



October 26, 2016

2016-DMO-56

Steve McLellan, CEO
Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
1630 – 1920 Broad Street
REGINA SK S4P 3V2

Dear Mr. McLellan:

Thank you for your recent letter concerning aquatic invasive species (AIS).

The ministry has ramped up its AIS prevention efforts considerably since the confirmation of zebra mussels in Lake Winnipeg in late 2013. A response plan was completed in 2014 and has been used to guide subsequent actions. Raising public awareness of the risks posed by AIS and ways to prevent their introduction as well as coordinating these efforts with other government and non-government agencies have been priorities for our ministry.

Communications have been held with many of the organizations present at the June 2016 meeting dating back to 2014. In January 2015, a workshop was held with the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds and its member organizations, along with other non-government organizations, to solicit and discuss their involvement in raising public awareness and assisting with monitoring efforts. This has resulted in ongoing communications with these organizations and the successful implementation of the Adult Invasive Mussel Monitoring (AIMM) program in 2015. In 2016, \$42,000 was provided from the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund to the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds to continue their work on this issue.

In 2016, ministry staff coordinated watercraft inspection efforts with neighbouring provinces and the Canada Border Services Agency. A total of 770 compliance inspections were conducted.

The ministry agrees that coordinated action by government and non-government organizations is important, and that more can be done in this regard. As was noted at the June 2016 meeting, the ministry is developing a strategy to address AIS and plans to consult with government and non-government organizations on the draft strategy over the next three months.

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We appreciate the Chamber of Commerce support in this issue and will consider the recommendations you provided during this process. Please contact Mr. Ron Hlasny, the ministry's lead for AIS, at (306)-953-3242 should you wish to discuss this in more detail in the interim.

Sincerely,



Kevin Murphy
Assistant Deputy Minister
Resource Management and Compliance
Ministry of Environment

cc: Honourable Scott Moe, Minister of Environment
Cam Swan, Deputy Minister of Environment
Ron Hlasny, Fish, Wildlife and Lands Branch, Ministry of Environment