

Grant pursued for oxbows

By [Bruce Walkinshaw - Penticton Western News](#)

Published: **February 15, 2011 10:00 AM**

Updated: **February 15, 2011 1:47 PM**

The City of Penticton will apply for a grant from the Okanagan Basin Water Board to help preserve local oxbows, the habitat-rich corners of lake marshes left orphaned from the flow of the Okanagan River when it was channelized in the 1950s.

The city's director of operations Mitch Moroziuk said the municipality hopes to use the potential grant money to conduct a baseline study assessing Penticton's storm water management system.

The money will also help fund the installation of a Stormceptor at the Brandon Avenue Oxbow, a device that will reduce the amount of grit and contaminants that enters the environment through the city's storm water system, he said.

"This project was included in the City of Penticton's Liquid Waste Management Plan and was also included in the city's 2010 budget. (However), it was not completed due to staff shortages," said Moroziuk. "The cost to us is \$50,000, while the maximum amount of the grant we could obtain from the (OBWB) is \$30,000."

Commencement of the project would certainly come as good news to the Friends of Oxbows, a local group of about two dozen biologists, naturalists and concerned citizens working to preserve, protect and restore the native species, plants and social values of oxbows.

The group has also applied to Ducks Unlimited for further funding for the project. The Penticton Indian Band is also in support of the plan.

According to environmental co-ordinator Carolyn Stewart, the study will analyze the stressors on the city's storm water system; determine the major sources of storm water flows; investigate the potential effect of climate change on the flows; and develop a long-term course of action to address storm water management

"Integrating storm water management into infrastructure upgrades limits the impacts of contaminated runoff on our natural waterways," Stewart reported.

“This project is expected to have a significant positive impact to the Brandon Street Oxbow lake and provide a valuable opportunity for collaboration with Friends of the Oxbows, Ducks Unlimited, Penticton Indian Band and OBWB.”

Penticton council voted unanimously to support the application.

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