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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **WATERWISE YOUTH WIN BIG IN OKANAGAN “MAP YOUR TAP” CHALLENGE**

**Kelowna, B.C.** – In celebration of B.C. Drinking Water Week, the Okanagan Basin Water Board is pleased to announce the winners of this year’s Okanagan WaterWise “MAP YOUR TAP” Challenge – Uta Van Ziffle’s Grade 1 class at Okanagan Landing Elementary in Vernon, and Monique Porter’s Grade 7 French Immersion class at Summerland Middle School.

“We were looking for creative submissions, showing where water in our tap originates from and how it makes its way into our homes, schools and businesses,” explained Corinne Jackson, OBWB’s Communications Director who also runs the OkWaterWise program. “We were also looking for entries that noted the importance of protecting these ‘source’ areas and what we can all do to help look after them. The submissions were brilliant,” she added.

Both classes submitted very different but very effective videos. The six and seven-year-olds in Van Ziffle’s class created a sweet skit “Think Before You Drink,” showing the water cycle, acting as snowflakes and raindrops falling in streams, making their way through pipes and into a house. For its part, Porter’s class filmed a movie trailer based on The Hunger Games, called “The Thirst Games,” where the main character “Catfish Everclean” (based on the original character Katniss Everdeen), struggling in a post-apocalyptic nation, teaches fellow district citizens the importance of protecting the water.

“The contest tied in with our ecology curriculum, which includes the water cycle, and it just looked fun,” said Porter, explaining why her class decided to enter. “It was a great opportunity to explore a subject to a greater extent than we might have otherwise.”

Van Ziffle, who won last year while teaching Grade 2 at Vernon’s Mission Hill Elementary School, agreed. “I was interested in participating again because each year the theme is a different focus. This year I wanted to explore how water starts in the mountains, goes into our lakes and eventually through the tap and how it’s important to take care of it at every point,” she added.

For their efforts, both classes have the choice of a pizza party and pool passes, or a two-hour cruise on Okanagan Lake with a lesson on water provided by the Okanagan Science Centre. The teachers are weighing their options with their classes. Last year, Van Ziffle took her kids on the cruise.

“The boat trip was amazing,” she recalled. “We had kids who had never been on the lake, and then to have the Science Centre deliver an outdoor classroom experience – it was the best learning environment one could possibly have.”

Special thanks to this year’s Okanagan WaterWise Challenge partners, including Vernon Aquatic Centre,

the YMCA of Kelowna's H2O Adventure and Fitness Centre, the City of Penticton Community Centre Pool, Okanagan Science Center, Cruise Okanagan, The Executive Boardroom, and Casabella Princess Cruises.

Find the winning submissions at: <http://tinyurl.com/pojzr7a>.

- 30 -

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