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Hello!

You are receiving this letter because you are a boat-user in the Outaouais region of Quebec or Ontario. This letter is to invite you to participate in a research study to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in your local lakes and rivers. This study is collecting information on the behavior of boaters in the region and will be used to decide strategic locations for mobile aquatic invasive species prevention units. The information will also be used to help create better public outreach and education strategies.

The Agence de Bassin Versant des Sept (ABV des 7) is your local watershed organization, mandated by the provincial government to protect and improve the water resources through engaging with local groups and citizens to develop and implement a master plan to address issues within the local watershed. The ABV des 7 has identified that certain foreign species of plants and animals (including Zebra mussels, Eurasian Water Milfoil, Spiny and fishhook water fleas) are a threat to the ecosystems, the economy, and the recreation activities in the region. These aquatic invasive species are damaging nearby lakes and rivers, negatively impacting fish stocks, making beaches unsuitable for swimming, fouling boating equipment and docks, and blocking water treatment infrastructure resulting in huge costs. The ABV des 7 is trying to protect local lakes and rivers from these harmful species, and this research study is designed to assist with that project.

What is involved in participating: The information will be collected by anonymous survey so if you are willing to participate please simply fill out the attached survey and **return it to ABV des 7**.

Address: 733, boul. Saint-Joseph, bureau 430
Gatineau (Québec) J8Y 4B6
Telephone : (819) 771-5025 Fax : (819) 771-3041

If you would like to ensure complete anonymity when returning a hard copy please enclose your response in a sealed envelope without a return address.

You may also fill out the anonymous **online version** if you prefer at: <http://goo.gl/forms/uB9X68GvRA>

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may choose to leave any question blank.

By returning a completed anonymous survey you are indicating your consent to have the information used in this study.

We appreciate your participation! Please do not hesitate to contact us with any concerns or questions.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights or welfare as a participant in this research study, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

First some questions about your boating habits. Please tick one box

1. What type of watercraft do you own? Fishing Motor boat/ pleasure-craft PWC - Seadoo
Non-motorised watercraft Other Please specify _____
2. Do you leave your boat in the water all season? Yes No
3. Last season, how many different lakes and rivers did you visit with your boat? _____
4. Of those lakes and rivers, how many were south of the Ottawa River? _____

Now some questions about how you decide where to go boating.

5. What is your primary recreation activity when you use your boat? _____
6. Please tick all the factors that are important for you at a boating destination.
 - It is close-by (less than 50 km)
 - There are no launching or moorage fees
 - The lake is large enough for high speeds
 - Good fishing
 - There are picnic areas or parks
 - There are good swimming areas
 - The lake is not busy with other users
 - There are amenities including stores, washrooms, gas stations etc.
 - Other, please specify _____
7. Please describe your decision-making process for **where** to go boating?

8. How long (one direction) would you be willing to haul your watercraft for;
A day trip? _____
A weekend trip? _____
9. Last year how many of the following trips did you make with your watercraft?
Day trips _____ Weekend trips _____ Trips of 1 week or more _____ N/A

Now some questions about aquatic invasive species and boat washing.

10. Did you know that aquatic invasive species can be transported by boat users? Yes No
11. Would you support a boat washing program to help protect local lakes? Yes No
12. What would you be willing to pay for a washing and certification service when entering the region? \$ _____
13. In your opinion what is an acceptable wait-time for boat washing and certification? _____ minutes

Do you have any other comments? _____

