The Regional District Central Okanagan is ranked as the third largest urban area in the Province, with more than 160,000 people calling the Central Okanagan home. RDCO places a priority on maintaining the balance between growth and development, while protecting the natural environment and the unique Okanagan lifestyle. It is made up of two unincorporated electoral areas and the four member municipalities of Kelowna, Westside, Peachland and Lake Country.

The seismic reflection project involves state of the art research and application of new methodologies for aquifer definition. Results will greatly improve the ability to provide long term management of key aquifers in the Kelowna region, while also developing new methodologies that can be extrapolated to other similar aquifers within the Okanagan Basin. This work originates directly from the strong inter-government and university research partnership established through the Groundwater Assessment of the Okanagan Basin (GAOB) project. The seismic collection and processing was conducted by the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC), through a significant cash and in-kind contribution, and is supported by the B.C. Ministry of Environment, in addition to key researchers at UBC-Okanagan and Simon Fraser University. The well developed partnerships ensure maximum benefit of the research as well as wide distribution and uptake of the results.

The WCQI Grant funds were used to support the transport of a research team from the Near-Surface Geophysics section of the GSC, including specialized vehicles for data collection, from Ottawa to Kelowna as well as their costs while on site. The team spent a few weeks in the area collecting seismic data, and are currently completing the data processing. The seismic results will provide a 3-D image of buried aquifers.

These results will be used in conjunction with surficial geological mapping to develop a 3-D stratigraphic model of the region. This model will be used by university partners to develop a hydrogeological model of the key aquifers. This end product will enable water managers to assess groundwater vulnerability and aid in resource management.

During the project media attention was garnered due to the unique look of the “mini-vibe” machine and its trailing sensors that completed the data collection. For more information on newspaper articles please contact Bruce Smith at the Regional District Central Okanagan, or the Okanagan Basin Water Board.
Bunnies being felled by air gun

BY DON PLANT

A contractor hired to trim Kelowna’s feral rabbit population has spent at least two nights shooting the animals with an air rifle.

Ian Wilson, the city’s urban forest supervisor, confirmed Wednesday a relaxed ROMP officer has used a night vision scope and a broadband pointer to fire pellets at the rabbits as recently as last week.

“There’s been some initial work done with an air rifle at night,” Wilson said Wednesday. “We haven’t revealed where or when things have happened because of threats made against the contractor and employees.”

Animal rights activists are upset that BC Environmental Consulting, the delta firm hired by the city to remove the feral rabbits, has apparently decided to forego humane options, such as live trapping and lethal injection. They’re worried that the rabbits may not be killed, leaving their babies to starve.

“It’s a cruel act,” said Siirkka Crostland of The Responsible Animal Care Society. “It’s got people on the phone crying, they’re so upset.”

Tragic, Siirkka Crostland

A message left on EBP’s voicemail wasn’t returned Wednesday afternoon, and the company did not return a call seeking further information.

The contractor told Wilson on Wednesday that the rabbit killing would not stop for the week. “He’s got people on the phone crying, they’re so upset.”

The contractor switched to a different contractor.

There will be live trapping. There are no plans to do the immediate future for shooting. Some of the animals may be provided to a local SPCA or adoption.

Health officials in Victoria hired someone to show them how to prevent these kinds of deaths, he said.

The contractors are being provided with the Canadian Wildlife Service, in turn, and uses one or two operators to ensure no animal is at risk, he said.

NDP candidate up for the challenge

By CHUCK POULDEN

Tish Lakes’ parents were conservatives, which gave the NDP candidate in Kelowna-Lake Country plenty of opportunity to argue politics.

Her mother is a Labour lawyer. Her father was a professor of the old days — more like Disraelian conservatives,” says Lakes.

“I’m running because I enjoy talking, I guess. I grew up in a family where we had to have polite arguments at the dinner table.”

“My dad was a lawyer. He liked going back and forth with us that was good. He’d challenge us with that.”

“I just like being outside when I can, I have golfed in the past, but I’m scared to go back, I could do better for exercise, for sure.”

High point is housing.

“It’s a passion for me that we take a really serious look at what’s needed for people,” she said. “It’s OK

CAUSENPROJ

Survey of Kelowna, Lake Country area aimed at finding out amount of water available underground for future development

By DON PLANT

Scientists have a unique machine from Ottawa to search for underground water in one of the driest communities in the country.

The mapping study, commissioned by the Okanagan-Basin Water Board, will help experts decide how much water can be pumped to the surface without depleting the underground supply. The goal is to understand what sustainable amounts are available to support future development, said project leader Stephen Grawby.

Every year, a natural amount of water goes into the broad water system, and every year, people pump water out.

The mapping study will single out aquifers that hold water as well as formations called aquifers that prevent water from flowing to an aquifer. A natural water barrier is a "preferable place" for industrial development, said Grawby, because underground water supplies are protected from chemical spills or other pollutants.

The scientists plan to continue their study and hand it to the regional district in March.

There’s only one water resource. We all share that especially with changes that may be coming with climate and differences in the snowpack," said regional district spokesperson Brian Smith.

"Water is key to keeping us alive."