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Cattlemen to discuss water trends

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The North Okanagan Livestock Association (NOLA) is focusing on Okanagan water and drought issues and how they affect ranching at its annual education seminar.

The free session is open to other agriculture sectors and to the general public. It will be today at 7 p.m. at the Best Western Hotel and Conference Center in Vernon.

Keynote speaker Nelson Jatel, water stewardship director for Okanagan Basin Water Board, will provide an overview of the water challenges agriculture and society face in the Okanagan. The Okanagan Water Board is working towards long-term management of this valuable resource through a number of sustainable initiatives

Rob Dinwoodie, district range officer for the Ministry of Forest and Range, will speak on recent works on local watersheds that address concerns of water purveyors around water quality and cattle access. Rob has been working to find management strategies that increase cattle grazing and reduce conflict with fellow resource users.

There will also be updates from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Environmental Farm Plan, and the Farmland Riparian Interface Stewardship Program.


The B.C. government is presently modernizing the province's Water Act which will have implications for water license holders and for those doing business around streams or waterways. Changes will affect most, if not all, beef producers in the province.

The provincial government is encouraging public comment and has launched a blog on its website dedicated to water smarts located at: <http://blog.gov.bc.ca/livingwatersmart/>. Ranchers are strongly encouraged to submit their comments. You can also go to the B.C. Cattlemen's Association website at www.cattlemen.bc.ca to find their position statement and other government documents pertaining to the Water Act modernization process.

For more information contact: Lee Hesketh at 250-547-6586 or silverhillsranch@aol.com.

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