

 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

# Province chips in for dry-weather contingency plan

Published: **June 03, 2010 6:00 PM**

Provincial funding will help with the development of a basin-wide drought plan for the Okanagan.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board has received \$10,000 through the Local Government Grants Act for the project.

"This is not about doing crisis management, but putting a plan in place for the future," Anna Warwick Sears, executive director.

"Our recent dry winter points out the importance of developing a plan."

The drought plan will draw on information from OBWB's water supply and demand study to develop drought trigger levels, based on lake levels, which municipalities and other water utilities can use to respond to region-wide water shortages.

The first step in developing a drought plan, said Warwick Sears, is to determine how Okanagan communities, from Armstrong to Osoyoos, are connected, considering the source and direction of water flows, and then to look at what lake levels would be appropriate for triggering a drought response given the water needs of the environment and downstream communities.

Currently, water allocation in B.C. is determined using a system known as first-in-time, first-in-right (FITFIR). Under this system, water allocation is determined by who, historically, received their licence first and how much water they are entitled to.

"It's important we understand what the obligation is to supply water to senior licensees and how this would play out if there was a multi-year drought," said Warwick Sears.

“For example, there are a number of large senior licenses in Osoyoos, but it is the community farthest downstream. Under FITFIR, if Osoyoos was unable to receive the water it is legally entitled to it could request upstream license-holders to let the water flow south.”

Warwick Sears said a drought plan would look at the implications of FITFIR and devise a plan that best meets the environmental, health and economic needs of all Okanagan communities.

“We are very pleased to have the province join the federal and local government at the table. It is recognition of the importance of a basin-wide drought plan that will help ensure the long-term prosperity of the entire valley.”

```
a.adLink_a:hover {background-color: ; text-decoration: underline; } a.adTitle_a:hover
{background-color: ; text-decoration: underline; } a.adLink_a {text-decoration: none; color:
gray; } .single_center {text-align: center} a.adTitle_a {text-decoration: none } .adText {text-
decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size: 12px; font-weight: normal; font-style: normal;} .
adLink {overflow: hidden; color:gray;text-decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size: 17px;
font-weight: normal; font-style: normal;} .abg {color: gray;text-decoration:none; font-family:
Arial; font-size: 11px; font-weight: bold; font-style: normal;} .adTitle {color:2e95d9;text-
decoration:none; font-family: Arial; font-size:14px; font-weight: normal; font-style: normal;} .
ad_box1 {border-style:solid;border-width:1px; border-color:#FFF; background-color: #ebf4fb;
width:500px;margin-left:0px; opacity: 1; background-image: url(); background:
nottransparent; margin: 0 auto; clear: both; }
```

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.bclocalnews.com/okanagan\\_similkameen/vernonmorningstar/news/95573819.html](http://www.bclocalnews.com/okanagan_similkameen/vernonmorningstar/news/95573819.html)



[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

© Copyright Black Press. All rights reserved.