



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD  
HELD JULY 5, 2011, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NORTH OKANAGAN  
9848 ABERDEEN RD., COLDSTREAM, B.C.**

---

**PRESENT**

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Buffy Baumbrough	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Graeme James	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Gordon Clark	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. director Dan Ashton	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt. director James Pepper	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC

**OBWB STAFF**

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Melissa Tesche	Interim Office and Grants Administrator
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator

**GUESTS**

Jason Schleppe	Ecoscope Consulting
----------------	---------------------

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Wells called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 5, 2011 be approved."***

**CARRIED**

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 7, 2011 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, Penticton.

***"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 7, 2011 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton be adopted."***

**CARRIED**

**5. DELEGATIONS**

5.1 Jason Schleppe – Ecoscope Consulting: Using the Foreshore Inventory Maps to assess disturbance on Okanagan lakeshore

Mr. Schleppe explained to the board that the Province of B.C. has a three step process for shoreline management: 1) Foreshore Inventory Mapping (FIM) which catalogues the foreshore, riparian conditions and modifications, 2) Aquatic Habitat Index which is a descriptive listing, and 3) the development of a shoreline management guideline.

Shoreline inventories are being conducted out of recognition by the province and local governments that alterations are occurring without compliance in multiple jurisdictions. At the same time, local residents are asking for protection of their watersheds, noting its importance to drinking water quality, their economy, tourism and recreational values.

#### Change monitoring

As a result of the Okanagan Lake FIM study, it has been found that only 43% of the shoreline is in its natural condition. Substrate modification was prevalent along 47% of the shoreline, Mr. Schleppe reported, noting: 1,799 retaining walls covering 20% of the shoreline; 2,718 docks with an overall density of 11.43 docks/km; 222 concrete boat launches; 41 marinas with more than six boat slips; 939 groynes or 39.5 groynes per kilometer. Much of this has been built without permit. However, there are significant opportunities for shoreline restoration across all land use types, he added.

The first FIM began in 2004. These latest findings are a result of mapping being redone in 2010. The rate of change is estimated at -0.5 to -2% of natural shoreline per year, showing an increase in all modifications observed (e.g. in 7 years there were 140 new docks). Of particular concern is the loss of shoreline affecting kokanee spawning grounds.

FIM has been conducted on Shuswap Lake also, showing significant impacts along its shoreline. That said, Okanagan Lake is one of the most impacted lakes because of its dense population. It is ranking high in terms of impact, added Mr. Schleppe, noting that it is important to recognize this and address it now.

#### How can government use FIM to reverse trends?

Mr. Schleppe provided recommendations to protect the existing shoreline and even reverse some of the damage done:

- 1) Collaboratively develop Shoreline Management Guidelines and incorporate them into Official Community Plans, waterfront plans, etc;
- 2) Develop specific restoration objectives and goals;
- 3) Complete Change Monitoring through ongoing FIM studies;
- 4) Work collaboratively to enforce compliance and prosecution for violations;
- 5) Shoreline restoration opportunities should be considered as part of any development process, no matter how small, to help change current trends.

In addition, he stressed the importance of education and outreach to change behavior, the continuation of data collection as part of a comprehensive approach to foreshore management, and creation of a data management program to ensure that all the layers of data are accurate and accessible.

In response to questions from directors, Mr. Schleppe noted that people don't like the waits that occur with rules and regulations and sometimes they think it is easier to do wrong and ask for forgiveness later. Agencies need to find collaborative ways to address this.

Dir. Clark asked if the OBWB was the right agency to be addressing this. Dr. Warwick Sears responded, saying the OBWB's role is to pull the information together, highlight the trends and take it to municipalities, helping develop a basin-wide plan for the lake.

Alt. dir. Ashton entered the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

A number of directors noted that the problem is with enforcement – that the work has been downloaded without funding attached to it. However, Dir. Pike noted that just because enforcement is difficult doesn't mean it shouldn't be done. Perhaps natural areas should require a permit to allow alterations.

Chair Wells added that perhaps there is a role for the Water Stewardship Council on this issue. Dr. Warwick Sears offered to take the issue to the council for their input.

Dir. Baumbrough noted a recent letter from the City of Vernon to the provincial government, voicing concern about changes that will affect the ability for local government to comment on riparian area variances.

Mr. Schleppe concluded that protection of the foreshore is a complicated issue and the answers aren't simple, but suggested all three levels of government working collaboratively, and the OBWB working from a basin-wide approach, is a good direction to go.

## 6. STAFF REPORTS

### 6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Warwick Sears spoke to a letter received by the Polis Project, asking that funding not be cut to Environment Canada's (EC) water monitoring programs, and suggested that the OBWB write its own letter. The letter should speak to the importance of EC's water quality monitoring work, the lake evaporation project soon to get underway in the Okanagan, and the critical role the agency plays in important water research. Further, the letter should invite EC to use the Okanagan as a hub for its research, added the executive director.

Directors asked staff to look into what cuts the ministry is facing and to report back to the board with a draft letter. It was further suggested that the letter be cc'd to all three Okanagan MPs.

Dr. Warwick Sears continued with her report noting that B.C. Ministry of Environment (MoE) has asked the Water Board to stop rototilling the Kelowna foreshore within half a kilometer of a creek mouth due to fish spawning. Water Board staff are continuing to work with MoE on this issue, recognizing the high value of this area for recreational uses and because the fish are not endangered. The data from the FIM and Ecoscape's information about species in the area will be useful, she added.

Directors voiced concern, noting that rototilling is much more effective in controlling milfoil than harvesting, and residents want it done. It was also noted that leaving the milfoil unattended would have drastic consequences on aquatic habitat as well.

Dr. Warwick Sears said that staff will continue to work with MoE to address milfoil control.

***"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board defers next steps in addressing the Watermilfoil Control Program to the next board meeting."***

**CARRIED**

Dr. Warwick Sears reported that the Water Supply and Demand Project committee has conducted a second set of scenarios that look at an increase in overall water demand due to changes in development, as well as an increase in agriculture and population. A report will be provided to the board.

Staff is looking at holding a workshop in November on the various tools developed by the Water Board, and others, for local government engineers and planners. For example, the FIM maps, the groundwater and soil bylaws toolkits, the Water Supply and Demand project and the accompanying Local Government Guide, also the Irrigation Management Tool, and the Water Balance Model.

Directors were reminded about the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum and asked to register if they haven't already done so.

***"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated June 28, 2011, be received."***  
**CARRIED**

## 6.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel reported that the province is looking to adopt the Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool (SWURT) B.C.-wide. This bodes well for other water sensitive areas in B.C., but also in helping the Water Board develop the tool further to include snowcourse information.

The Water Stewardship Council is continuing to work with the federal and provincial government on the Groundwater Wells Monitoring Project – a three-year project. Six monitoring wells have been drilled in sensitive aquifers so far, with more to come. The council has a committee looking at the development of an Agricultural Water Reserve for the Okanagan and another one looking at source water protection measures.

In addition, the council is working with senior levels of government to expand hydrometric monitoring in the valley. At one time, there were 150 stations. Today, there are 35. Council is working to re-establish between three and five stations by the end of 2012.

In response to a question from Dir. Fairbairn, Mr. Jatel noted that one funding application to NASA for remote-sensing water research, jointly submitted with our counterparts in the U.S., was rejected. The other should be announced in about a month. There may also be an opportunity to partner with UBC-Okanagan on this, he added.

As for the Water Act Modernization process, Mr. Jatel reported that the province recently went through some restructuring which has created some delays.

***"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated June 29, 2011, be received."***  
**CARRIED**

## 6.3 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

Ms. Jackson reported on a number of communication initiatives underway, including: the reprinting and distribution of the Okanagan Waterscape poster, the production of a series of videos, creation of a valley-wide water conservation ad campaign, development of a "Where's my water from?" web app, creation of an Okanagan Homeowners' Guide to Rainwater Harvesting, creation and distribution of the Okanagan WaterWise radio and print series, and communication around the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum.

Ms. Jackson went on to show directors a draft of the Okanagan WaterWise water conservation video, Make Water Work.

***“THAT the Communications and Research Coordinator’s Report, dated June 28, 2011, be received.”***

**CARRIED**

**7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**7.1 Water Management Program Review**

Dr. Warwick Sears submitted the report “Water Management Program Review 2011” to the board, noting the report will also be provided to the three Okanagan regional districts, looking for them to reauthorize the WMP for another three year term.

The program’s new term would begin April 1, 2012. The three-year review provides a good check up of the program, looking at the WMP as a whole, its projects, governance, the Sustainable Water Strategy and grants.

Since 2006, when the program began, it has gathered some of the best data in B.C. for local government planning and which is being replicated in other areas. The Water Supply and Demand study has been completed. Indeed the study showed the need to protect the water storage we have and was an integral part of our – successful – submission to the province to not sell its reservoir lease lots. An Endocrine Disruptor Study was conducted, the Groundwater Bylaws Toolkit was created, as was the Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool. Groundwater Monitoring Wells are being drilled to keep an eye on sensitive aquifers in the Okanagan. In addition to many other projects, the WMP has established the OBWB as a voice for B.C. water policy, and as an example of a working structure for engagement and conflict resolution, added Dr. Warwick Sears.

Dr. Warwick Sears requested that the board approve continuation of the program, approve the review’s recommendations and preliminary budget draft for 2011- 12, and forward the same request to the Okanagan regional districts.

Directors suggested a few additions to the WMP Review report, including reference to the importance of research, advocacy and outreach. It was suggested that there be some clarification regarding strategic priorities for the next three years. There was also discussion around references to First Nations involvement in water management and how to further engage bands.

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the OBWB has made presentations to the various bands and has worked to ensure the board and council seat for the Okanagan Nation Alliance is filled. Additional meetings can be arranged (e.g. to discuss what information is available for planning), and further steps to encourage engagement will be made.

Dir. Findlater asked for a cost-benefit analysis for the additional staff person.

***“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve the draft 2011 Water Management Program Review in principle and that staff present the report to the three member regional districts requesting reauthorization for the next three-year term.”***

**CARRIED**

**7.2 U.S. milfoil treatment proposal for Osoyoos Lake**

Dr. Warwick Sears presented the board with a draft letter to the Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board, regarding the U.S. agency’s proposal to use aquatic herbicide to control milfoil on their side of Osoyoos Lake. The letter requests that chemical control not be used and

offers assistance in finding another solution to the milfoil issue.

The board was told that the letter was written recognizing the history of herbicide control in the Okanagan and the opposition from residents, as well as the B.C. government's own talk of a potential province-wide ban on cosmetic pesticides.

***"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board send a letter to Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board requesting that aquatic herbicide not be applied on Osoyoos Lake, and offering assistance in exploring other methods of control."***

**CARRIED**

## **8. CORRESPONDENCE**

8.1 Drinking Water Inter-Agency Directors Committee letter to OBWB

8.2 City of Vernon letter to Province of B.C. re: Water Act Modernization

Dir. Baumbrough noted that the letter from the City of Vernon notes that it would like an opportunity to comment on the proposed Water Sustainability Act as it evolves.

8.3 City of Vernon letter to senior governments re: Riparian Area Regulations

Dir. Baumbrough explained that the letter notes concerns about proposed changes in the province's Riparian Area Regulation Variance Protocol and the affect on local government's ability to speak to variances, how riparian area rules would be regulated and the lack of integration with municipal zoning.

8.4 Sunshine Coast Regional District letter to Premier Christy Clark re: Decision-Making Authority in Watersheds

***"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the correspondence from City of Vernon and Sunshine Coast Regional District."***

**CARRIED**

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

9.1 The next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board

Following some discussion, it was decided that the next regular meeting would follow the Water Board's Annual General Meeting on Sept. 9, 2011, unless an issue arises that requires the board to meet sooner.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

***"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 5, 2011 be adjourned at 2:09 p.m."***

**CARRIED**

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director