



BOARD REPORT: March 10, 2017



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

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OBWB Directors

Tracy Gray - Chair,
Regional District of Central
Okanagan

**Juliette Cunningham - Vice-
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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.
April 4, 2017 at the Regional
District of North Okanagan in
Coldstream.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Board hears from conservation groups on possible partnerships: Directors heard a presentation from Bryn White of the South Okanagan and Similkameen Conservation Partnership and Scott Boswell with the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program. The two presented on the “Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region” and how it aligns with OBWB initiatives, such as protection of ecosystems, including wetlands, and water quality. There was also discussion around the recently adopted South Okanagan Conservation Fund and how it may be a possible match with the OBWB’s Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program for future conservation projects.

OBWB continues to push for mussel action on federal front: The board was updated on a recent meeting with Kelowna-Lake Country MP Stephen Fuhr regarding an OBWB request for funding and increased support to provinces on the invasive mussel issue. There was also discussion about the need to ensure a consistent approach to watercraft inspections at Canada-U.S. border crossings. Staff have also been working with the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce to assist their efforts on this file at the federal chamber and government levels. Directors also discussed plans to address the issue at the upcoming Federation of Canadian Municipalities Annual Convention in Ottawa this June.

Water grant applications being reviewed: It has been another strong year for applications to the OBWB’s Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program. The office received 25 eligible applications from throughout the Okanagan. Requests for funding came in at just over \$467,000, with \$300,000 available. Submissions are being reviewed and recommendations will go to the board in April.

Canada Water Week makes splash in Okanagan: The Water Board’s Okanagan WaterWise program has several events lined up to celebrate UN World Water Day (March 22) and Canada Water Week (March 19-25). Events include a special screening of the award-winning film *RiverBlue*, followed by a Q&A with director and Kelowna resident David McIlvrde. This visually stunning documentary follows B.C.-based Mark Angelo, an internationally-celebrated rivers conservationist, as he explores the textile industry and the resulting pollution in waterways around the world. Also, the ever-popular – and free – **public forum** and mixer makes a return with this year’s topic “Why WASTE Water?” The panel will be MC’ed by Kelowna broadcaster Phil Johnson, host of AM1150’s The Early Edition. Johnson will keep the conversation flowing as he leads audience members on a story-telling water journey. The **Okanagan WaterWise Challenge** for youth invites young people to participate in up to three challenges that help conserve and protect our water with great prizes to be won. Plus, there are water plant tours and more. For full details, visit www.OkWaterWise.ca.

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