

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Agenda



DATE: Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2011

TIME: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

PLACE: Regional District Central Okanagan
1450 KLO Rd., Kelowna, B.C.

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

2. **APPOINTMENTS TO THE OBWB**

2.1 Board Appointments and Elections for 2011 *(page 2)*

3. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

5. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

6. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

6.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 7, 2010 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton, B.C. *(page 3)*

7. **STAFF REPORTS**

7.1 Executive Director Report *(page 9)*

7.1.1 Water Supply & Demand (WSD) update *(page 11)*

7.2 Water Stewardship Director Report *(page 13)*

7.2.1 Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Innovation Fund grant proposal - update *(page 23)*

7.3 Communications and Research Coordinator Report *(page 25)*

8. **NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

8.1 Farm classification in times of severe drought *(page 28)* *(includes recommendation)*

8.2 OBWB Goals and Objective 2011 *(page 33)*

9. **CORRESPONDENCE**

10. **NEXT MEETING**

10.1 The next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held March 1, 2010 at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
February 1, 2011
Agenda No: 2.1

File No. 0550.04

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears, Executive Director
Date: January 26, 2011
Subject: **Board Appointments and Elections**

Board Appointments

We have now received formal confirmation of the 2011 appointments to the OBWB from the Okanagan regional districts and the Okanagan Nation Alliance. There has been one change to the directors from the regional districts, and we have a few new alternates. The ONA has appointed a new director and new alternate.

	<u>Directors</u>	<u>Alternates</u>
<u>North Okanagan</u>	Rick Fairbairn, Area D Buffy Baumbrough, Vernon Doug Dirk, Coldstream	Mike McNabb, Area C Wayne Lippert, Vernon Will Hansma, Spallumcheen
<u>Central Okanagan</u>	Graeme James, Kelowna James Baker, Lake Country Doug Findlater, West Kelowna	Jim Edgson, Central Okanagan West Keith Fielding, Peachland Charlie Hodge, Kelowna
<u>Okanagan-Similkameen</u>	Stu Wells, Osoyoos Gordon Clark, Summerland Michael Brydon, Area F	Mark Pendergraft, Area A Dan Ashton, Penticton Tom Chapman, Area E
<u>Okanagan Nation Alliance</u>	Gwen Bridge, Okanagan Nation Alliance	James Pepper, Okanagan Nation Alliance
<u>Water Stewardship Council</u>	Bernie Bauer, UBC Okanagan	Ted Van der Gulik, Ministry of Ag
<u>Water Supply Association</u>	Toby Pike, South East Kelowna ID	Bob Hrasko, Black Mountain ID

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The OBWB is required to elect a Board Chair and Vice-Chair at the first meeting following the announcement of official appointments from the regional districts. Election is by nomination and acclamation, or by secret ballot.



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD DECEMBER 7, 2010, AT REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
101 MARTIN ST., PENTICTON, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Stu Wells	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Buffy Baumbrough	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director Doug Dirk	Regional District North Okanagan
Director James Baker	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Doug Findlater	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Graeme James	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Bernie Bauer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Toby Pike	Water Supply Association of BC

REGRETS

Director Michael Brydon	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Gordon Clark	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director George Saddleman	Okanagan Nation Alliance

OBWB STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Corinne Jackson	Communications and Research Coordinator
Melissa Tesche	Interim Office and Grants Administrator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Wells called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 7, 2010 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

8.2.1 B.C. Auditor General's report on groundwater

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 2, 2010 at Coast Capri Hotel in Kelowna.

Amendment: A small change to attendance.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Nov. 2, 2010 held at the Coast Capri Hotel in Kelowna be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Warwick Sears reported that the Sewage Assistance Grants forensic review is ongoing, aimed at creating reporting systems that will ensure better cash flow management. The response from local governments has been positive, she added.

OBWB staff members were hoping to get a head-start on milfoil rototilling this year. However, this was delayed with the discovery of the endangered Western Ridged Mussel and new Ministry of Environment permit requirements. The permit has now been approved so work has begun. Staff will be meetings with MoE and Department of Fisheries and Oceans in March to get ready for summer harvesting, helping prevent any delays in the work.

Staff are developing maps, documenting where milfoil control work is being conducted, in response to a board request, but it will also help meet MoE requirements, Dr. Warwick Sears noted.

The Memorandum of Understanding on milfoil issues, being developed by stakeholders in Washington and Idaho, is being finalized.

An Osoyoos Lake Water Forum is being planned for October 2011. A number of American studies are being done regarding water issues in the region. It is important they be reviewed by people on both sides of the border since they will help form the basis for any future agreements regarding flow rates to the U.S., added Dr. Warwick Sears. A number of board directors noted the importance of understanding the implications of guaranteed flows across the border and its effects on fish, agriculture, and people in the Okanagan.

Directors suggested having a delegation come and speak at an upcoming board meeting with representation from BC Ministry of Environment's Brian Symonds and Environment Canada's Dan Millar, who both sit on the International Joint Commission's International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control.

The Office of the Auditor General's Scott Vaughan, Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, will be speaking next week on his recent audit of the Canadian government's monitoring of this country's fresh water resources. The speech will be webcast from the Munk School on Global Affairs on Dec. 14 at 9:30PST and can be viewed at <http://hosting.epresence.tv/MUNK>.

Following on the OBWB's "From Rain to Resource" workshop in October, Dr. Warwick Sears recommended the small amount of remaining funds be used to produce a rainwater management guide for Okanagan homeowners. A guide has already been produced in California and the Water Board was given permission to use it as a template and localize it. A small number of guides would be printed, but it would be made available by download through the OBWB's public outreach program, Okanagan WaterWise.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board adapt the homeowners' "Slow it. Spread it. Sink it!" guide for rainwater management for the Okanagan Basin, using remaining funds from the Rain to Resource conference budget."

CARRIED

The board meeting schedule for 2011 was presented.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board adopt the Board of Directors meeting schedule for 2011.”

CARRIED

UBC-O is continuing to lay the foundation for its Chair in Water Resource and Ecosystem Management, including the development of an advisory committee in January. The university hopes to make an announcement during World Water Week in March.

Board directors discussed the possibility of having the February board meeting in West Kelowna since it is set to take place in the Central Okanagan. Dir. Findlater suggested there could be a tour of the new, state-of-the art Westbank Treatment Plant. There was also discussion about holding the meeting at the Okanagan Nation Alliance office.

There was discussion around the OBWB’s application to Agriculture Canada for a \$1.5 million research project. The board had previously approved a \$50,000 commitment (\$18,000 in funds, the remainder as in-kind support). However, Dirs. Pike and James noted that they received calls of concern about the project. Both members added that they didn’t have sufficient information to be able to answer questions.

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the application for funding was by invite only. The OBWB was invited to apply and the turnaround was very short. However, she noted, she regretted that the application was not circulated more widely before it was sent. The project is for economic studies intended to benefit the agricultural community, she added, including research into an Agricultural Water Reserve and a water pricing toolkit for water utilities. A special meeting with the agricultural community is set for tomorrow, she added, to answer questions and concerns. A follow-up meeting will be held with the OBWB’s technical advisory group, the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council, to gauge interest in proceeding.

After further discussion it was agreed that staff will e-mail out finalized applications to board directors to ensure they have necessary information to respond to individuals when called.

5.1.1 Water Supply & Demand update

Dr. Warwick Sears reported that two teams have been contracted to research additional climate models in Phase 3 of the Okanagan Water Supply and Demand study. The data will be available on the OBWB website and a report is being developed for local governments on how to use the material.

“THAT the Executive Director’s report and the Okanagan Water Supply and Demand report from Dr. Warwick Sears, dated Nov. 30, 2010, be received.”

CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report

Mr. Jatel noted that the November 2 joint council-board meeting was well-received and feedback suggests it should be done annually. The OWSC has set priorities for the coming year, including looking at groundwater licencing.

The groundwater monitoring project is moving ahead with the committee looking at 15 sensitive aquifers throughout the Okanagan. The first wells to be drilled will be in the South Okanagan over the next few weeks and will continue over the next three years.

Mr. Jatel distributed information around the federal government’s proposed Bill S-11, known as

the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act, adding concerns have been raised that it doesn't go far enough to address First Nations issues. The board was asked to review the material.

The Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool project is nearly ready to launch. Staff are looking to hold a press event in the new year to show off the prototype. The province is looking at implementing the tool across B.C.

Mr. Jatel provided a presentation on the groundwater monitoring project, noting that the partnership – between OBWB, local government, the province and federal government – is viewed as extremely positive given everyone's fiscal restraints.

The Hydrologic Connectivity Study committee has met with the consulting team. The study will look at how we are connected and who is susceptible, especially under First in Time, First in Right. The Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Study will be useful in the work. The project is expected to be completed by April 1.

The Sustainable Water Strategy is being reviewed by the Stewardship Council to determine progress on action items. This is important with next year's review of the Water Management Program.

“THAT the report from Mr. Jatel, dated Nov. 30, 2010, be received.”

5.3 Communications and Research Coordinator Report

Ms. Jackson reported that she has been working with a province-wide Drinking Water Week committee, led by the BC Water and Waste Association, preparing a public outreach campaign to take place May 1-7.

Other communication initiatives underway include the launch of the SWURT project and announcement of the start of the 2011 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program.

“From Rain to Resource” materials are now available on the Water Board website at http://www.obwb.ca/rain_to_resource/.

Staff have also been promoting a xeriscape rap video, inspired by a talk Dr. Warwick Sears gave to a class at UBC-O. The video, created by geography student Graham Campbell, has been entered in BC Hydro's Invent the Future contest and is a fantastic communication tool, encouraging young people to think about water use and the practice of xeriscaping. It can be found at www.inventthefuture.ca/songs.php?sort=popular&.

“THAT the report from Ms. Jackson, dated Nov. 30, 2010, be received.”

6. **ADJOURN TO IN-CAMERA MEETING**

6.1 Matters pertaining to OBWB staffing

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board adjourns to an In-Camera meeting at 11:51 a.m.”

CARRIED

(Break for lunch at 12:08 p.m.)

7. **RESUME REGULAR MEETING**

Regular meeting resumed at 12:41 p.m.

8. **NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

8.1 OBWB provisional budget for 2011-2012 - revised

Dr. Warwick Sears provided the board with a revised budget with a decrease of \$4,200. The entire budget equals a 4.4% increase overall from last year a 0.2 cent increase per \$1,000 assessed value.

There was some discussion around the increase for financial services. Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the cost is based on full-cost recovery and there are a number of projects underway at the moment that require extra financial management. However, she added, new software and organization is expected to bring these costs down for the 2012-13 budget year.

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that she will provide the board with a monthly financial report.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board adopt the 2011-12 budget as proposed.”
CARRIED

Directors Bauer and Pike abstained.

8.2 Groundwater Monitoring Project

Mr. Jatel requested the board's approval of an agreement between the OBWB, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment for the Groundwater Monitoring Project. The agreement is for three years and requires all three parties to be at the table. There is great interest in the project from local governments in the South, Central and North Okanagan and staff will continue to develop partnerships to drill monitoring wells in each of these regions, he added.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board approve the attached project agreement between the OBWB, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment.”
CARRIED

8.2.1 Groundwater audit

Dr. Warwick Sears noted a recent audit conducted by B.C.'s Auditor General on provincial groundwater that indicates that the province needs to improve monitoring of its groundwater resources to ensure its sustainability. The audit is in line with the concerns of the OBWB and with what we are hearing in other parts of B.C.

Mr. Jatel added that the report is timely with the Water Act Modernization. Also, with the work that the Water Board is doing in this area, it is well-positioned to take a leadership role on this issue.

“THAT the B.C. Auditor General's report be received for information.”
CARRIED

8.3 Meadowlark Festival Sponsorship Request

Dr. Warwick Sears noted there is \$3,000 in the budget for sponsorship of community events and recommended funding for the 2011 Meadowlark Festival.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board sponsor the 2011 Meadowlark Festival at \$1,000.”

CARRIED

Directors Bauer and Pike abstained.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 Letter re: Okanagan Lake Collaborative Monitoring Agreement from Vic Jensen, Ministry of Environment (MoE)

Mr. Jatel explained that this Memorandum of Understanding between MoE, the City of Kelowna, District of Summerland and RDCO is for a water quality monitoring program of the Okanagan’s mainstem lakes. The project will include partnering with First Nations and will monitor for various items including endocrine disruptor compounds.

“THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board receive the correspondence from Vic Jensen, Ministry of Environment, regarding an Okanagan Lake Collaborative Monitoring Agreement.”

CARRIED

11. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held Feb. 1, 2010 at Regional District of Central Okanagan.

12. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Dec. 7, 2010 be adjourned at 1:21 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
February 1, 2011
Agenda No: 7.1

File No. 0550.04

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears, Executive Director
Date: January 24, 2010
Subject: Executive Director Report

Financial Reporting

At our last meeting, board directors requested that we have monthly financial reports, providing an overview of our accounts and cash flow. We will be handing out the most recent report at the board meeting, and Carol Teschner, our accountant, will come in to answer any questions about format. The financial reports will be similar to those used by the SIR board, and will be the same basic structure as our audited financial statements.

Sewage Assistance Grants

We are just finishing up our forensic review of the sewage grants program with only a short list of recipients left to go. We have been working with each recipient individually, collecting additional background materials and ensuring that calculations are done correctly on customized spreadsheets. Beginning in 2011, grant recipients will be able to invoice in August and December, and we will have greater control of our cash flow management. So far, the response from recipients has been positive.

Next month we plan to bring a newly-updated sewage grant summary to the board, with updated retirement projections and recommendations for updating the terms of reference.

Watermilfoil Control Program

Rototilling is now underway in the Vernon Arm of Okanagan Lake, Kalamalka Lake, and along the shore of West Kelowna. We were frozen out of Osoyoos Lake, but will return later in the year. Our trainee, Dave Caswell, will be rototilling in Kal throughout most of February when our regular operator goes on vacation.

Dave Caswell and Melissa Tesche are continuing to work on establishing a mapping system for our milfoil work. The goal is to better track annual work locations and intensity of effort, as well as provide a record for our compliance with Ministry of Environment and DFO. Each machine will be fitted with a GPS unit, collecting data that will be recorded on digital maps at the OBWB offices.

We have a meeting scheduled with DFO and MOE on March 14th, to discuss our program for 2011 harvesting and rototilling, and minimize disturbances to species at risk. We would like to get the permits in order as soon as possible.

The milfoil group from Washington and Idaho has finalized the international MOU on milfoil control, which is attached and ready to be signed by the OBWB Chair.

Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum 2011

The organizational committee for the conference on Osoyoos Lake science had meetings in December and January. The steering committee includes representatives from the International Joint Commission, Environment Canada, DFO, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the US Geological Survey, OBWB, and the Town of Osoyoos (Mayor Stu Wells). There are several objectives for the conference. It is a follow-up to the very successful Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum held in 2007. It is also an important opportunity for consultation around the studies conducted for the renewal of operating orders for Osoyoos Lake. The public and stakeholder groups from Osoyoos, the greater Okanagan valley, and the Similkameen will be invited to attend, ask questions, and provide their views on water science priorities for Osoyoos Lake. The Water Science Forum will be held September 18-20.

A representative from the Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (likely Brian Symonds) will present at the next OBWB meeting on the status of the renewal of the operating orders for Zosel Dam, and the studies being conducted.

Water Governance Workshop with NRTEE

We have been requested to participate in a February workshop to explore potential reforms in collaborative water governance in light of current and future challenges to water use in natural resources sectors. The workshops are being led by the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy – a group of industry stakeholders sponsored by the federal government. Their role with the federal government seems much like the one the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council holds with the OBWB, providing independent advice on policy.

*"Our **mission** is to generate and promote sustainable development solutions to advance Canada's national environmental and economic interests simultaneously, through the development of innovative policy research and advice."*

NRTEE is working with UBC-Vancouver on this project. Similar workshops are also being held in Alberta, Quebec, and Nova Scotia, and the Okanagan will be a model for collaborative governance processes in BC. We have asked them to put a special emphasis on First Nations water issues.

Update on Regional Innovation Chair in Water Resources and Ecosystem Management

The application for the BC Regional Innovation Chair was submitted to the Leading Edge Endowment Fund (LEEF) in November 2010 for review by an external committee. Once the external review is complete it will move to the full LEEF board for consideration in February or March. UBC hopes to have approval at the end of March, or early April. UBC and other funders will complete the necessary paperwork to establish the endowment fund. LEEF will simultaneously arrange a public recognition event of the Chair, likely this spring. We are trying to arrange for the announcement to happen during World Water Week. In anticipation of project approval thought is now being given to the structure of the advisory committee. Dr. Warwick Sears will be thoroughly consulted as plans for the committee unfold. An update on this should be forthcoming in March. UBC Okanagan has passed along their thanks to everyone for continued patience as the nomination process continues.

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
February 1, 2010
Agenda No: 7.1.1

File No. 0550.04

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears, Executive Director
Date: January 25, 2011
Subject: **Water Supply & Demand Project Update**

TAC Meeting: The Management Team for the project met by conference call on January 20th, with about 20 team members and advisors on the line. The purpose of the call was to update the group on projects underway, and get support and advice. The team reviewed the progress of the following projects:

- Okanagan Water Viewer (see www.okanaganwater.ca)
- Okanagan Water Supply & Demand webpage (see www.obwb.ca/site/ - temporary site)
- Hydrologic Connectivity study (see Water Stewardship Director's report)
- Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool (see Water Stewardship Director's report)
- OKWater Database
- Osoyoos Lake studies for IJC
- Scenarios project (see below)
- Lake Evaporation (see below)

Scenarios: We have funding from NRCan (RAC) and Environment Canada to undertake more climate scenarios and develop a report on the outcomes. The first round of scenarios (in Phase 2), focused on a middle-of-the-road climate future, and fairly conservative estimates of conservation and population growth. For example, the three-year drought model was not as extreme as the historical drought of the 1930s. As a result, we had fairly moderate responses – some real concerns for fish flows and low snow packs, but we did not get a sense of what the extremes might be like.

For this round, experts at Environment Canada and Agriculture Canada have created additional future climate data sets for us to test, including a recreation of the 1930s-level drought conditions. We will run the drought model for a five-year drought, and can examine the impacts in any of those years. Another innovation is to allow for more urban-sprawl, with respect to how it impacts water use. In Phase 2, most of the population growth was confined to existing urban boundaries. However, much of the current new development of single family homes (with high water use) is being targeted to undeveloped hillsides that have never been irrigated. This represents a potential increase in demand, so is being incorporated into the model.

The scenarios study was scheduled for completion on March 31, 2011, but has been delayed because of the unexpected time required to produce the data sets. The new completion date is now May 31, 2011.

Lake Evaporation Study: Lake Evaporation is, with groundwater, one of the greatest unknowns in the Okanagan Water Balance. Environment Canada did a lake evaporation modeling study as part of the Water Supply & Demand (WSD) Project, but it was only able to give approximate results because very little data had ever been collected in the field. After several years of making the physical assessment of lake evaporation a top priority for the OBWB, we've received excellent news from Environment Canada that it will likely go ahead this summer. Environment Canada is looking at establishing flux towers (monitoring wind and other variables) at 3 locations (2 on Okanagan, and 1 on Kalamalka). We will be helping them with logistics and taking them out in our milfoil boat, as needed.

Communications: The Okanagan WSD web page is in the final stages of development. The webpage will be an access point for all the resources from the project, including the Water Viewer which lets the public see the results and data from the study. The Local Government Guide to the Water Supply & Demand Project is also almost completed. That report will detail what data and information are available to local government planning and engineering staff to answer different practical questions or inform OCP development and other processes.

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
February 1, 2011
Agenda No: 7.2

File No. 0550.04

To: Board of Directors
From: Nelson R. Jatel, Water Stewardship Director
Date: January 26, 2011
Subject: **Water Stewardship Director's Report – December / January**

This memo provides an update on some of the ongoing activities of the OBWB's Water Management Program.

1.0 OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL, TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Council has agreed to focus the next term on four priority areas: (1) groundwater in the Okanagan, (2) agricultural water reserve, (3) source water protection, and (4) providing input and support to the WAM process.

The groundwater sub-committee will be providing a report at the Feb. 10, 2011 council meeting with suggestions for groundwater projects and considerations by the council for discussion. Any recommendations developed by the council will be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

Two guest speakers are scheduled to deliver presentations at February's council meeting: Valerie Cameron (MoE) – providing an update on groundwater initiatives, and Kirsten Harma, a recent MA graduate presenting on her thesis project using the WEAP model (the same software being used for the OBWB's hydrologic connectivity study). The council meeting will be held 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Feb. 10 at the Best Western Inn in Kelowna and all board members are encouraged to attend.

2.0 PROJECT UPDATES

2.1. Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool

The Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool launch is scheduled for Feb. 4th, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn, West Kelowna (2569 Dobbin Rd). Board members are encouraged to attend and RSVP to Ms. Jackson.

2.2. Okanagan Groundwater Monitoring Project

Groundwater in the Okanagan is an important part of the water supply used to support a variety of beneficial uses, for example: ecological flows for streams, oxygenated water to support fish spawning and habitat, industry uses (e.g. agriculture) and drinking water supplies for individual homes and entire communities (e.g. Rutland Waterworks). The sustainable management of groundwater resources, especially in sensitive areas, requires reliable multi-year data. Local governments benefit from long term groundwater data to support a variety of land-use decisions.

Monitoring groundwater supply is done through the development of strategically placed groundwater wells equipped with specialized groundwater monitoring that provides real-time data to be collected at a centralized location. For this project, the data is collected by the Ministry of Environment and posted on the B.C. Government's observation well network website at: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/data_searches/obswell/.


This project is a partnership between AAFC, MOE, EC, OBWB and local governments throughout the Okanagan. The project scope is to develop 15 groundwater wells in identified sensitive aquifers. For the purpose of this project, sensitive aquifers are those groundwater sources identified by the MOE groundwater working group as being at significant risk for supply problems and at risk of being negatively impacted by increased demand caused by increased use and additional well development.

To date, five monitoring wells have been drilled in three areas: Anarchist Mountain (east of Osoyoos), Oliver and the Twin Lakes sub-basin (see figure 1 below). These first five wells complete this years drilling program which ends March 31st. The project steering committee is working with local governments to identify which local governments are interested in participating in the program next year. A letter of support for the project has been received from Spallumcheen (see attached) for the development of a monitoring well in the Hullcar aquifer.

A recent article on the groundwater monitoring project in the Kelowna Capital News is attached.

Figure 1. OBWB and partners groundwater monitoring well project, Twin Lakes Sub-basin – January 2011 (Photos by Oleg Ivanov)



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Okanagan groundwater monitoring project to launch next spring

By [Judie Steeves - Kelowna Capital News](#)

Published: **December 16, 2010 6:00 PM**

Updated: **December 16, 2010 6:17 PM**

An innovative groundwater monitoring project involving all levels of government and the Okanagan Basin Water Board should result in creation of the first six monitoring wells by spring next year.

The Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Study, substantially completed earlier this year, pointed to a number of sensitive aquifers in the valley that could be at risk of either contamination or over-use, explained Nelson Jatel, stewardship director for the OBWB.

In the Central Okanagan, that includes aquifers in the Joe Rich area, one south of UBC Okanagan and one in the Glenrosa area of West Kelowna.

Whenever there is increased land use above an aquifer, concerns about contamination and water quality increase, and, particularly in confined aquifers, there are concerns about water quantity with increased use.

Because there is no licensing of groundwater in B.C., there aren't the controls on use of it that there are for surface water.

However groundwater licensing is being discussed as part of the Water Act Modernization process.

Jatel said the project team was particularly gratified at the response from local governments who have been very supportive in sharing the cost of drilling monitoring wells. The costs range from \$11,000 to \$30,000 a well.

“There seems to be a strong consciousness from local government and its relationship with land use management decisions,” commented Jatel.

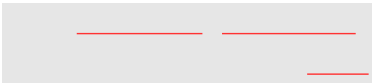
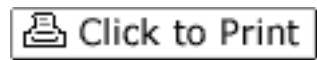
Data from those wells will be gathered by the environment ministry as part of the B.C. Groundwater Monitoring Network and it will be posted on its website.

In addition to the six wells to be drilled in the coming months, Jatel said the plan is to drill five more monitoring wells around the valley in the next year.

There’s also discussion about a pilot project in the Okanagan to license the use of groundwater, particularly in sensitive areas, he said.

jsteeves@kelownacapnews.com

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OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2010, AT BEST WESTERN INN, 2402 HWY. 97N, KELOWNA, B.C.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Present

UBC Okanagan	Bernie Bauer, Chair
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands	Ted van der Gulik, Vice Chair
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch	Doug Edwards
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch	Denise Neilsen
Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.	Don Dobson
BC Agriculture Council	Hans Buchler
BC Fruit Growers Association	Lorraine Bennest
BC Ground Water Association	Doug Geller (alternate)
Canadian Water Resources Association	Brian Guy
City of Kelowna	Mark Watt
City of Vernon	Ed Stranks (alternate)
Environment Canada – Pacific & Yukon Region	Dan Millar
Kelowna Fish and Game Club	Doug Flintoft
Interior Health Authority	Rob Birtles
Oceola Fish and Game Club	Lorne Davies
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board	Howard Neufeld
Okanagan Nation Alliance	Jamie Pepper (alternate)
Regional District of Central Okanagan	Margaret Bakelaar
Regional District North Okanagan	Laura Frank
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen	Evelyn Riechert
South Okanagan Real Estate Board	Elden Ulrich
Water Supply Association of BC	Bob Hrasko

Regrets

BC Cattlemen's Association	Lee Hesketh
B.C. Ministry of Environment, Resource Stewardship & Parks	Ken Cunningham
B.C. Ministry of Environment, Fish and Wildlife Branch	Steve Matthews
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program	Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo
Okanagan College	Douglas MacLeod
Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society	Mark McKenney
Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association	Kerry Rouck
Urban Development Institute	Robert Evans

STAFF:

OBWB, Executive Director	Anna Warwick Sears
OBWB, Water Stewardship Director	Nelson Jatel
OBWB, Communications and Research Coordinator	Corinne Jackson
OBWB, Interim Office and Grants Administrator	Melissa Tesche

GUESTS:

B.C. Ministry of Environment, OWSC Source Protection Cttee.	Solvej Patschke
Insight Environmental Consulting	Kellie Garcia
Okanagan Xeriscape Association	Barbara Crawford
B.C. Ministry of Environment	Oleg Ivanov
Clarke Geoscience Ltd.	Jennifer Clarke
SFU doctoral candidate	Laurie Neilson-Welch

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Bauer called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed members and guests.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Amend to include 9.3 – Provincial silvopasture project

Moved by Don Dobson

Seconded by Denise Neilsen

“That the agenda for the Dec. 9, 2010 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held Nov. 2, 2010, at Coast Capri Hotel, Kelowna.

Small change to wording.

Moved by Doug Edwards

Seconded by Hans Buchler

“That the minutes from the Oct. 14, 2010 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. BOARD REPORT

Dr. Warwick Sears presented her board report, noting directors adopted its 2011-12 provisional budget. The budget is now being forwarded to Okanagan regional district boards for their approval.

The board voted to sign on to an agreement with Ministry of Environment and Agriculture Canada for the Groundwater Monitoring Project.

Also, the board was informed of an Osoyoos Water Forum that is being planned for October 2011. The forum will allow for feedback on reports that are being conducted in preparation for the renewal of operating orders on Osoyoos Lake and the U.S.’s Zosel Dam.

The board also approved using remaining funds from the “Rain to Resource” workshop to create a homeowners guide for rainwater management. A guide was developed in California and the OBWB was given permission to customize it to the Okanagan and make it available to local residents.

5. WSC MANDATE & PRINCIPLES REVIEW

Mr. Jatel reviewed the council mandate and principles for the benefit of new members. It was noted that the mandate of the OBWB is to enhance water quality in basin and undertake strategic projects to further this goal. The board was formed by the three Okanagan regional districts.

The Okanagan Water Stewardship Council is a technical advisory body to the board, providing advice to the board and information to the public. One of its primary goals is to help ensure clean, healthy, sustainable water for future generations.

Three priorities have been identified for the council to work on in 2011/12:

- water source protection

- Okanagan groundwater
- an agriculture water reserve

1:22 p.m. Rob Birtles entered the meeting.

Much of the work of the council is led by its Sustainable Water Strategy, which recognizes that the Okanagan's water supply is affected by a number of factors including climate change, Mountain Pine beetle, and population growth.

Mr. Jatel noted that the OBWB is unique and a model to other agencies on how to manage water in a region. The OWSC is also unique in promoting dialogue and collaboration on such issues.

6. SUSTAINABLE WATER STRATEGY REVIEW

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that the OBWB's Water Management Program will be up for review at the end of this coming fiscal year. Review of the Sustainable Water Strategy (SWS) will form part of the reporting of what has been accomplished.

Ms. Garcia led discussion on the draft SWS Review. Following a review of the report, she encouraged council members to provide further feedback as soon as possible. A final report is expected by the end of February.

7. PROJECT REVIEW – INNOVATIVE APPROACHES PROGRAM APPLICATION: POLICY TOOLS FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SECURITY IN THE OKANAGAN

Mr. Jatel and Dr. Warwick Sears provided an overview of the Water Board's process in applying for Innovative Approaches funding through Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC).

The AAFC Innovative Approaches Program is intended to fund projects that enhance the long-term sustainability of the agricultural sector with one of the priorities being market-based instruments, noted Mr. Jatel, adding the call went out at the end of August with applications due Oct. 1st.

Mr. Edwards added that there wasn't an open call for proposals and the OBWB was invited to apply.

With Water Board approval, a grant proposal was submitted by staff. Subsequent conversations with AAFC asked the Water Board to narrow its proposal to study the concept of an Agricultural Water Reserve in the Okanagan (what the benefits would be and what it might look like) and develop a Water Pricing Toolkit. The agency also requested that the OBWB seek further input from the local agricultural community and other stakeholders before resubmitting.

Mr. Jatel noted that a meeting the previous day with stakeholders provided helpful feedback. Council members, including members of the agricultural community and local water purveyors, raised a number of issues at the meeting including: the lack of consultation prior to the original proposal submission, the size of the original proposal, the inclusion of market-based mechanisms, lack of emphasis on collaborative learning, and the contingent valuation study of how the public values agriculture land.

With feedback from AAFC and input from the agricultural community a revised proposal was proposed by staff. Mr. Jatel presented a PowerPoint presentation with highlights of a revised proposal outline. He then asked for comments from council members, adding that if the council wishes to proceed, the deadline for staff to submit a revised final submission would be Dec. 17th.

Mr. Buchler said that he supports the proposal in principle and that he would like to see ongoing consultation throughout the process. Ms. Bennest agreed and also noted the importance of ongoing consultation.

Mr. van der Gulik suggested that the study on an Agricultural Water Reserve should consider a model that will work throughout B.C., adding that the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and Environment has an Ag-Water Subcommittee that could be helpful.

A vote was called by Chair Bauer on whether staff should resubmit a revised proposal and it passed with a majority.

8. ROUND TABLE – DIALOGUE ON OKANAGAN WATER: SOURCE PROTECTION STRATEGY

Mr. Jatel provided a review of the discussions around source protection at the last council meeting, adding a number of barriers were identified. It was suggested that a workshop could be useful, reviewing the gaps and looking at a valley-wide strategy.

Mr. Dobson said that a workshop would require organization, adding inter-jurisdictional issues are a stumbling block and the council will have to explain the benefits of such a strategy.

Mr. Birtles noted that, currently, source protection plans are being done one at a time, up and down the valley. By bringing in the OBWB, best practices can be established and become a model for the province.

Mr. Jatel said that the Source Protection Strategy subcommittee will be meeting in February, prior to next council meeting and will look at this issue.

9. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9.1 Farm Classification Memo

Mr. van der Gulik provided council with information regarding a letter of support he is requesting from the OBWB, asking the province to waive the income requirement for farm status in Level 3 drought conditions.

The request is the result of a suggestion made by the Regional District of North Okanagan last winter when it was concerned about potential drought. Such an allowance by the province would let those with farm status not water without losing their status.

Chair Bauer added that the board approved writing a letter in principle but wanted to know why Minister Ben Stewart was opposed. We still don't have an answer to this, he added.

Mr. Jatel said that he would draft a letter.

9.2 Bill S-11 - Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act

Mr. Jatel noted Bill S-11 is intended to standardize drinking water regulations for First Nations in Canada, however, there has been some criticism of the legislation. Council member were asked to take a look at the bill and told that it will be discussed in the coming weeks. Kelowna-Lake Country MP Ron Cannan has been told that the Stewardship Council will be reviewing the bill, he added.

9.3 Provincial silvopasture project

Mr. van der Gulik informed council members that the BC Ministry of Agriculture is interested in piloting silvopasture sites in the North Okanagan. It is looking for funding, development and delivery partners (e.g. with other agencies, producers and conservation interests). Those interested in the project were invited to contact his office.

10. ROUND TABLE – MEMBER UPDATES

- Ms. Bakelaar: RDCO is looking for new members for its environmental advisory commission. Interested individuals can apply online. The regional district is looking for people with a variety of backgrounds.
- Mr. Hrasko: The Kelowna Joint Water Committee is busy developing a drinking water strategy.
- Dr. Guy: Canadian Water Resources Association is holding its annual conference in St. John's, Nfld. in June. Summit Environmental is looking for biologists and hydrogeologists.
- Mr. Davies: Middle Vernon Creek had 8,000 kokanee return making it an average year.
- Ms. Frank: The RDNO-Shuswap advisory group had a successful first meeting regarding a basin-wide water protection plan, with about 40 participants attending. The meeting included a visioning exercise and identification of issues. There was also talk about incorporating Source Water Protection into the planning strategy.
- Ms. Neilsen-Welch: The Adaptation to Climate Change Team at SFU is studying why the Okanagan Basin has been successful in planning its adaptation to climate change. It will be using the information to form the basis of a model to be used in other communities.
- Mr. Ulrich: The Government Relations Committee for the BC Real Estate Association has conducted a survey on water conservation. It shows 70 percent of clients did not raise the issue with their realtor. Another study on the residential cost/benefit of conservation and flood protection has been done. Contact us for more information.
- Mr. Edwards: Agriculture and Agri-food Canada is looking to hire a hydrogeologist to help with work in the B.C. Interior, a watershed hydrologist for Kamloops, as well as possibly other positions in the Southern Interior. We're planning a Kelowna workshop for the end of February with the national ag-climate service and Environment Canada, looking at forecasting and new products available. A water well workshop to discuss best practices with homeowners is also being discussed. Stats Canada will be releasing crop assessments, making it timelier to find conditions of crops on a climate basis.

Ms. Bennest suggested that there be some discussion about holding council meetings in other parts of the Okanagan valley to make it easier for those who travel long distances to attend. Mr. Hrasko added that maybe one meeting a year in the north and one in the south should be considered. Mr. Stanko noted that Kelowna is a half-way point for a lot of members.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be held Feb. 10, 2011.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Moved by Elden Ulrich

"That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of Nov. 2, 2010 be adjourned."

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Chair

Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
February 1, 2011
Agenda No: 7.2.1

To: Board of Directors
From: Nelson R. Jatel, Water Stewardship Director
Date: January 26, 2011
Subject: Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Innovation Fund grant proposal - update

In late summer of 2010, the OBWB was requested to apply for grant funding to Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Innovation Fund. The project scope was for proposals to conduct economic studies intended to benefit the agricultural community. The Innovation Fund consists of \$15.5 million in program funding to support the core themes of: market based instruments and performance indicators. The deadline for submission to the fund was Oct. 1, 2010. The Innovation Fund program was to support projects, including those proposed by local governments, that were up to two years in length, with a maximum project budget of \$2 million.

The project proposal concept was introduced to the Board of Directors in September with a board recommendation to have staff develop and submit a proposal – exploring four research questions proposed by staff.

Staff had the opportunity to hear from some members of the agricultural community and water utilities who had concerns about the original proposal submitted to AAFC. Issues included:

- The proposal required more consultation with grass root agricultural organizations and stakeholders;
- Some water utilities identifying the size of the project's scope and budget was too large;
- Some agricultural representatives feeling strongly that a contingent valuation study was inappropriate research as proposed;
- Comments that the proposed project team was inappropriate to develop meaningful economic and water pricing studies in the Okanagan; and
- Strong support for the development of an agricultural water reserve but the need for further input from the agricultural community and a stronger emphasis on collaboration.

In addition to the feedback received from local stakeholders, a meeting with the AAFC's proposal review committee encouraged staff to submit a revised proposal: (1) reducing the overall project scope, and (2) including more input from the local agricultural community. A revised proposal had a submission deadline of Dec. 17, 2010.

A workshop with agricultural and water utility stakeholders was held Dec 8, 2010. Workshop meeting notes are available upon request to staff. General agreement was reached to have staff

submit a revised proposal that: (1) focused on strong consultation with agricultural members , (2) increased focus on collaboration, and (3) removed the proposed contingent valuation and economic instruments parts of the originally proposed study.

Following the stakeholder workshop, a revised proposal framework was proposed to the Water Stewardship Council on Dec. 9, 2010. The revised Innovation Fund proposal received strong support from the council with an emphasis on collaboration and the opportunity to foster continued education between and among stakeholder groups.

Staff submitted a revised proposal to AAFC by the December 17th deadline which included the following:

- AAFC – Agri-Environmental Services Branch;
- Brock University;
- POLIS Project on Ecological Governance (University of Victoria);
- BC Government – Water Protection and Sustainability;
- BC Wine Grape Council; and
- Interior Horticulture Sector, BC Agriculture Council.

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
Feb. 1, 2011
Agenda No: 7.3

File No. 0550.04

To: OBWB Directors
From: Corinne Jackson
Date: January 25, 2011
Subject: **Communications and Research Coordinator Report**

Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool (SWURT) Launch

Plans are underway for a public launch of SWURT on Friday, Feb. 4, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., at the Holiday Inn in District of West Kelowna. The launch will be followed by a training session for Okanagan water utility staff at Okanagan Computer Lab, also in West Kelowna.

World Water Week

Staff are busy planning various events as part of World Water Week, March 20 to 26, 2011. Ideas include a panel discussion and an event to encourage youth to learn more about Okanagan water issues.

Water Board staff are working strategically with two partners, hoping to increase awareness and involvement in the events: UBC-Okanagan and the Gordon Foundation. In past years, the OBWB has worked with UBC-O to help organize and promote various public outreach initiatives, such as a high profile plenary speaker, a poetry slam and water drumming performance. The Water Board will do the same this year. New this year is the Gordon Foundation's efforts to unite the country in celebrating World Water Week. The foundation will be launching a website and other social media tools to promote the conversation around water. The Water Board will be helping facilitate this effort.

Drinking Water Week

Work continues with BC Water and Waste Association to develop a plan, and materials to promote Drinking Water Week, May 1 to 7, 2011.

The Drinking Water Week committee is made up of local government representatives working in water on Vancouver Island, in the Lower Mainland, Northern B.C., the Kootenays and the Okanagan. Once again, I want to note that the committee is hoping to have B.C.'s mayors and regional district chairs proclaim Drinking Water Week. The group is also looking for water utilities to provide tours of their treatment plants – encouraging residents to get to know where their water comes from. If you have any feedback you wish to share, please let me know.

Update on other communication activities

In response to public comments regarding milfoil washing up on beaches at the north end of Osoyoos Lake, staff issued a news release on Dec. 21, 2010 which was picked up by a number of media outlets, including the *Osoyoos Times*, *CHBC News*, *Castanet*, and the *Penticton Western News*.

Two news releases went out, regarding the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program accepting applications, one on Dec. 15, 2010 and the second on Jan. 20, 2011. The story was picked up by newspaper, radio and online media outlets in the North, Central and South Okanagan.

In reviewing our Okanagan WaterWise website (www.okwaterwise.ca) and clicking through to the partners linked on our site (many of them local government agencies), it was found that a number of communities have still not linked to the WaterWise website. In an effort to promote valley-wide messaging around Okanagan water issues, I encourage you to request that your agency's website link to OkWaterWise if it hasn't already done so.

Summary of Recent Media

Dec. 3	"Water issues focus of new poll," <i>Vernon Morning Star</i>
Dec. 5	"Water watchdog reports on weeds," <i>Westside Weekly</i>
Dec. 12	"Water Board budget up 4.4%," <i>OliverDailyNews.com</i>
Dec. 14	"Twin Lakes residents wonder who will be to blame if the lake dries up," <i>Keremoeos Review</i>
Dec. 15	"Water Board opens call for grant submissions," <i>AM1150, SunFM, SilkFM</i>
Dec. 16	"Applications sought for water grants," <i>Vernon Morning Star</i>
Dec. 16	"Okanagan groundwater monitoring project to launch next spring," <i>Kelowna Capital News</i>
Dec. 16	"Grants available for Okanagan water conservation projects," <i>Kelowna Capital News</i>
Dec. 21	"Mission underway to control invasive plant," <i>CHBC News</i>
Dec. 21	"Winter weed control," <i>OliverDailyNews.com</i>
Dec. 23	"Water board tackling milfoil outbreak," <i>Castanet</i>
Dec. 29	"Local leaders say phase 2 sewer pipe under highwater mark won't hurt lake," <i>Osoyoos Times</i>
Dec. 29	"Osoyoos mayor sees progress on milfoil," <i>Penticton Western News</i>
Dec. 31	"No escaping a year of government regulation," <i>Kelowna Capital News</i>
Jan. 4	"Lake weed harvest in Osoyoos halted by ice," <i>CHBC News</i>
Jan. 5	"Milfoil control measures in high gear on lake," <i>Osoyoos Times</i>
Jan. 18	"Peachland council meeting highlights: Okanagan Basin Water Board grant," <i>Peachland View</i>
Jan. 19	"Council report: Rain barrel program supported," <i>Summerland Review</i>
Jan. 20	"Water grant deadline approaches," <i>Kelowna Capital News</i>
Jan. 21	"Water grants deadline looming," <i>Castanet</i>
Jan. 23	"Water grants deadline only four weeks away," <i>Kelowna Daily Courier</i>
Jan. 24	"OBWB invites proposals for grants," <i>AM 1150</i>

Summary of Upcoming Presentations

Feb. 15	"OBWB programs and Okanagan water issues," to Kelowna Roundtable (Kelowna) – Dr. Warwick Sears
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- Mar. 3 "Planning for climate change and rapid population growth – trials and innovations in the Okanagan," to Canadian Water Network National Conference (Ottawa) – Dr. Warwick Sears
- Apr. 18 BCWWA Annual Conference and Trade Show (Kelowna) – Dr. Warwick Sears, Mr. Jatel

Recently Delivered Presentations

- Dec. 8 "Presentation on the OBWB Provisional Budget for 2011-2012," to Regional District of North Okanagan (Coldstream) – Dr. Warwick Sears
- Dec. 9 "Innovative Approaches grant proposal (AAFC)," to Okanagan Water Stewardship Council – Mr. Jatel
- Dec. 13 "Groundwater well monitoring stations," to Spallumcheen's Committee of the Whole (Spallumcheen) – Mr. Jatel
- Dec. 16 "An update on OBWB projects," to Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (Penticton) –Mr. Jatel

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
Feb. 1, 2011
Agenda No: 8.1

File No. 0550.04

To: OBWB Directors
From: Nelson R. Jatel, Water Stewardship Director
Date: January 26, 2011
Subject: Farm classification memo - draft letter of support to waive farm income during declared periods of drought

The Water Stewardship Council at our December meeting had the opportunity to review a request from Mr. Ted van der Gulik, Senior Engineer: Ministry of Agriculture, to support a recommendation to the Ministry of Agriculture waiving the farm income requirements to maintain farm status in regions that are affected by a drought level 3 or higher. The council recommends that the Board of Directors support this recommendation.

As background, S6.1, Standards for the Classification of Land as Farm Regulation, authorizes Cabinet to suspend income and production requirements for a specified period where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, allowing farmers at risk to retain farm classification status. This proposed recommendation provides for a timely application of S6.1 during years of declared level 3 drought.

In addition to review and comments by the council, the proposed concept was earlier supported by Ted Osborn, a retired professional agrolgist now residing in Vernon. His earlier letter of support is attached.

Staff recommendation: That the Board of Directors send a letter of support to the Minister of Agriculture for the proposed recommendation to waive farm status during severe droughts as a measure to conserve water in the Okanagan.

A draft letter is attached for board consideration.



February 1, 2010

Hon. Ben Stewart
Minister of Agriculture
Ministry of Agriculture
P.O. Box 9043 Stn. Prov. Govt
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9E2

Re: Letter of support to save water by waiving farm income during declared periods of drought

This letter supports the proposed policy recommendation, submitted by Mr. Ted van der Gulik, Senior Engineer, Ministry of Agriculture on October 24, 2010, to implement the following recommendation:

that the BC Government waive the farm income requirements to maintain farm status in regions that are affected by a drought level 3 or higher (declared by the Ministry of Environment).

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) believes that this initiative will be of benefit to the Okanagan region.

As background, S6.1, Standards for the Classification of Land as Farm Regulation, authorizes Cabinet to suspend income and production requirements for a specified period where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, allowing farmers at risk to retain farm classification status.

The OBWB supports the original intent of the initiative to save water in drought affected areas by allowing small producers to not grow a crop and allowing the farm income level to be waived. The Water Board believes that additional benefits of this initiative would include:

- Application of s6.1 to designated drought areas will assist small farmers who temporarily cannot grow a crop due to drought conditions; these farmers would be assisted by lifting the burden of application for exemption from income and production requirements to retain farm classification. Income thresholds (\$2,500.) must be met every other year, but there must be a sale each year to retain farm status; therefore, it can be assumed that mainly small operators will be affected.



- There is an administrative gain by invoking s6.1 as BC Assessment will not have to deal with a number of individual applications, nor will they have to undertake assessment field work in designated area(s).
- Producers will not have to individually apply for exemptions if unable to grow or harvest a crop.
- Government will be seen as responding in a positive manner to farmers in distress.
- There is no anticipated cost to government.

Thank you for our consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stu Wells, Chair
Okanagan Basin Water Board

DRAFT

9042 Binns Rd.
Coldstream, B.C. V1B 3B7

April 21, 2010

Hon. Eric Foster, MLA
Vernon – Monashee
3209 – 31st Ave.
Vernon, B.C. V1T2H2

Dear Eric:

I am writing to bring forth a matter which is in essence a provincial policy subject rather than a local or regional subject for your consideration and furtherance as you see fit. To explain, this year it would appear that unless we experience some very high natural precipitation between now and July, that many Okanagan water purveyors, will need to place the areas, covered by them, under severe water restrictions. It would appear incumbent to exam the present regulations to see if the change in any regulation may result in assisting in conserving water. Of course any regulation change would have to be quick to execute and have minimum negative effect to existing budgets.

Within the Agricultural Land Reserve, a property owner must meet the annual revenue thresholds, for the land area to remain classed as a "Farm", under the BC Assessment Act. In the Okanagan, to meet the revenue threshold, in commodities approved under the Act, the property owner will need to utilize an irrigation system to overcome the water deficiency, from the normal precipitation, to adequately grow the crop. In most cases the source of water for the property is a community water purveyor who provides water for commercial and domestic needs, in addition to agricultural needs. In times of water shortages; the water purveyor will place restrictions on all users so as to have sufficient water to last for the year. In the case of agriculture, within the Greater Vernon Water Authority, these restrictions could amount to 10% voluntary reduction of the annual allocation, in a Stage 2 Drought Response Plan, to a mandatory 50% in a Stage 4 Drought Response Plan.

The policy issue becomes apparent with the application of the "Farm" classification. While all agricultural operations will be negatively influenced by water restrictions, property owners growing annual crops or forage, for pasture or hay, will be hit especially hard with the water restrictions, as they are in jeopardy of losing their Farm Classification if they do not meet the revenue threshold. That is, locally, the GVW Authority has tied the availability of water, for agricultural uses, to the BC Assessment revenue threshold with an expanded list of approved commodities. If the operation does not meet this criteria, the cost of the water rises from the agricultural rate of \$ 215.82 per

hectare, in 2010, to the domestic rate of approximately \$1.00 per cubic meter. This means that on a volumetric basis (the amount of water needed to grow a crop in the North Okanagan) the cost of the water, at the domestic rate, would amount to some \$5,580 per hectare.

It can be realized that the property owner has a powerful incentive to ensure he makes the annual revenue threshold under the existing water rate policy. **It would appear that a simple policy change by BC Assessment, to not include a year in which water restrictions were applied for determining the “Farm” Classification,** could signal to those property owners that diminishing their water use, if they so desired, would not cause them to lose their “Farm” status. This policy would, most likely, be taken advantage of by property owners who have higher expenditures than the revenue they receive, especially under drought conditions, but still find that there is sufficient merit to carry on with their farming activity and qualify for the “Farm” Status.

It is recognized that the BC Assessment only periodically assesses a farm to evaluate if it still qualifies for “Farm” status. However, **if it was well publicized that the above policy was in place, the objective of conserving water, in a year of drought, could be realized.**

Thanking you for your consideration of the above policy suggestion,

Yours truly,

Ted Osborn P Ag (ret.)

Okanagan Basin Water Board Operational Goals and Objectives February 1, 2011

The OBWB provides leadership to protect and enhance quality of life in the Okanagan Basin through sustainable water management. Our objective is to undertake strategic projects and programs that meet the collective needs of Okanagan citizens for sustainable water supplies while supporting member jurisdictions in meeting their own water management goals.

I. Goal: Reaffirm the OBWB's water management mandate. Consult with member local governments and stakeholder organizations on the OBWB's Water Management Program and governance structure – listen to the water priorities of each jurisdiction, and reaffirm our water management mandate.

Objective I-1: Review the successes and challenges of the program since 2008, including recommendations for improvements and modifications to the governance process and structure.

Action I-1A: Undertake an OBWB strategic planning process to evaluate the highest priorities for the program, and the board's recommendations for governance changes.

Action I-1B: Meet with Regional Board chairs, mayors and administrators, to get their views on OBWB activities and Okanagan water governance.

Action I-1C: Meet with Okanagan Water Stewardship Council to get their views on OBWB activities and Okanagan water governance.

Action I-1D: Review the activities of the Water Management Program since 2006, and evaluate strengths and challenges.

Action I-1E: Revise the 2005 "Proposal to Enhance the Effectiveness of the OBWB" – which summarizes the agreements with the regional districts for the Water Management Program.

Action I-1F: Develop a report by June 2011 for review by Okanagan local governments, and obtain their endorsements by September 2011.

Action I-1G: Obtain final approval from Regional Boards for Water Management Program renewal by October 31, 2011.

II. Goal: Appropriate Water Policy. Improve water management policy in the Okanagan by working with local governments, First Nations, and stakeholder organizations to identify needs and opportunities.

Objective II-1: Build political support for improved water management by maintaining clear communication and good working relationships with senior and local governments and key stakeholder groups.

Action II-1A: Send a delegation to each regional district and municipal council once a year to provide updates on OBWB activities, and receive information on local needs and concerns.

Action II-1B: Invite senior government politicians and staff to OBWB meetings and events. Make a presentation on Okanagan water issues to Okanagan MLA caucus and Okanagan MPs.

Action II-1C: Keep the Ministry of Environment's Parliamentary Secretary for Water Allocation updated on OBWB activities and involve him wherever appropriate.

Action II-1D: Attend events and grow relationships with Water Stewardship Council member organizations and other water stakeholders to build a cohesive Okanagan water community.

Action II-1E: Strengthen connections with UBC-Okanagan and Okanagan College, by attending events, partnering on projects, or participating on committees.

Action II-1F: Identify common goals and interests with the Okanagan business community; pursue opportunities for presentations or participating in events. Support efforts to create a basin-wide Chamber of Commerce.

Objective II-2: Provide workable and rigorous recommendations to senior governments for improving Okanagan water management policies.

Action II-2A: Refine water policy needs and alternatives identified in the Sustainable Water Strategy with participation of the Water Stewardship Council.

Action II-2B: Make recommendations to Ministry of Environment to improve Okanagan water policies, including pilot groundwater regulations and the *Water Act* modernization process.

Action II-2C: Work with Ministry of Environment to improve information sharing for drought response planning.

Action II-2D: Participate in Southern Interior Regional Drinking Water Team with BC Ministries and Interior Health to improve policies protecting water sources.

Action II-2E: Stay apprised of water issues and policy development occurring in other basins and provinces, as well as trans-boundary international concerns.

Action II-2F: Re-engage the Okanagan Hydrometric Monitoring governance process. Encourage senior governments to meet commitments for expanding the network.

Action II-2G: Participate in the Collaborative Watershed Governance initiative sponsored by the Fraser Basin Council to follow the development of water governance policy for B.C.

Objective II-3: Provide workable and rigorous recommendations to local jurisdictions and assist with policy development improving Okanagan water management.

Action II-3A: Continue with outreach to help Okanagan local governments implement policies in the Groundwater Bylaws Toolkit.

Action II-3B: Develop an agreement for Basin-wide coordinated drought response between large license holders, based on the results of the hydrometric connectivity study, and begin the consultation process.

Action II-3C: Draft a Topsoils Bylaw Toolkit, in partnership with the Green Infrastructure Partnership and BC Water and Waste Association.

Action II-3D: Develop water pricing tools that support water use efficiency, cost recovery, and best management practices.

III. Goal: A WaterWise Okanagan. Raise the awareness of Okanagan citizens about local water issues. Connect people and programs within the watershed and with broader networks in B.C., Canada, and abroad. Develop credibility as a source of reliable information on water issues.

Objective III-1: Improve public communication and support to raise awareness about important water issues and the work of the OBWB and Stewardship Council.

Action III-1A: Begin implementation of Okanagan WaterWise Program, working with the Water Stewardship Council and local government staff – using the adopted WaterWise Strategy.

- **Action III-1A-i:** Further develop Okanagan WaterWise Website with content for individuals, businesses, and youth.
- **Action III-1A-ii:** Develop new marketing tactics such as the 650 litre water bottle display.
- **Action III-1A-iii:** Focus on a sense of place, and recognition of our semi-arid environment.

Action III-1B: Update and restructure the OBWB’s corporate website and other outreach materials.

Action III-1C: Work with partner organizations to develop the OKCP website, making environmental information available to planners and policy makers.

Action III-1D: Seek out opportunities for public speaking engagements to key stakeholder and user groups and the broader public.

Action III-1E: Continue to distribute media releases and monthly Board Reports to communicate about OBWB and Water Stewardship Council projects.

Action III-1F: Publish the “Slow it, Sink it, Spread it” homeowner’s guide to rainwater management, and distribute it to the public.

Objective III-2: Improve communication with and between OBWB Directors, the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council, local government electeds and staff.

Action III-2A: Meet regularly with individual community leaders to stay informed about local water concerns and share information about Okanagan Basin water initiatives.

Action III-2B: Involve local government staff in Water Stewardship Council committees and other initiatives.

Action III-2C: Prepare an Annual Report on the OBWB’s financials, year-in-review, and planned initiatives to be released August/September 2011.

Action III-2D: Host an AGM in August/September 2011, to coincide with the release of the OBWB Annual Report. Invite all elected politicians and key stakeholders and media outlets in the basin to share information, hear concerns and discuss policy.

Action III-2E: Hold a joint OBWB and Water Stewardship Council meeting in November.

Objective III-3: Strengthen understanding about First Nations’ traditional values and build partnerships to address mutual water resource issues in the Okanagan.

Action III-3A: Conduct discussions with ONA to explore co-management and water governance in the Okanagan – identifying obstacles and ways to move forward.

Action III-3B: Seek out opportunities for the OBWB to participate in First Nations’ cultural events focused on water and fisheries.

Action III-3C: Identify areas of mutual interest for collaboration with ONA and member bands.

Action III-3D: Hold one or more OBWB meetings at the ONA office, or at a facility of ONA member bands.

IV. Goal: Make Improvements on the Ground. Support water quality and management goals by channeling resources and political support to key research, restoration and infrastructure improvements.

Objective IV-1: Improve water quality in Okanagan lakes and tributaries by providing infrastructure funds to local governments through the Sewage Facilities Grant program.

Action IV-1A: Complete financial review of program, and provide grant recipients with easy-to-use templates and program guides.

Action IV-1B: Conduct an assessment on the financial benefits and implications for using this program for stormwater management infrastructure.

Action IV-1C: Undertake a consultation process with Okanagan municipalities to determine future infrastructure needs and interest in the program.

Action IV-1D: Review Sewage Facilities Grant program terms of reference to determine whether changes are needed.

Objective IV-2: Use the OBWB's Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant program to support key research, data collection and water management projects.

Action IV-2A: Target awards to tangible projects that help meet OBWB's water management goals and objectives, leveraging local-scale efforts.

Action IV-2B: Develop a formalized, transparent decision-making process for grant evaluations.

Action IV-2C: Remain apprised of grant making developments through the Canadian Environmental Grantmakers Water Funders Group to improve the granting process and leverage external public and private funding.

Objective IV-3: Increase the level of external grant funds and research into the Okanagan Basin.

Action IV-3A: Actively promote the benefits of sponsoring and conducting projects in the Okanagan – target senior government politicians, staff at granting agencies, and federal and academic researchers.

Action IV-3B: Support external academic and government researchers by connecting them with local resources and networks, and writing support letters.

Action IV-3C: Seek out opportunities for external grant programs that meet the OBWB's water management objectives.

- **Action IV-3C-i:** Identify opportunities and help support external funding applications for ONA water planning and water governance coordination.
- **Action IV-3C-ii:** Facilitate corporate sponsorship of water conservation education programs.

Objective IV-4: Undertake strategic planning and studies for projects and programs building Okanagan water information systems and increasing water sustainability.

Action IV-4A: Implement highest-priority projects identified by the Sustainable Water Strategy.

- **Action IV-4A-i:** Develop the OkWater Database so that it can better provide direct access to Okanagan water planners and other users.
- **Action IV-4A-ii:** Complete project to develop a Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool to improve water demand tracking. Conduct additional

trainings and outreach to help water utilities become comfortable with the web-tool.

- **Action IV-4A-iii:** Conduct a water supply pricing study to evaluate appropriate financial policies and mechanisms for cost-recovery for agricultural and domestic water.
- **Action IV-4A-iv:** Conduct outreach to educate and inform local government staff and consultants about what data and tools are now available from the Water Supply & Demand studies.
- **Action IV-4A-v:** Work with stakeholders and policy experts to examine the feasibility of an Agricultural Water Reserve for the Okanagan, as a model for the province of B.C.
- **Action IV-4A-vi:** Initiate new Water Stewardship Council projects on Source Protection and Groundwater.

Action IV-4B: Continue Phase 3 of the Water Supply & Demand Project, building on results to develop policy and regulations, and establish information management and communication systems for the project.

Action IV-4D: Participate in efforts to expand First Nations' capacity for water planning and hydrology, to coordinate planning and data collection on band lands with initiatives such as the Water Supply & Demand Project.

Action IV-4E: Continue to consult with municipal water conservation staff to share information and collaborate on conservation programs.

Action IV-4F: Collaborate on international projects that impact the Okanagan watershed.

V. Goal: Manage Eurasian Watermilfoil. Manage watermilfoil levels in high-value public areas while protecting aquatic habitats and maintaining a cost-effective program.

Objective V-1: Maintain control program and evaluate options for program assessment.

Action V-1A: Work with environmental regulators from Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Environment to develop a streamlined environmental permitting system, to refine the program and minimize impacts to species at risk.

Action V-1B: Develop GPS methods for monitoring treatment effectiveness and impacts, with GPS responders on each machine tracking daily progress.

Action V-1C: Survey current and former treatment sites to evaluate control needs in different treatment areas.

Objective V-2: Preserve high standards for operator safety and equipment maintenance.

Action V-2A: Maintain equipment in very high quality condition.

Action V-2B: Continue to update staff training and certifications.

Action V-2C: Continue to conduct regular Health & Safety meetings with field staff. Further develop Health & Safety Manual for Milfoil program.

Objective V-3: Respond to public enquiries about the Okanagan Milfoil program and provide information about OBWB control methods.

Action V-3A: Maintain Public Enquiries log to track public milfoil enquiries and maintain a quick response time to requests for information.

Action V-3B: Communicate to municipal staff, yacht clubs, marinas and other lakeshore user groups to explain the needs, limitations and operational logistics for milfoil control (harvest and tilling). Inform stakeholder groups what helps or hinders operations in these areas; and the challenges with utility cables, water intake pipes, anchors and lines, pilings and dock construction, and geothermal systems.

VI. Goal: Strengthen the OBWB Organization. Maintain a robust financial management structure, strong staff and harmonious work environment with focus on creativity and productivity; prepare for future needs.

Objective VI-1: Enhance financial management systems and human resource policy.

Action VI-1A: Analyze tangible capital assets to determine the necessary size of equipment reserves. Incorporate into future budget development.

Action VI-1B: Develop an OBWB human resources policy guide.

Objective VI-2: Foster a positive working environment with good communication.

Action VI-2A: Conduct individual staff reviews twice a year.

Action VI-2B: Hold bi-weekly staff meetings.

Action VI-2C: Hold regular staff gatherings.

Action VI-2D: Hold event that brings together Board Directors, Water Stewardship Council members, and OBWB staff.

Objective VI-3: Increase the effectiveness and capacity of the organization by encouraging staff to learn new skills and take initiative in their areas of expertise.

Action VI-3A: Identify training opportunities for individual staff members including relevant courses and workshops, and support their participation.

Action VI-3B: Plan ahead and initiate appropriate training to prepare for staff transitions and retirements.

Objective VI-4: Encourage a healthy workplace.

Action VI-4A: Support staff efforts at exercise and healthy eating.

Action VI-4B: Reduce stress and encourage self care by using flex days, taking vacation time and limiting overtime expectations.

Action VI-4C: Encourage staff to take First Aid training.