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UBCO to host water meet

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Experts from a wide range of fields will join with the public and community groups at UBC's Okanagan campus at the end of August to help create a new water science strategy for B.C.

The B.C. Water Symposium, hosted concurrently in three locations across the province (Victoria, Kelowna and Prince George) takes place Aug. 30 to Sept. 1. It is organized by the B.C. government together with the University of Victoria, UBC Okanagan, the University of Northern B.C., and MITACS (Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems).

Individuals from First Nations, industry, governments, NGOs, community groups and the public are invited to participate.

"A vast amount of water research is occurring in British Columbia, from hydrological modelling to governance, but few opportunities for experts in different fields to come together to look at water management issues from a holistic perspective," says Bernard Bauer, UBC professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences and Geography.

A member of the symposium advisory committee, Bauer is also on the local organizing committee with UBC Okanagan graduate students Darwin Horning, Tricia Brett and Natasha Neumann, and representatives from the Okanagan Basin Water Board, the Interior Health Authority, and the B.C. Ministry of Environment.

"Overcoming the water challenges we face in the Okanagan Valley requires a collaborative, determined community effort," says Doug Owram, deputy-vice chancellor and principal of UBC's Okanagan campus. "Through research, teaching, lab space and creating public awareness, UBC faculty and students are a significant partner in that process."

The symposium will begin with a public lecture and have a mix of plenary talks (addressing all three sites) from local and international experts, panel discussions, break-out discussions,

networking breaks as well as a poster reception.

This mix of platforms will give participants a chance to listen to leading experts as well as to meet new colleagues and engage in dialogue around the content of a water science strategy for B.C.

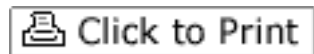
“This symposium will foster interactions which can lead to the development of collaborative relationships and promote more coordinated, interdisciplinary approaches to tackling issues related to water management,” says Bauer. “We hope to attract a broad range of participants.”

Two of the symposium’s four plenary speakers will be presenting live from the Kelowna site in the arts building at UBC’s Okanagan campus. Introductory remarks by John Slater, parliamentary secretary for Water Supply and Allocation and MLA for Boundary-Similkameen, will also be delivered from the Okanagan campus.

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