



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: February 9, 2017

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www.obwb.ca

OBWB Directors

Tracy Gray - Chair,
Regional District of Central
Okanagan

**Juliette Cunningham - Vice-
Chair,** Regional District of
North Okanagan

Doug Dirk, Regional District of
North Okanagan

Rick Fairbairn, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Doug Findlater, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Cindy Fortin, Regional District
of Central Okanagan

Ron Hovanes, Regional
District of Okanagan-
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.

Brian Guy, Okanagan Water
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be at 10 a.m. March
7, 2017 at the Regional District
of Okanagan-Similkameen in
Penticton.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Water Board elects new chair: Directors elected RDCO Director (and Kelowna City Councillor) Tracy Gray as chair. RDNO Dir. (Vernon City Coun.) Juliette Cunningham was re-elected vice-chair. Additional directors for 2017 include, representing RDNO: Doug Dirk (Coldstream Coun.) and Rick Fairbairn (Electoral Area D. Dir.); for RDCO: Doug Findlater (West Kelowna Mayor), Cindy Fortin (Peachland Mayor); and for RDOS: Sue McKortoff (Osoyoos Mayor), Ron Hovanes (Oliver Mayor), and Peter Waterman (Summerland Mayor). Also, Water Management Appointments include: Lisa Wilson (Okanagan Nation Alliance), Toby Pike (Water Supply Association of BC), and Brian Guy (Okanagan Water Stewardship Council).

Infrastructure needs top list of concerns for directors: A roundtable discussion was held to hear from board members on pressing water issues facing their region. Improvements to water and waste water infrastructure topped the list, with a number of directors noting the need to improve aging systems and/or expand them to meet a growing population. Other issues included concern about provincial drinking water guidelines, questions about how the province will roll out groundwater licencing, and invasive zebra and quagga mussels. Dir. Wilson highlighted the special significance of water to Okanagan Nation and the importance of respecting and protecting it in its natural environment.

OBWB to push province for stronger mussel response: With Montana now infested with invasive mussels, and with snowbirds returning soon and boating season only weeks away, the OBWB will be recommending specific provincial policy changes to help prevent the nuisance species from spreading to B.C. waters. The board also recently sent recommendations to the federal government and will be following up on these, asking for a stronger level of engagement on the issue, including financial.

Okanagan residents provided guide to navigate new groundwater regs: The Water Board has developed a guide for homeowners with a well and questions about new groundwater licencing regulations. The information can now be found on the Okanagan WaterWise website (www.OkWaterWise.ca) and at www.OBWB.ca/well/.

Board given Make Water Work & Don't Move A Mussel update: Directors were provided final reports on the [Make Water Work](#) (MWW) 2016 residential outdoor water conservation program and the [Don't Move A Mussel](#) (DMM) campaign, and an update on plans for this year. MWW 2016 highlights included an expanded Plant Collection, an increase in the number of garden centre partners carrying the collection and the installation of three demonstration gardens at Summerland Ornamental Gardens. DMM highlights included the programs expansion to include 'Have the Talk,' helping extend the invasive mussel prevention message outside the Okanagan.

Water project grant deadline nears: Applications to the Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grant Program are due 4 p.m. Friday, February 17. Eligible grant recipients include non-profit community groups, local governments (regional districts or municipalities), and irrigation or improvement districts. Successful applicants can receive up to \$30,000 for their project. For more information visit www.OBWB.ca/wcqi.

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