

December 1, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OKANAGAN WATER BOARD OPENS ANNUAL CALL FOR PROJECT GRANT APPLICATIONS

Kelowna, B.C. – The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) is now accepting applications to its Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) grant program for 2023.

With an annual funding pool of \$350,000, applicants that meet the program criteria can receive between \$3,000 and \$30,000 for water projects within the Okanagan Basin. Eligible applicants include Okanagan local governments and First Nations, irrigation districts and non-profit organizations. This year, the board of directors adopted the theme “from data to action for community resilience,” encouraging the use of open data developed by the OBWB and others to address Okanagan water challenges.

“The impacts we are seeing from climate change are here to stay,” says Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo, Office and Grants Manager. “When it comes to water, that translates to more flooding and droughts. It means greater stress and impacts on infrastructure like dikes, water and wastewater treatment plants, as well as the need for greater water conservation measures. These grants focus on solutions - improving ways to manage water, to mitigate current and future problems, and to protect the environment and our communities.”

The OBWB has available open data including hydrometric (water level and flow), floodplain topographic LiDAR and nearshore topobathymetric LiDAR mapping, and water quality data which can be used to develop water projects. Projects that include the use of open data can receive up to 10 extra points during their evaluation, which could increase their chances of being funded. There are also several other project categories eligible for funding, including restoration, groundwater, and education.

“Open data can help people make better-informed decisions with confidence,” Restrepo-Tamayo explained. “Now, more than ever, data needs to be accessible to everyone, including scientists, local government staff, non-profit organizations and policymakers to develop relevant and impactful projects.”

The complete WCQI Program Guide, including scoring criteria and other detailed information, and application forms can be found at www.OBWB.ca/wcqi. This year’s application deadline is Feb. 24, 2023, 4 p.m.

Since the WCQI program began in 2006, the OBWB has funded 315 projects worth more than \$5.47 mill., recognizing the importance of enhancing water quality and conserving water in the Okanagan, known as one of Canada’s most water-stressed regions.

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT: Corinne Jackson, OBWB – Communications Director
Office: 250-469-6271
Mobile: 250-718-7249
E-mail: Corinne.Jackson@obwb.ca