



KELOWNA

Okanagan water under the microscope

*by Wayne Moore - Story: 70551
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The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) will be monitoring the health of groundwater supplies in several areas around the Okanagan.

One of the projects started Friday morning in Joe Rich.

"Groundwater is one of the biggest unknowns in this valley," says OBWB Executive Director, Dr. Anna Warwick Sears.

Groundwater is an important supply of water to many residents in this valley, but because its extraction is currently unlicensed in BC, we don't have an accurate measure of how much is being drawn out. At the same time, recent research indicates there are a number of sensitive aquifers in our valley."

As part of the Groundwater Monitoring Project, wells will be drilled in a number of aquifers identified as vulnerable and in need of monitoring due to a limited water supply and increasing demand.

The Joe Rich well is being drilled in one of 15 aquifers identified as sensitive.

A number of monitoring wells have already been drilled near Osoyoos, Oliver, Spallumcheen and in Twin Lakes near Keremeos.

Other wells are proposed for Ellison, West Kelowna, Summerland, Penticton and in an aquifer on UBC Okanagan land.

The wells are designed to help communities protect, manage and sustain their groundwater supplies and help them in land-use planning decisions that could affect these water sources.

"The water in this valley is all connected, from the water that flows down our mountains into the creeks, rivers and lakes in the valley bottom to the water in our underground aquifers that also ends up in our lakes," added Warwick Sears.

"Monitoring these important water sources is good for Joe Rich and the other communities that have them installed, but also good for the valley. Knowing where and how much water we have will help ensure a sustainable supply."

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Castanet *MoodMeter*

