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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.