



## **REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN INFORMATION RELEASE**

**June 24, 2014**

**2014/15 RBC Blue Water Project Grant**

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### **2014 RBC Blue Water Project donates \$90,000 to the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen for valley-wide water conservation projects.**

"Water is one of the most precious resources on earth. Everything we do depends on it - it is vital to our social and economic well-being," said Gord Nixon, CEO, RBC. "We are honoured to support the important efforts of this year's grant recipients, whose programs reflect our new focus on water issues in urbanized areas, where so many of our employees and clients live and work. I am confident that these organizations will help create a future with swimmable, drinkable and fishable water."

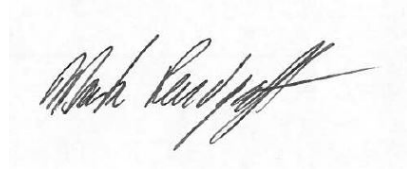
In BC, of the 15 organizations receiving funds, the Regional District Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) come out with the lion's share of grant dollars. The RDOS was encouraged and supported in their grant application by the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB), and both the North and Central Regional Districts.

"The RBC Blue Water Project is a 10-year, \$50 million grant program to support projects dedicated to water conservation, watershed protection, access to clean drinking water, and other fresh water-related issues in Canada and around the world. We are proud and excited this year to be able to present such a significant donation to the Regional District Okanagan Similkameen as the funds will benefit our communities throughout the Okanagan" said Karen Boring-Olsen, Regional Vice President RBC Okanagan.

This multi-agency collaboration insures grant funding will be leveraged to maximize conservation impacts valley-wide, extending the efforts of the existing 'Make Water Work' campaign delivered by the OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise program. Make Water Work encourages residents to make water work more effectively and efficiently in their yards. . RBC funding will assist in expanding the reach of the program and add new components including workshops to residents and landscapers and creation of Make Water Work demonstration gardens, featuring xeriscape and rain garden techniques.

“Make Water Work is the result of OBWB efforts to cultivate strong partnerships in the valley - bringing together local governments and utilities to speak on outdoor water conservation with one voice,” explained Don Dobson, OBWB board director. “The initiative began with a pilot in the North Okanagan in 2011. Since then the program has expanded across the valley, from Armstrong to Osoyoos and has grown to include strong media partners as well. It’s exciting to see the effort grow even further with these workshops and gardens,” he added.

“This project brings together all three regional districts, and the RDOS Board and staff look forward to working with all the partners to achieve maximum success through water conservation initiatives” said RDOS Chair Mark Pendergraft. “We appreciate RBC recognizing the importance of this work and helping us grow a WaterWise valley.”



M. Pendergraft  
RDOS Board Chair

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