



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: March 7, 2013

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Association of B.C.

Tom Siddon, Regional District
of Okanagan-Similkameen

Gerry Zimmermann, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

**The next regular meeting of
the OBWB is 10 a.m.,
April 2, 2013 at Regional
District of North Okanagan,
Coldstream.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Zebra mussel action plan rolling out: The board was told of several initiatives underway to help prevent zebra and quagga mussels from infesting Okanagan lakes. It is estimated such an invasion could cost the region at least \$43 mill./year. Aquatic biologist Heather Larratt, contracted by the Water Board to research the threat to the Okanagan, is now speaking with local government councils and boards. Agencies interested in hearing Ms. Larratt present are asked to contact the OBWB to arrange. The mussels are transported on boats and water-related equipment and are currently in Ontario, Quebec, and several U.S. states. The OBWB is holding a public meeting April 4 in Osoyoos. A webinar for local government, media and affected industry (e.g. tourism, fisheries) is being organized and will be announced soon. A public outreach campaign is also being developed.

Youth invited to take WaterWise Challenge – win great prizes: The Water Board's Okanagan WaterWise program is inviting youth to take the Challenge and share how they "love their water body" for the chance to win great prizes. It's all part of this year's Canada Water Week celebrations which run March 18 to 24. The multi-media contest is open to individual and class submissions. Prizes include pizza parties and pool passes, with classroom winners given the option of a boat charter for an on-the-water classroom experience. Details coming soon to www.okwaterwise.ca.

Celebrate Water Week with "Love your water body!" event: The Water Board is hosting its popular annual public forum as part of Canada Water Week/UN World Water Day celebrations on March 22, 5 to 8 p.m. at Summerhill Winery. The theme is "Love your water body!" Panelists include Maria Besso (Society for the Protection of Kalamalka Lake) speaking for Kal Lake, Ocoela Fish and Game Club's Rick Simpson for Wood Lake, and Osoyoos Mayor Stu Wells speaking for Osoyoos Lake. Others to be announced. Details soon at www.okwaterwise.ca. This event is free but registration is required at <http://tinyurl.com/aqh8t58>. Light refreshments served.

Groundwater monitoring stations expanding: Groundwater monitoring wells are being drilled in Ellison and Mission Creek. For three years, the OBWB has been partnering with Okanagan local governments, and federal and B.C. ministries to install wells in aquifers identified as vulnerable due to limited water supply and increasing demand. The wells will help communities manage supply and make planning decisions. Monitoring wells have also been installed on Anarchist Mountain, in Oliver, Twin Lakes, Spallumcheen, Joe Rich, West Kelowna, and Summerland.

Work begins to re-establish hydrometric stations: The OBWB is working with District of Lake Country, Okanagan Nation Alliance, federal and B.C. ministries to re-establish two hydrometric stations to monitor water supplies at Clark Creek and Upper Vernon Creek. The Okanagan used to have at least 150 stations, recognizing the need to monitor supply, but there are now only 25. The project is part of a larger effort to reinstall 15 stations to support planning decisions given expected changes in climate, land-use and population.

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