



Photo by Shawn Goodsell



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: April 7, 2011

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OBWB Directors

Stu Wells - Chair,
Regional District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Rick Fairbairn - Vice Chair,
Regional District of North
Okanagan

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Water Stewardship Council

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Nation Alliance

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Gordon Clark, Regional
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Doug Dirk, Regional District of
North Okanagan

Doug Findlater, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Graeme James, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of BC

The next regular meeting of the OBWB is 10 a.m. **May 3, 2011** at the Regional District of Central Okanagan, Kelowna.

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Water conservation and improvement grants awarded: Board of Directors approved the award of \$300,000 through the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program to five projects in the North Okanagan, eight in the Central Okanagan and six in the South Okanagan. Priority was given to projects that will provide valley-wide benefit, recognizing that we all share "One Valley. One Water." Funded projects include: an interactive water exhibit at Okanagan Science Centre; development of a Water Conservation Manual for Municipal Parks and Green Spaces by City of Kelowna; and shoreline mapping on Osoyoos Lake that will be included in an Okanagan-wide mapping network. For more information on the grants visit www.obwb.ca.

Okanagan Nation Alliance provides insight into water issues: OBWB Director and ONA representative Gwen Bridge gave an update on work by local First Nations on water issues. A Land Use Plan should be complete by May 2011 and ready for implementation, noted Bridge, adding a number of water concerns arose while developing the plan such as the lack of clean water on some Okanagan reserves. Other issues include inadequate sewage treatment, agricultural run-off, population growth and climate change. The board noted the importance of ONA involvement with the Water Board in working together to address these issues, all of which are of valley-wide concern.

Board wants Province to reinstate Parliamentary Secretary on Water: The board asked staff to send a letter to B.C. Premier Christy Clark, asking that the position of Parliamentary Secretary on Water be reinstated. The position was cut in the last cabinet shuffle. Directors believe that with the revision of the century-old Water Act and changes in water legislation coming, and with several ministries involved, there needs to be someone supporting and providing leadership to the process.

Okanagan WaterWise Challenge engages youth: Staff announced the launch of the Okanagan WaterWise Challenge, aimed at engaging young people in learning about Okanagan water. The contest began during World Water Week in March and ends May 3, during Drinking Water Week. Kids 5 to 15 are encouraged to visit www.okwaterwise.ca, take the challenge and enter to win a pool and pizza party for themselves and nine of their friends.

Board proclaims Drinking Water Week, May 1 to 7, 2011: At the request of the BC Water and Waste Association, the OBWB has proclaimed May 1 to 7 Drinking Water Week. A number of events and activities are being planned throughout B.C. For details visit <http://www.bcwwa.org/public-info/drinking-water-week.html>.

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca