



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

Science. Management. Governance.

BOARD REPORT: MARCH 3, 2009

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www.obwb.ca

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**The next meeting of the
OBWB is scheduled for
10am on April 7, 2009 at
the Regional District of
North Okanagan.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Science for Long-term Water Management: Jim Mattison, Assistant Deputy Minister and Comptroller of Water Rights at the BC Ministry of Environment, discussed the government's commitment to working with the OBWB to complete Phase II of the Water Supply & Demand Project. The Project provides a scientific framework and management tools to support water supply decisions in the Okanagan Basin, taking into account population growth, climate change, land use, and preservation of the environment. Project partners include other federal and provincial ministries, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, UBC-Okanagan, SFU, the BC Agriculture Council, and the Water Supply Association of BC.

Water Quality Advisories: The process for water quality advisories—based primarily on turbidity levels—has previously raised concerns about message fatigue in some service areas and the need for other risk indicators. The Board recommended meeting with Interior Health staff to discuss changes to the advisory process anticipated for the 2009 freshet.

Sustainable Water Strategy—Focus on Action: The Okanagan Water Stewardship Council, a technical advisory body to the Board, is formalizing their 2009-10 work plan. The plan identifies the formation of 6 committees to work on the 45 actions identified in the Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy. The committees are source protection, water supply & drought management, groundwater, water information management, water economics, and communication & outreach.

Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grants: \$676,000 in applications was submitted to the OBWB for the 2009 grant cycle; more than twice the available funding of \$300,000. OBWB staff are reviewing the applications and will make recommendations for funding at the April OBWB meeting.

Increased Senior Government Funding to the Okanagan: The OBWB has received an additional grant in March of up to \$156,000 from the Canada-BC Water Supply Expansion Program to support the completion of Phase II of the Water Supply & Demand Project.

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