

**OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**  
*A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board*

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2012, AT  
BEST WESTERN INN, 2402 HWY. 97N, KELOWNA, B.C.**

---

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**Present**

UBC Okanagan	Bernie Bauer, Chair
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture	Ted van der Gulik, Vice Chair
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Agri-Enviro. Branch	Doug Edwards
Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.	Don Dobson
BC Agriculture Council	Hans Buchler
BC Fruit Growers Association	Lorraine Bennest
B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Ops.	Ken Cunningham
Canadian Water Resources Association	Brian Guy
City of Kelowna	Mark Watt
Environment Canada – Pacific & Yukon Region	Kendall Woo
Interior Health Authority	Rob Birtles
Kelowna Fish and Game Club	Doug Flintoft
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program	Aaron Deans (alternate)
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board	Howard Neufeld
Okanagan Nation Alliance	Zoe Masters (alternate)
Regional District of Central Okanagan	Margaret Bakelaar
Regional District North Okanagan	Jen Miles (alternate)
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen	Evelyn Riechert
Water Supply Association of BC	Bob Hrasko

**Regrets**

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch	Denise Neilsen
BC Cattlemen's Association	Lee Hesketh
BC Ground Water Association	Remi Allard
B.C. Ministry of Environment, Fish and Wildlife Branch	Steve Matthews
City of Vernon	Rob Dickinson
Oceola Fish and Game Club	Lorne Davies
Okanagan College	Douglas MacLeod
Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society	Mark McKenney
Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association	Kerry Rouck
South Okanagan Real Estate Board	Scott Rowlands
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, Water Policy and Research Intern	Michelle Cook

**GUESTS:**

Forrex	Suzan Lapp
Okanagan Kootenay Cherry Growers Association	Christine Dendy
UBC Okanagan	John Janmaat
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen	Zoe Kirk

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Bernie Bauer called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. and welcomed members and guests.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Don Dobson

Seconded by Hans Buchler

*“That the agenda for the Feb. 9, 2012 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.”*

**CARRIED**

## 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of a regular meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held Jan. 12, 2012, at the Best Western Inn, Kelowna.

A small amendment was noted.

Moved by Doug Edwards

Seconded by Don Dobson

*“That the minutes from the Jan. 12, 2012 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved as amended.”*

**CARRIED**

## 4. BOARD REPORT

Dr. Anna Warwick Sears reported on the inaugural meeting of the new Board of Directors. Issues discussed included water economics, improving relations with the First Nations community, the UBC Okanagan Water Research Chair, and the expected renewal of Osoyoos Lake Operating Orders. The board was also provided with preliminary information on a drought tournament exercise.

In response to questions, Dr. Warwick Sears noted that public consultation on the renewal of operating orders will take place this spring/summer. The interest in water economics, she added, is based on the work being done in the North Okanagan, looking at the price of water and the cost of infrastructure maintenance.

## 5. ROUNDTABLE – MEMBER UPDATES

Council members and guests were invited to provide an update:

- Mr. Edwards: Ag Food Canada has purchased a portable offstream water system and will be demonstrating it in March with BC Cattlemen’s Lee Hesketh. As a result of the Copenhagen meetings on climate change, Canada’s contribution to address greenhouse gas emissions includes funding ag projects that looks at water use efficiency. A \$1.2 million research project will be done in the Okanagan between Summerland Research Station, UBC-O and international partners.
- Mr. Dobson: As part of the hydrometric data project, work is underway with District of Lake Country to re-establish a water survey station, and to connect data from non-integrated stations into a database. A source protection response plan for Interior Health is also being developed.
- Ms. Dendy: The Okanagan Kootenay Cherry Growers Association is assisting Ag Canada’s Dr. Nielsen conduct research for cherries in drought conditions.
- Ms. Miles: Greater Vernon Water is looking at water pricing. New rates have been approved in principle with an 18% increase in the base rate and there are five tiers. This should help meet the budget target to separate agricultural water use from domestic.
- Ms. Bakelaar: RDCO has completed and adopted a utility policy. Stage 3 of the Westside Wastewater Treatment Plant will be completed in the spring. The regional district is commissioning a new water system in the upper Fintry area, it has completed an Okanagan Lake source assessment in the Killiney Beach and Westshore Estates area, and is completing a study on required sustainable funding levels for all water systems in RDCO. Joe Rich stream restoration work is wrapping up and RDCO is now evaluating the effectiveness of the project.

- Mr. Woo: Environment Canada has developed wastewater regulations that will come into force in coming months and we're meeting with the Province of B.C. on this. The agency is also looking for innovative ways to conserve in the Okanagan basin and will be speaking with the WSC and stakeholders to gauge the status of science being conducted and provide that information to Ottawa.
- Mr. Hrasko: The Water Supply Association of BC is holding its spring workshop at Quail Ridge, March 29 and 30. One of the sessions will be on intergenerational communications. The BC Water and Waste Association is holding its annual conference in April at the Penticton Convention Centre.
- Ms. Bennest: The recent BC Fruit Growers Association annual conference focused on water sustainability and had UBCO's John Wagner as a guest speaker.
- Ms. Kirk: The RDOS will be metering in Naramata this spring and is looking for samples of communications information that others have provided to residents when they implemented meters.

Mr. Watt entered the meeting at 1:39 p.m.

- Mr. Watt: City of Kelowna is moving forward on the Cedar Creek Pump Station expansion next year. Our filtration deferral application was accepted by the province. The city is introducing water rate changes in June and more are coming. The water quality enhancement fee will go towards filtration deferral requirements.
- Dr. Janmaat: Work is getting underway as UBC-O's Water Research Chair.
- Ms. Riechert: RDOS received a \$360,000 grant towards a wetlands project.

Mr. Cunningham entered the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

- Mr. Deans: The OCCP is conducting outreach with its Foreshore Inventory Mapping (FIM) work. Aquatic Habitat Index will be conducted on Wood and Kalamalka lakes in spring.
- Mr. Buchler: The federally created water working group on agriculture will be receiving funds to develop a strategy.
- Mr. Guy: The CWRA conference is in Banff this year and is being held at the same time as the Canadian Geophysical Union convention.
- Ms. Masters: The ONA is working in Ok Falls on a sediment basin redesign and stream restoration project. The agency is also working on a project to assist in moving some residents off of groundwater to improve flows for fish.
- Mr. van der Gulik: BC Water and Waste Association is drafting a paper for their Board on metering in and outside purveyed areas, the group is also holding a meeting in the Peace on hydraulic fracking.
- Dr. Warwick Sears: The OBWB is working with FORREX to hold a drought tournament exercise. Staff participated in a recent Water Governance Workshop in Vancouver and will be attending an upcoming water governance symposium at UBC Vancouver. The Water Board is holding a series of hands-on workshops for local government staff and consultants. A Green Bylaws Workshop will be held Feb. 27. On March 1, the OBWB hosts a PIEVC workshop, helping local governments assess risks to infrastructure from climate change, a Water Balance Model workshop to help reduce urban runoff in communities, and another on how to use FIM in local planning.
- Chair Bauer: The Building Sustainable Communities Conference is Feb. 27 to March 1. Feb. 28 will have several sessions dedicated to water issues.
- Mr. Jatel: The OBWB held a news conference on the Joe Rich groundwater drilling on Feb. 3 with representation from Environment Canada, Ag Canada, FLNRO, and local government. This is the eighth of 15 wells drilled in vulnerable aquifers. The Water Board is looking to create partnerships with West Kelowna and others to drill seven more. Nanaimo is looking to adopt our Streamlined Water Use Reporting Tool (SWURT) for ground and surface water monitoring. We will be holding a panel discussion as part of Canada Water Week/World Water Day events in March.
- Ms. Jackson: The OBWB's news conference on the Groundwater Monitoring Project attracted local and provincial media, bringing attention to Okanagan water issues to a wider audience. Staff are

helping plan for Canada Water Week events (March 19-25) and Drinking Water Week (May 13-19), as well as a valley-wide outdoor water conservation campaign – Make Water Work. Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants are being accepted and the deadline is Feb. 24.

- Mr. Cunningham: Inflows into Okanagan Lake are showing as less than normal for the last few months. Unless there is more snow or a wet spring, there could be water supply issues this summer. FLNRO staff are monitoring.

## **6. GUEST PRESENTATIONS – OKANAGAN WATER SUPPLY 2012**

### **6.1 Drought Planning Workshop 2012 / WEAP**

Ms. Lapp spoke on a partnership between FORREX, the OBWB and several other partners to hold a Drought Tournament in June, preparing the agricultural community and other stakeholders for climate extremes.

Dr. Warwick Sears added that the simulation exercise would bring different players to the table, getting people to start thinking about drought response plans and preparing for what could become a reality in the Okanagan. The OBWB is also looking at this exercise as a way to further develop the WEAP model to look at an Agricultural Water Reserve and stream flows.

Ms. Lapp noted that a webinar on Assessing Preparedness and Building Adaptive Capacity Through Interactive Gaming: the Invitational Drought Tournament will be held March 22, 9:30 to 10:30 PST with Ag Canada's Nancy Lee. Those interested can register through the Forrex website.

A number of council members showed interest in the tournament. Mr. van der Gulik added that the province has recently developed a draft, looking at the agricultural community's response to climate adaptation. Dr. Janmaat noted that the exercise could be useful in helping determine valuation of water. Chair Bauer suggested that organizers think about who is going to be invited to make sure the greatest impact possible from the exercise.

In response to questions, Dr. Warwick Sears said some of the goals would be to get communities to start working on drought management plans, and to help inform the province's Water Sustainability Act.

### **6.2 Water Supply Webinar**

Mr. Jatel reported that this year's first water supply webinar will be held March 9, from 10 to 11 a.m. It will include information on where the Okanagan basin is at in the hydrologic cycle, looking at streamflows, groundwater and precipitation, historic and current snowpack levels, the forecast for the coming year and more. It is intended to help inform water planning decisions, considering agricultural needs, fish needs, the need to control lake levels, and water needs across the border.

The webinar would be of interest to agricultural groups, water utilities and others. Those with questions they would like addressed during the webinar were invited to forward their queries to Mr. Jatel in advance.

## **7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Discussion: Irrigation in the Okanagan – Board policy**

Mr. Jatel proposed that the discussion paper on irrigation in the Okanagan go to a council committee to be further developed, then forwarded to the OBWB Board of Directors in March for comment and then back to the council for review in April.

After some discussion on the importance of such a policy, and the need for promoting irrigation standards, this process was agreed upon.

The committee will be made up of Dr. Warwick Sears, Ms. Miles, Ms. Bennest, Mr. Edwards, as well as Ms. Maria Besso and Mr. Ehren Lee.

**8. STRATEGIC PLANNING – POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2012-13**

8.1 Break-out sessions: Review SWS – identify priority policies

Council members were divided up to look at priorities for the coming 18 month term.

**9. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be held March 8, 2012 at the Best Western Inn, Kelowna.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

**Moved by Evelyn Riechert**

*“That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of Feb. 9, 2012 be adjourned.”*

**CARRIED**

**CERTIFIED CORRECT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chair**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Executive Director**