

Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society proposes lake appreciation day next May

By
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Birgit Arnstein (left), president of the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society (OLWQS) spoke at council last week about her group's proposal for an Osoyoos Lake Appreciation Day, possibly on the May long weekend. Mayor Sue McKortoff (centre) commended OLWQS on the initiative. Former mayor Stu Wells, an OLWQS director, attended the presentation to show support. Behind is OLWQS's banner proclaiming, "Love Our Lake." (Richard McGuire photo)

An event designed to promote awareness of Osoyoos Lake is tentatively being planned for the spring.

Birgit Arnstein, president of the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society (OLWQS), brought the idea to Osoyoos town council last week to gauge the town's support.

OLWQS conducts regular monitoring of lake water quality and also tries to raise public awareness about the lake.

Arnstein suggested an Osoyoos Lake Appreciation Day could be held on the Victoria Day long weekend in May.

"Osoyoos Lake is extremely important to the overall economy and lifestyle of residents and tourists in this area," said Arnstein, pointing to the citizen group's banner saying "Love Our Lake," which was hung over Main Street during the recent Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum.

"We would like to suggest that Victoria Day weekend would be a great time to do this as it would bring both locals and tourists together," she told council's committee of the whole session prior to the Oct. 19 regular council meeting.

Arnstein said the event would include the banner over Main Street, pole banners, garbage container decals, an information stand and activities by the lake including food and music.

She said she would like to include other stakeholders in the tourist industry and among groups and businesses using the lake.

Other OLWQS directors, including former Mayor Stu Wells, attended the presentation to support it, but didn't address council.

Mayor Sue McKortoff commended OLWQS on the initiative, but pointed out that the May long weekend coincides with the opening of Market on Main.

"You may have to fight with them for space for the banner on Main Street, but I'm sure that can be worked out," McKortoff said.

Coun. Carol Youngberg spoke in support, adding she hoped raising awareness of invasive mussels would be part of the agenda. Arnstein assured her it would be.

Coun. Mike Campol was also supportive, suggesting an event that would include music would help to engage the public.

"It's a great idea," he said.

Barry Romanko, the town's chief administrative officer, said he already had discussions with the OLWQS about banners and budgeting of funds previously provided to the group and he will bring a report to council's next meeting.

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