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Water supply concerns elicit plan for monitoring wells

By [Steve Arstad - Keremeos Review](#)

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The regional district is partnering with the Okanagan Basin Water Board to develop new monitoring wells for water table levels in the Okanagan Valley.

The move comes on the heels of the regional district receiving increasing evidence that aquifers in the Okanagan valley are decreasing, as noted by recent concerns in Faulder and Twin Lakes. While the Similkameen has not been designated for any of the five well sites in 2010, it has been identified as a priority ecosystem region and could be identified for monitoring wells in the final two years of the program.

"Don't leave the Similkameen out of this opportunity," Area "B" Director George Hanson responded to the announcement. "The Similkameen valley does not have an OBWB."

"There is an ongoing dialogue between the Similkameen and the OBWB," Osoyoos Director Stu Wells assured.

A somewhat puzzling statement came from Area "D" Director Bill Schwarz during the discussion when he insisted that the Twin Lakes aquifer drained into the Similkameen after Keremeos Mayor Walter Despot requested that the Similkameen be exempt from funding for Okanagan valley monitoring wells, because there were no wells planned for the Similkameen watershed.

"Water is the Similkameen's top priority," he told the board, " we want the same motion (to partner and develop monitoring wells) for the Similkameen as a separate watershed. We are concerned about upstream use of the Similkameen."

Further clarification was needed regarding the regional district's share of the cost for the wells.

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