



Kelowna

## PROTECTING KELOWNA WATER

# Okanagan water protection projects to benefit Kelowna

Brayden Ursel - Apr 24, 2022 / 4:00 am



Photo: Colin Dacre

A kayaker on Okanagan Lake.

A pair of Kelowna projects are among 15 funded this year by the Okanagan Basin Water Board to help address climate change and its impact on clean water in the region.

This year the OBWB approved \$350,000 in funding through its Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program.

"By protecting the waters we have and finding better ways to do this, our valley will be in a much better position to weather whatever comes our way - flooding, drought, and wildfires," explained James Littley, OBWB's operations and grants manager.

Currently, the City of Kelowna stores urban snow at four locations with various conditions. An upcoming project proposed by the City of Kelowna called, "Snow Storage Location Risk Assessment" will sample the four sites for pollutants like metals, tire-derived contaminants, and more. These possible pollutants could damage surface water, groundwater, and soil.

Kelowna has also received more funding to continue a [study assessing microplastics in Okanagan Lake](#).

Last year, phase one of this project sampled surface waters in Kelowna and at the Kelowna Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), where microplastics were discovered. Phase two will expand sampling on Okanagan Lake and will include sub-surface water and sediment sampling in Kelowna, Vernon, Peachland, Summerland and Penticton. Sampling will also continue at Kelowna's WWTP.

With a goal aimed at gathering enough data to inform strategies to reduce microplastics in the environment.

Since the program began in 2006, OBWB has provided a total of 315 grants to Okanagan non-profits, First Nations, local governments and irrigation districts worth over \$5,470,000.