

OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD THURSDAY, April 14, 2016, AT OKANAGAN REGIONAL LIBRARY, 1430 KLO ROAD, KELOWNA, B.C.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Present

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch
Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.
BC Agriculture Council
BC Fruit Growers Association
BC Ground Water Association
BC Wildlife Federation – Region 8
Canadian Water Resources Association
City of Kelowna
Environment and Climate Change Canada – West and North
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Interior Health Authority
Interior Health Authority
Ministry of Agriculture
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops. (OSNR)
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops. (Resource Mgmt)
Okanagan College
Okanagan Forest Sector
Okanagan Nation Alliance
Regional District of North Okanagan
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
UBC Okanagan

Denise Neilsen
Don Dobson
Hans Buchler
Denise MacDonald
Marta Green
Lorne Davies
Brian Guy
Jason Angus (alt)
Ian Rogalski (alt)
Doug Edwards
Rob Birtles (Chair)
Judi Ekkert (alt)
Andrew Petersen
Ray Crampton (alt)
Grant Furness
Allison MacMillan
Murray Wilson
Natasha Lukey
Renee Clark
Zoe Kirk
Carolina Restrepo (alt)

Regrets

BC Cattlemen's Association
BC Water Supply Association
City of Penticton
City of Vernon
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board
Regional District of Central Okanagan

Lee Hesketh/Linda Allison
Toby Pike
Andrew Martin
Ed Stranks/Rob Miles
Jeff Robinson
Tanis Gieselman
David O'Keefe
Margaret Bakelaar

STAFF

OBWB, Executive Director
OBWB, Water Stewardship Director
OBWB, Operations and Grants Manager
OBWB, Communications Director
OBWB, Planning Specialist

Anna Warwick Sears
Nelson Jatel
James Littley
Corinne Jackson
Kelly Garcia

GUESTS

AF Consulting
Gorman Bros
Irrigation Association of BC
Okanagan College
UBC-O
UBC-O
UBC-O
Urban Systems
Westcoast CED Consulting

Johanna Faccini
Kerry Rouck
Bruce Naka
Rob St. Onge
John Janmaat
Jonathan Beppele
Nargiz Rahineova
Suzan Lapp
Karol Hansma

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Rob Birtles called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. and welcomed members and guests.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

**Moved by Doug Edwards
Seconded by Brian Guy**

“That the agenda for the April 14, 2016 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.”

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was noted that page 4 (round table update by Ms. Clark) contained an error ~ snow course information that they are about 125% of (not above) normal for snow/water equivalent. This change has been reflected in the March 10, 2016 minutes.

**Moved by Doug Edwards
Seconded by Brian Guy**

“That the amended minutes from the March 10, 2016 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.”

CARRIED

4. BOARD REPORT—Ms. Warwick Sears

They have a new staff member. Kelly Garcia has been hired for an initial 1 year term to assist with implementation of the Drought Response Plan recommendations, work with local governments and integrate efforts with the OBWB’s Okanagan WaterWise program and its Make Water Work campaign. She will also work with Corinne to integrate water policy work on MWW. OBWB is sending a letter to the federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stéphane Dion, supporting a request by the Canadian Water Resources Association that a Canadian Science Advisory Panel be created to advise on the Columbia River Treaty (CRT) renewal. An update on the Hullcar Aquifer was provided and a letter from the Minister and a plan by MOE to gather information and work with the community to address the problem. The Board is being supportive of the process. The Board approved \$300K for Okanagan water projects.

5. OKANAGAN FORESTRY AND WATER (Ray Crampton, FLNRO; Murray Wilson, Tolko; Kerry Rouck, Gorman Bros.)

Mr. Crampton spoke to forestry, legislation and government. He discussed the need to balance economic prosperity and environmental stewardship and the importance of the forest economy in BC. The forest industry has been in a state of recovery the last while. People are working. Companies are making money. Government revenues are recovering. The provincial coffers are up as a result from revenue from stumpage from the forest industry. The ministry was created to integrate the natural resource sector government pieces. They found that there were more efficiencies with the “dirt” ministries coming together under one team. They have seen improved decision-making and continue to strive towards greater efficiencies and quicker turnaround times. They work better when they work together. They have a number of partnerships that make this work as well: FN, MoAg, local government, BC Cattlemen, Ranches, IH, water purveyors, ONA, etc. They work with clients to build trust and confidence that the forest is in good hands and that the level of professional reliance in the TSA and the willingness to work with other agencies amongst licensees is high.

Mr. Wilson (Tolko) spoke about forest economics and the impact of the forest industry in the Okanagan. Annually in BC, the forest industry is a large part of the economy: \$12 billion/year, 145,000 jobs. 35% of BC’s exports are BC forest products. Tolko is a privately owned, family company that has been in business for 60 years. They have 14 different manufacturing operations across Western Canada and employ approximately 3500 people. They ship their product to 30 countries. Their theme is “Make products from the forest”. They have a large variety of products. Their economic impact in the Okanagan equates to 82,000 truck loads/year to the various facilities; wood is moved 160-180 days a year which is about 400 logging trucks/day; approximately 1300 direct jobs; approximately \$300 million in economic activity.

Mr. Rouck (Gorman Bros.) spoke about forest management. Gorman Bros was started 65 years ago and has three main facilities plus a pole plant and a reload and remanufacturing facility. Gorman's has tried to differentiate the company. They put through a lower amount of wood but extract all the value out of it. They branded their product – the Gorman Edge. Their economic impact equates to approximately \$320 million of annual economic activity and approximately 1200 jobs.

In 2003, there was a 20% take back to, in part, establish a competitive log market and BC Timber Sales is a big part of the economic fabric of the Okanagan. First Nations have become a very big part of the business. They went from no involvement to being a partner with the companies. Their involvement will continue to increase. Most forest companies are heavily engaged with working with First Nations' communities.

The forest companies do have their eye on the future. The forest is always changing. It is an evolutionary process. There are a lot of nurseries in the Okanagan. They look at ways to grow trees faster and with a higher value. They do not do genetic engineering. The forest industry in the Okanagan has been a key part of the economy for over 100 years; it is sustainable and innovative.

Integral to market access is the certification process. While the demand for certified products is not high yet, the forest companies have systems in place that monitor and check the processes to ensure they do what they have said they are doing: plan/do/check/respond. Forest companies have audit systems in place and year after year they are continually monitoring, checking and improving systems. Safety is paramount to operations and there has been a big push since 2008 to ensure proper safety systems.

The LRMP is the cornerstone of what happens in the Okanagan. Every cutblock, drainage, road built, takes a number of things into consideration. Water is first and foremost in the Okanagan. A large effort is put into water, social license, recreation, cattle, wildlife, etc. in the Okanagan.

6. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: Okanagan Forestry & Water

There was some discussions and questions put forth regarding processes and responsibilities of the forest companies after they have finished logging; for example, road maintenance, reforestation (100%), survival surveying, monitoring.

Over the past 25-30 years, many improvements have been made in the forest industry. A question was put forth about what the next big improvement will be. The biggest improvement, it is felt, will be more of a combined effort. There are a lot of competing uses on the landscape and different standards and expectations for each of the users. There will be more of a cumulative planning process where stakeholders (ranchers, irrigation districts, etc.) will work together more and more in land based activities.

The use of Lidar technology was discussed a bit further. Lidar is probably one of the greatest advances as a tool in the business to better understand hydrography and the geotechnical side of things. 5 years ago Lidar was around \$5-6/hectare. Now, it is around \$1.17/hectare. There are 2 million hectares planned for the southern interior.

A comment was made about viewing water as an asset to be protected but also as a resource to be enhanced and using forest management practices to enhance groundwater recharge, etc. Plan your harvest so you can meet some water objectives. The forest companies are aware of it and continually work towards the consideration of water. This area generated a great deal of discussion amongst the participants.

A question was raised regarding partnerships with FNs and how it has changed over time especially in light of the Tsilhqot'in court case. The forest companies work with FNs and going forward FN will have more say in natural resource development and the forest companies will work closely with the FNs. FNs will get a portion of the cuts. There are over 700 revenue sharing agreements being worked on in the province. They are becoming/have become a partner in the industry.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS & UPDATES (Anna Warwick Sears)

There were two committee meetings in the morning. The EFN project is still in the planning stage. A draft report has been circulated and there is a lot of discussion about critical flows versus environmental flows, what data is being collected, and where the data gaps are. The drought committee had a presentation by Ray Crampton about his experience with the drought last year and hints on how the provincial response plan may be different this year. Kelly Garcia presented to the committee about local government drought response and the planning project she is working on this summer. Next month's committee meetings are Wetlands and Groundwater.

8. ROUNDTABLE – MEMBER UPDATES

Council members and guests were invited to provide an update:

- Ms. Jackson (OBWB): UN World Water Day was a success. The rain barrel pilot project with RDCO was very successful. MWW and DMM plans are moving ahead for launch in May. They have had confirmation that two new garden centres will be joining the group this season for a total of 9 garden centres. The plant selection has been expanded and is now more than double.
- Ms. Warwick Sears (OBWB): Nelson had to leave the meeting early as he is heading to a Wenatchee. The Osoyoos Lake Board of Control is partnering with the IJC, the Water Board and the Department of Ecology putting together a short film on issues surrounding Osoyoos Lake, (salmon, agriculture, etc). There was a big meeting around wetlands. There are lots of wetlands going in and there is a lot going on with the EFN project and the Mission Creek ground water project. OBWB is quite busy.
- Ms. Lukey (ONA): the Sockeye fry are emerging. The Sockeye fry release will be May 18 in Penticton. It is anticipated that the river will be bumped up in flows. They have received funding from OBWB for the Shuttleworth Basin project which will address water management at the headwaters. On April 19th, ONA and RDCB are holding a forum on sustaining our headwaters. On April 17th, the Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society will have a booth at Wildplay to kick off earth week.
- Mr. Davies (BCWF): they had a presentation from ONA and the Provincial Government on Sockeye being reintroduced into Okanagan Lake. The

province has some reservations about it.

- Mr. Wilson (OFS): There is still a lot of snow pack (especially in the Monashees) that still has to come off this spring.
- Mr. Dobson (APEGBC): MCRI dike setback program intent was to have flow come up over the dike. Water is flowing through the berm into the flood plain. With regard to the MC flow monitoring, they have finished installing the water level sensors. They have one set of measurements from pre-freshet. They have made a proposal to Nelson regarding Isotope testing of water quality for signature.
- Mr. Rogalski (ECCC): with regards to the federal budget, billions of dollars will be spent over the next few years on green infrastructure, water infrastructure, waste water treatment infrastructure projects. The ECCC is the lead department federally for the Government of Canada's Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for 2016-19. The draft has been released for public review and comment. Comments will be accepted until June 24th. Of interest is the desire to get greater public and NGO engagement in building the data that leads into the indicators.
- Ms. Kirk (RDOS): On April 26th, OASISS (Lisa Scott) is celebrating 20 years as an organization. There will be a day long celebration at OC in Penticton and the theme is On the Land and in the Water -What's Here and What's Coming. They are hoping that the Quagga and Zebra mussel outreach unit will be unveiled. They have received funding from the WCQI grant for their 2nd round of drought planning. Their public works department is checking for any leaks on the new system. They are experiencing flooding in Oliver already. There have also been a couple of forest fires in the region. The Okanagan River is rising and the emergency centre is ready to be open.
- Mr. Naka (IIABC): Splatsin First Nation has a new convention centre with over half an acre of green roof. Most of the plants seem to be growing quite well.
- Ms. Faccini (guest): pass
- Mr. Beppe (guest): pass
- Ms. Lapp (guest): work on the BC Water Use Reporting Centre update is underway.
- Ms. MacDonald (BCFGA): The tree fruit growing season is looking similar to last year's. The BCFGAs executive will be doing small

presentations and one of the items will be their support for the creation of an agriculture water reserve in the Okanagan.

- Mr. Crampton (FLNRO): South Okanagan Drought Response Plan 2.0 in draft format. Webinar tomorrow looking at fire forecast and drought forecast.
- Ms. Clark (RDNO): GVW has three snow courses in their watershed. They are about 105%-125% of normal. They are predicting spill to be in 10 days to 2 weeks. She attended the WSA meeting where the Hullcar aquifer was discussed and the nitrate levels in groundwater. More research is being done on the issue.
- Mr. Petersen (MAG): the Ministry has been looking at the damage to the Oliver siphon. It will cost \$1 million to repair. This cost will be split with Oliver.
- Mr. Edwards (DFO): reviewing designs for a program on the Similkameen River. There is a call for proposals for the Recreation Conservation Fisheries Partnership Program. April 21 is the closing date. There is more money and more people can qualify for it. BC has had a big share of the money in the past.
- Ms. Neilsen (AAFC): there is a call for proposals out for the Agriculture Greenhouse Gas program. There is also money available to look at soil water and climate change activities. The Okanagan might be a place of interest to the department. She will be using the water demand model to start assessing vulnerabilities of different cropping, irrigation and soil type. It has been an early spring and they have seen the earliest bloom to date for sweet cherry. Fruit quality problems and issues will need to be discussed.
- Ms. Rahineova (UBCO/OBWB): pass

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

- Mr. Littley (OWBW): in Ottawa attending a meeting on Our Living Waters platform. This is a group of water focused NGOs and water based funders. Spoke to the Lake Winnipeg Foundation regarding the mussel issue. The mussels in Lake Winnipeg are larger than they have seen before and spreading fast. They are in Cedar Lake now. Our Living Waters is also working on a shared measurement platform. They are starting a national survey to see what sort of water data is out there; what platforms and hubs are out that to collect and relay that information; and what the gaps are.
- Mr. Guy (CWRA): The CRT is coming up for renewal and it is a single purpose deal between BC Hydro and Bonneville Power with a narrow scope. There is a feeling that the scope of the Treaty should be broader. CWRA wrote a letter to the Federal Government, Stéphane Dion, suggesting they take a stronger role regarding the CRT and they should broaden the scope, geographically and turn it into more of an international river basin management approach.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be on Thursday, May 12, 2016 from 12:30 to 4:30 at Okanagan Regional Library, 1430 KLO Road Kelowna.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Moved by Ian Rogalski

“That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of April 14, 2016 be adjourned.”

CARRIED

Chair

Executive Director