

**Electoral Area 'D' Skaha Lake Shoreline Study
Progress Report**

November 14, 2008

Prepared for:

**Okanagan Basin Water Board
Water Conservation and Quality Initiative Grant Program**

Prepared By:

**Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Jillian Tamblyn, Environmental Coordinator
Evelyn Riechert, Planner**

Background on the Organization:

The Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) was incorporated on March 4, 1966 and 2006 marked it's 40th anniversary. In British Columbia, Regional Districts serve three important roles; they:

- are regional bodies responsible for providing important regional services and undertaking key activities for the greater Regional area including solid waste management, land use planning, water and sewer utilities, 911, fire protection, recreation and regulatory services;
- provide the political and administrative frameworks necessary for member municipalities and electoral areas to collaborate in the provision of regional and sub-regional services, and;
- are the local governments for their (unincorporated) electoral areas. Regional Boards are composed of elected municipal and rural area directors. At present, the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) Board is comprised of eighteen directors. Ten municipal directors and eight rural area directors.

The planning department within the RDOS Development Services works in the public interest by preparing plans and policies to guide development, balance the needs of the community with economic, social and environmental considerations to protect the unique character of the area and quality of life for existing and future generations of the Okanagan Similkameen.

The RDOS' service area is approximately 10,400 square kilometers and serves just under 80,000 people.

Project Description:

The primary objective of the Skaha Lake Shoreline study is to create a comprehensive plan for the management of the Skaha Lake shoreline within Electoral area 'D' addressing shoreline zoning, use, foreshore use, protection of habitat and water, and accessibility to the lake. Electoral area 'D' is experiencing significant development pressures, particularly along lakeshore lands and this study will assist in making sound land use decisions.

The Foreshore inventory mapping (FIM) and report will illustrate habitat data inventories and recommendations for use of the Electoral Area 'D' Skaha Lake shoreline. Skaha Lake has a shoreline perimeter of approximately thirty kilometers.

This will establish a base line inventory of current conditions in regard to land use, shoreline type, riparian conditions and anthropogenic alterations that will be used to maintain and improve future water conservation, shoreline, and near shore habitat quality.

There was collaboration with DFO, Penticton Indian Band, the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) and the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program during the field work and the FIM component of the study.

There have been numerous ways for which the public to be involved with this study. An Open House was held on September 15, 2008; a survey was developed that was

available on line as well as hard copy; information has been posted on the RDOS website; and volunteers conducted boat counts on Skaha Lake that formed part of the data collection. A series of presentations was conducted on Oct 27 and 28th in Okanagan Falls and Kaleden outlining the proposed recommendations and conclusions and once again the public will be able to provide their comments.

The end goal of the project is to have Regional Board approve the final Skaha Lake Shoreline Study and have the recommendations incorporated into the area 'D' OCPs.

Present Achievements:

- Field work was completed in May of 2008 in collaboration with DFO and the Okanagan Nation Alliance.
- The draft Foreshore Inventory Mapping and Shoreline Study Reports have been completed and sent out for review to agencies and posted on the RDOS website;
- A survey to collect feedback and direction was developed and made available on-line and hard copy, approximately 100 surveys have been completed;
- An initial Open House was held with approximately 75 people attending;
- Press Releases were sent to local media, the Western News printed the story with photo;
- Radio interview was conducted;
- Television interview with CHBC was conducted;
- Two presentations on recommendations and conclusions were held

Time Line of Remainder of Project:

The original time line is slightly behind schedule but is planned to be completed by the end of November 2008.

Obstacles Encountered:

The intention was to start the project earlier, but it was a late spring this year and as the ONA was providing in kind support the dates also had to work around their boat.

The second delay was actually positive as it was as a result of significant work by consultants, NGO's, local, provincial and federal agencies to agree on a data dictionary that will be consistent for all future projects in the province. It also enabled an enforcement and monitoring component to be added to the data dictionary.

Other slight delays included more time allowed for public input and receiving feedback from the Shoreline Committee who spearheaded this project.

Feedback on the application process:

OBWB staff were very helpful.

Attached Information:

Press release, draft report, Western News article