

RELEASE DATE:  
November 5th 2023



Columbia Shuswap  
Invasive Species Society

# PRESS RELEASE

## Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS) Raises Alarm Over Potential Whirling Disease Detection at Emerald Lake, Yoho National Park and Beyond.

The Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS), a dedicated local non-profit committed to the preservation of our natural environments, is deeply concerned to learn about the presumptive positive detection of Whirling Disease at the iconic Emerald Lake in Yoho National Park. This development has the potential to mark the first-ever case of Whirling Disease in British Columbia, raising urgent conservation and environmental concerns.



Photo 1: Rainbow trout with whirling disease\_Sascha Hallet, FishPathogens.net

### Collaborative Efforts to Confirm Occurrence:

In response to this detection, CSISS acknowledges the immediate collaboration between Parks Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to confirm the presence of Whirling Disease in Yoho National Park and further suspected cases in the Kicking Horse River, Wapta Lake, Finn Creek and Monarch Creek.

### Temporary Closure for Conservation:

Recognizing the gravity of the situation, Parks Canada has taken decisive measures by temporarily closing all waterbodies in Yoho and Kootenay National Park until March 2024. CSISS supports this proactive step as it is vital in minimizing the risk of further potential spread and preserving the health of our cherished aquatic ecosystems.

### Understanding Whirling Disease:

Whirling Disease is a devastating condition brought about by a microscopic parasite that primarily targets trout and salmon. Infected fish display a distinctive and distressing "whirling" swimming pattern, often leading to premature mortality. The potential presence of Whirling Disease underscores the critical importance of safeguarding our natural habitats.

### A Collective Responsibility - Prevention is Key:

CSISS emphasizes the significance of collective responsibility in preventing the spread of invasive species like Whirling Disease. We strongly advocate for the "Clean, Drain, and Dry" protocol for all watercraft and fishing gear, which includes waders and non-motorized watercraft like stand-up paddleboards, canoes, and kayaks.

Parks Canada has issued a closure on all waterbodies in Yoho and Kootenay National Parks until March 2024.

For media inquiries or more information, please contact:  
Robyn Hooper, Executive Director

1- 855- 785-9333



[info@columbiashuswapinvasives.org](mailto:info@columbiashuswapinvasives.org)



[www.columbiashuswapinvasives.org](http://www.columbiashuswapinvasives.org)

