



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: December 7, 2017

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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 10 a.m.
February 6, 2018 at the
Regional District of Central
Okanagan in Kelowna.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Water Board receives update on 2017 mussel outreach partnership: Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS) provided the board with an update on invasive mussel outreach in 2017. The group receives OBWB funding to extend the efforts of the Water Board's "[Don't Move A Mussel](#)" campaign to boaters and others, as well as to conduct mussel monitoring in Okanagan lakes. Water samples were taken three times from 16 locations on five Okanagan Lakes. The group also deployed 14 substrate monitors for ongoing monitoring to see if any mussels attach. No evidence of mussels has been found. A number of enforcement gaps were noted, similar to those identified by OBWB, such as at Canada-U.S. border crossings and limited B.C. inspection station hours.

South Okanagan wetland project to move ahead: Directors were told work on a constructed wetland for the Okanagan Falls wastewater treatment plant will be proceeding in 2018. The wetland will receive treated wastewater and provide another level of filtration to reduce endocrine disrupting compounds before the water enters the Okanagan River channel, an important salmon spawning area. The OBWB provided project funding through its Sewage Facilities Assistance grant program. Part of the plan is to develop the area as an outdoor classroom with boardwalk and signage.

Directors to send follow-up letter to feds urging mussel response: The board voted to send another letter to the federal government, following up on their Ottawa meeting and letter sent in June. With the end of another boating season, gaps have been identified in ensuring proper invasive zebra and quagga mussel protection at Canada's borders. Also, the federal government noted that in the 2017 budget, \$43.8 mill. was available over five years to fight aquatic invasive species but nothing has been announced. The OBWB wants to ensure invasive mussels are included.

Preparation for floodplain mapping projects underway: The Water Board has been working with Regional Districts of North and Central Okanagan, Okanagan Similkameen, and City of Kelowna, to help coordinate floodplain mapping grant applications to the Union of B.C. Municipalities. Updated maps will help communities understand where flooding is most likely to occur and help make better planning decisions. The proposal is to include a LiDAR remote-sensing flight over the valley to measure topography and have most of the valley mapped by the end of 2018.

OBWB participates in sustainable tourism strategy: The board was updated on OBWB participation in Destination BC's 10-year Okanagan tourism strategy. The Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, recently awarded international "Biosphere Destination" certification, wants to ensure sustainability is built into this plan, including water sustainability. With growing interest in lake and backcountry access, the OBWB is providing input on the implications and the importance of ensuring appropriate protection of riparian areas, water sources, and water quality.

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