

Vernon and North Okanagan NEWS Funding for water projects

by [Deborah Pfeiffer](#) | Story: 113388 - Apr 18, 2014 / 2:02 pm



Photo: Contributed
Kalamalka Lake

Water related projects have been given a boost thanks to funding from the Okanagan Basin Water Board, OBWB.

The Regional District of North Okanagan, RDNO, has received \$45,700 in funding for four projects that will help improve water quality and promote water conservation in the North Okanagan. Funding was approved by OBWB directors on April 1, 2014, and the projects will commence later this year.

The largest portion of the funding will go to improving water quality in Kalamalka Lake, an important drinking water source, and a recreational and economical resource for the Greater Vernon area.

This project will build on previous work which identified storm water outfalls that have the potential to contaminate the lake.

Funding allows for the necessary improvements to reduce harmful substances from entering the lake.

Kalamalka will also benefit from OBWB funding for a preliminary water quality monitoring program to start in the Cosens Bay area.

This study will determine whether or not septic systems are having an impact on the lake. If an impact is detected, the RDNO will be in a position to identify possible next steps and solutions to further protect the lake.

Water quality, sustainability and conservation are among the topics to be included in the development of youth educational programming, another project receiving funds from the OBWB.

RDNO plans to partner with an educational organization to produce this program, which will be provided to teachers in the North Okanagan.

"The aim is to inspire students to learn about their watersheds and take action in water sustainability," said Renee Clark, water quality manager at the RDNO.

Lastly, funding will also go to hiring and training two water ambassadors who will promote water sustainability this summer.

These staff will communicate and promote water stewardship in Greater Vernon by participating in Farmers' Markets, community events and public demonstrations. They will also continue to encourage education on efficient watering practices to residential, commercial and agricultural customers.

"All four projects will improve water quality and promote water education in our community," stated Clark. "Whether directly, through testing lake samples, or indirectly through youth outreach, these projects will promote and protect our water in the North Okanagan, and we want to thank OBWB for that opportunity."