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Water Board budget up 4.4%

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The Okanagan Basin Water Board (**OBWB**) has advised the Regional District Okanagan Similkameen that it will pay 4.4% more in 2011 for services.

Total budget is \$3.7 million with RDOS paying 22% of that with other contributions from the north and central Okanagan regional districts.

Chair of the OBWB is Osoyoos Mayor **Stu Wells** who says: “all three regional districts approved the cost (\$100,000 in each of next 5 years) of a **Research Chair** at UBC Okanagan long before the budget – which accounts for the majority of this increase” and “other cost hikes include more expensive accounting procedures and a *hike in wages and benefits for Board staff.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) was established by BC Legislation in 1970 to **resolve critical water issues** at the scale of the entire watershed. The OBWB has representatives from the three regional districts, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, the Water Supply Association of BC and the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council – a broadly-representative stakeholder group established by the Board to provide independent science-based advice on water issues. The OBWB strives for consensus decisions and directors have equal-weighted votes. **Programs are supported through tax assessments on lands within the Okanagan watershed.**

* Financial information indicates that the budget line for wages and benefits has risen by \$44000