



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

Science. Management. Governance.

BOARD REPORT: January 7, 2010

1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC V1W 3Z4

P 250.469.6271 F 250.762.7011

www.obwb.ca

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The next regular meeting of the OBWB is scheduled for 10am on **February 2, 2010** at the Regional District of Central Okanagan office.

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Hon. John Slater encourages local voice in water issues: Boundary-Similkameen MLA and former OBWB chair, John Slater, attended the meeting. As Parliamentary Secretary for Water Supply and Allocation, Slater stressed the importance of OBWB and Okanagan Water Stewardship Council input on the modernization of B.C.'s century-old Water Act. Slater also encouraged public input through B.C.'s Living Water Smart blog that recently launched at <http://blog.gov.bc.ca/livingwatersmart/>.

Early results in on Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project: Dr. Brian Guy, OWS&D project manager, provided an update to the board. He explained data-collection is coming to a close. Preliminary results indicate residential outdoor water conservation is a key area that will need to be addressed as we experience further climate change and population growth. The project team is now preparing for the next phase which will include recommended policy changes. Final results of the three-year project will be launched as part of World Water Week in March, 2010.

Mapping shows potential areas of foreshore concern: Susan Latimer, with the Foreshore Inventory Mapping Project, presented program findings - a project partly funded by an OBWB grant. Mapping has been done of most large Okanagan lakes and shows very few undisturbed areas, Latimer said, noting the importance of documenting shorelines. Such mapping can show environmental violations and maps are now being used by local government planners to review development applications.

OBWB approves Goals and Objectives for 2010: The board approved goals and objectives for the coming year, including launch of the Okanagan WaterWise program. The aim of program is to communicate the importance of preserving water quality in the region and encourage homeowners, businesses and schools to adopt conservation efforts. Other objectives include working with local governments to implement groundwater bylaws, develop a Water Conservation Bylaws toolkit and work towards coordinated Basin-wide drought response policies.

Target audience provides valuable feedback: Staff reported on a recent focus group meeting to help plan for the launch of OBWB's WaterWise program. Participants provided feedback on what should be considered in bringing the public on board with water preservation efforts.

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