



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: October 6, 2016

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www.obwb.ca

OBWB Directors

Doug Findlater - Chair,
Regional District of Central
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District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waterman, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

To be announced,
Okanagan Nation Alliance

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Rob Birtles, Okanagan Water
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be at 10 a.m. Nov. 1,
2016 at the Regional District of
Central Okanagan in Kelowna.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Coldstream Creek research suggests human impacts on water: A preliminary report was presented to the Okanagan Basin Water Board looking at water quality on Coldstream Creek. The report, presented by Bryer Manwell and Trina Koch, is based on 207 water samples taken at about 150 different sites along the creek in 2015 and 2016, including from the creek itself, culverts and tributaries. Among the findings were elevated levels of nitrates and other minerals including chloride and sodium. Some of the high levels are believed to be associated with livestock and road-salting. Livestock watering is also believed to be causing bank erosion affecting water quality. The study, the researchers pointed out, suggests the need for greater control of pollution sources and healthy riparian corridors to help capture and filter contaminants before they reach the creek. The research was funded in part through OBWB Water Conservation and Quality Improvement grants. A final report will be completed later this fall.

Water Board co-recipient of provincial award: B.C.'s Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations' Thompson Okanagan Region Drought Response Team received a provincial award for its work to address the 2015 drought. As part of that team, the OBWB is a co-recipient. The award recognizes the team's work to implement innovative tools in response to the drought, helping mitigate the impact to 32 river systems and ensure a more effective response to future droughts. A video highlighting the project can be found here: <https://youtu.be/9iEtdN2g4x0>. Since the 2015 drought, the OBWB has been working with the province on updating the Thompson-Okanagan Drought Response Implementation Plan. The OBWB has also been developing its own Okanagan Drought Response Strategy, and assisting local water utilities to develop drought plans.

Make Water Work wraps up, announces winners: The OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise program has now wrapped up its [Make Water Work](#), outdoor residential water conservation campaign. The initiative is delivered in partnership with local utilities throughout the valley. As part of the campaign, residents are encouraged to Take the Challenge and pledge to Make Water Work more effectively and efficiently and be entered to win a \$6,000 WaterWise yard upgrade. This year's winners are Rob Abbott and Felicia Taylor of Osoyoos. For the past few years, the community with the most pledges collected per capita has also been recognized. This year, the District of Peachland was named "Make Water Work 2016 Champions."

Social Life of Water exhibit makes Okanagan debut: A special exhibit, The Social Life of Water, opens Friday, Oct. 7 at the Okanagan Heritage Museum in Kelowna. This exhibit uses art, audio and visual media, and storytelling to explore the diverse meanings that water holds and has held for the many communities, cultures and interest groups in the valley over time. Organizers note that it extends beyond the reaches of a traditional museum display, calling on the community to join in a pertinent discussion, taking visitors through a journey of the Okanagan watershed. In addition to exploring the past and present, the exhibit examines our relationship with water in the future, inviting participants to imagine how a responsible relationship with water might look. The project is a collaborative initiative between Kelowna Museums Society, Okanagan Nation Alliance, UBC Okanagan, Sncewips Heritage Museum and the OBWB. Find details at: www.kelownamuseums.ca/exhibits/social-life-water/.

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca