



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: December 7, 2016

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OBWB Directors

Doug Findlater - Chair,
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**Juliette Cunningham - Vice-
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North Okanagan

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Similkameen

Sue McKortoff, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waterman, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Lisa Wilson, 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. Dec. 6,
2016 at the Regional District of
Okanagan-Similkameen in
Penticton.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Water Board considers next steps to prevent mussel spread to Okanagan: The board welcomed Lisa Scott with Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS). The OBWB funds OASISS to assist with outreach on its [Don't Move A Mussel](#) campaign as well as mussel monitoring in Okanagan waters. Ms. Scott reported on 2016 efforts, noting survey results at boat launches suggest a growing awareness of invasive zebra and quagga mussels. They also suggest there are holes in the existing inspection program in B.C. and elsewhere, putting us at risk for an infestation. There was discussion about the recent revelation that Montana, part of our "Pacific NorthWest perimeter defence," has confirmed it now has mussels. Directors agreed to re-engage the province and the federal government and push for a stronger mussel defence.

Conservation App lauded as OBWB preps to receive grant requests for 2017: Directors were provided an update on the recent launch of the BC Wildlife Federation's "Conservation App," funded through the OBWB's Water Conservation & Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program. The app, available to iPhone users through free download (and soon Android users as well), allows one to report environmental infractions in B.C., including mud bogging, cattle in fish-bearing streams, and more, for follow-up by enforcement agencies including the BC Conservation Officer Service. It was noted the project is a great example of the type of innovative projects with valley-wide benefit funded through the program. WCQI applications are now being accepted for the 2017 funding year. Learn more at www.obwb.ca/wcqi. Find more on the Conservation App at: <http://bcwf.net/index.php/bcwf-app>.

Coming soon: Guidance for Okanagan homeowners on new groundwater regs: Feedback to the Water Board indicates there is some confusion regarding new provincial groundwater regulations and the registering of domestic wells. In response, staff will be preparing information for Okanagan homeowners who are on groundwater. Stay tuned.

Winter rototilling efforts in full swing: Milfoil control staff are busy rototilling on Okanagan lakes, derooting the invasive weed, considered the most effective means of controlling the nuisance plant. Work has been completed in Penticton Marina and in several areas on Osoyoos Lake. Efforts are now being focussed on Okanagan Lake in West Kelowna, the Vernon arm of the lake, and in Wood Lake. Work is also underway to obtain the federal and provincial permits necessary to remove the weed in Vaseux Lake in 2017. For more on our milfoil control program visit <http://www.obwb.ca/milfoil/>.

Okanagan wine & water featured in European doc: The OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise program was contacted by a European film crew to be part of a documentary on wine and civilizations to be aired in the new year on ARTE, a Franco-German channel known in Europe for high quality docs. Of interest to the filmmakers was the importance of the region's lakes and rivers to agriculture, but also to fish, domestic use and more, and – given our dry climate – the importance of water management in the face of climate change and a growing population. Filming took place at Covert Farms in Oliver where farmer/winemaker Gene Covert is becoming well-known for his water-efficiency efforts. In addition to the Okanagan, the crew has been filming in Australia, Argentina, France, New Zealand, and South Africa.

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