

## Okanagan Water Board provides \$300,000 in grants to fund upcoming projects

Water improvement projects in the Okanagan Valley can now get underway thanks to \$300,000 in funding from the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB).

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) has awarded funding to 18 projects that will help to improve the water quality in the Okanagan Valley.

Projects will take place across the Okanagan Valley in an effort to conserve and improve water quality.



*Photo Credit: Okanagan WaterWise/ Facebook*

In the Central Okanagan, one of the funded projects involves the development of a mobile app that will allow users to document and report damage in local watersheds.

“The information will allow for follow-up enforcement, restoration and protection efforts and is being developed in partnership with UBC Okanagan.”

A public exhibit titled “The Social Like of Water in the Okanagan Valley: Past, Present and Future” will also be a funded project in the Central Okanagan, taking some of the scientific water research by OBWB and opening it up to the public.

“So often we concentrate on data and science,” explains OBWB Operations and Grants Manager, James Littlely.

“We want to share research results in an engaging way that helps people- of all ages- understand the complex relationship between people and water in the valley- how one affects the other and vice versa. This project, informed by experts, will be presented in a friendly way that goes far beyond reports and graphs.”

In the North Okanagan, the Deep Creek Improvement District will receive funding to do Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping. The area is known to have been impacted by agriculture, urban and rural land development. The \$26,000 in funding from the OBWB will go to help the \$52,000 project that is intended to help guide habitat restoration decisions.



*Photo Credit: Okanagan WaterWise/ Facebook*

“This will be a great addition to several other SHIM projects that have been supported by the OBWB and conducted throughout the Okanagan, helping us better understand what is happening in these areas and the work needed to protect and restore them.”

After reviewing the last summer’s drought, the Okanagan Basin Water Board said they identified the need to update drought plans in the valley for the coming summer season and beyond.

In order to be approved, projects must meet a number of criteria, including the ability to demonstrate water savings or improvements to water quality, show collaboration and provide valley-wide benefit. In total, there were 27 applications for water based projects.