jeri Geiger, AIS Program Coordinator, at [jeri.geiger@gov.sk.ca](mailto:jeri.geiger@gov.sk.ca) or (306) 637-4600.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Dustin Duncan  
Minister of Environment

cc: Premier Scott Moe  
Jeri Geiger, Fish, Wildlife and Lands, Ministry of Environment