

EDITORIAL - SUPPLY AND DEMAND PROJECT FALLS A BIT FLAT

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It has to be asked whether roughly \$2.3 million and nearly five years of work developing the long-awaited Okanagan Water Supply and Demand Project could have been used in a better way. With the Okanagan Valley facing increasing, serious challenges relating to water, the final results of this project needed to be powerful and hard-hitting.

It needed to be a tool to open people's eyes to what the future holds when it comes to future water use in the valley.

Instead, the project seems like old news; it feels like we've seen much of the information contained in the project in other, smaller studies and presentations over the past several years. We know that domestic landscaping and agricultural activities are using up the largest portion of water in this part of the world.

We know that the valley will face hardships should it face a serious, long-term drought in the future.

We know that water needs to be managed better.

While it's a good thing that such efforts were undertaken to analyze water use and water supply patterns in the valley and to come up with some projections for what the future will hold, especially since such a comprehensive study hasn't been undertaken in more than 35 years, the project still seems to fall short of being part of a major shift in how people deal with water issues here.

Part of the project deals with the possible effects of climate change on the valley's future water supply and while that's important, it also seems to compliment an alarming trend where people have adopted the attitude that we had better just accept the fact that climate change is going to happen, so let's stop working towards limiting the impact of our daily activities on the environment.

Yes, it is important to start facing the fact that climate change is becoming a reality and to think about what climate change will mean for us and how to adapt.

But people still need to be encouraged to try to think about how we can prevent the effects of climate change from becoming a full-on global environmental catastrophe while there is still time.

Hopefully the water supply and demand project will be used as part of a broader strategy used by governments, industry, businesses and individuals in the valley to cope with the challenges we face down the road concerning water.

Because what we really need in the years ahead is a good plan to help us deal with some real tough choices regarding water in this area.