

## OKANAGAN DROUGHT BULLETIN #2019-1

**JUNE 11, 2019**

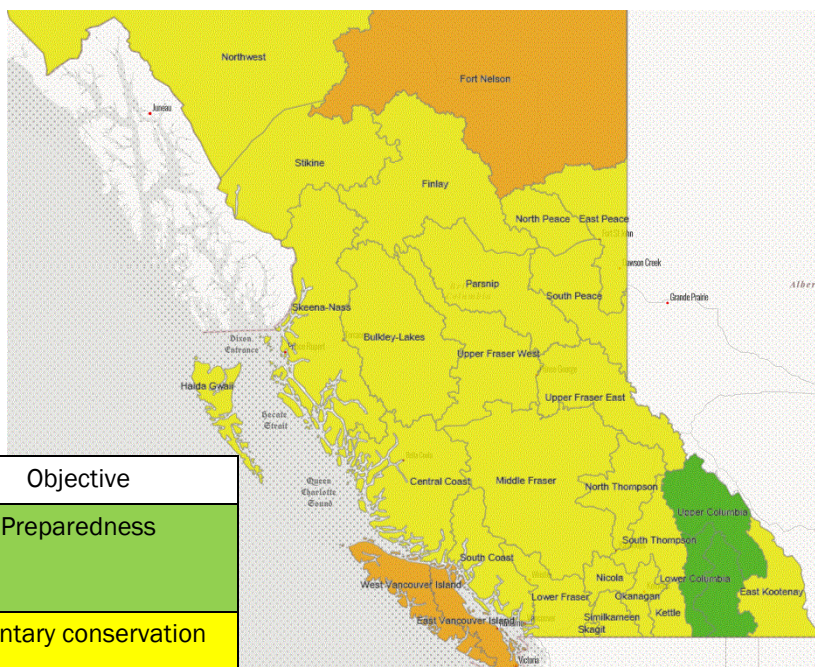


### OKANAGAN MOVED TO DROUGHT LEVEL 2 AS PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE

*Based on snowpack conditions, timing of snowmelt, and forecasted summer conditions, the B.C. Government has elevated the Okanagan to a Level 2 drought rating.*

Along with 2015 and 2016, this year is amongst the lowest snowpacks observed in B.C. over the past 40 years. Persistent warm weather and limited precipitation in May brought the Okanagan's snowpack to 4% of normal as of June 1. With diminished snowpacks and early melt, there is an increased likelihood of low flow conditions this summer. South of the border, the governor has expanded Washington State's drought declaration to cover large portions of the state. This includes the southern half of the Canada/U.S. Okanagan/Similkameen Basin.

**Local drought stages** are set by water suppliers and do not necessarily match provincial drought levels. All water suppliers should have an up-to-date drought management plan with clear triggers for watering restrictions and other conservation measures and communication activities. The OBWB has templates and other resources to support your drought-planning efforts. Contact [kellie.garcia@obwb.ca](mailto:kellie.garcia@obwb.ca) or 250-469-6321.



Summary of Provincial Drought Levels

Level	Conditions	Significance	Objective
1 (Green)	Normal Conditions	There is sufficient water to meet human and ecosystem needs	Preparedness
2 (Yellow)	Dry Conditions	First indications of a potential water supply problem	Voluntary conservation
3 (Orange)	Very Dry Conditions	Potentially serious ecosystem or socioeconomic impacts are possible	Voluntary conservation and restrictions
4 (Red)	Extremely Dry Conditions	Water supply insufficient to meet socioeconomic and ecosystem needs	Voluntary conservation, restrictions and regulatory action as necessary

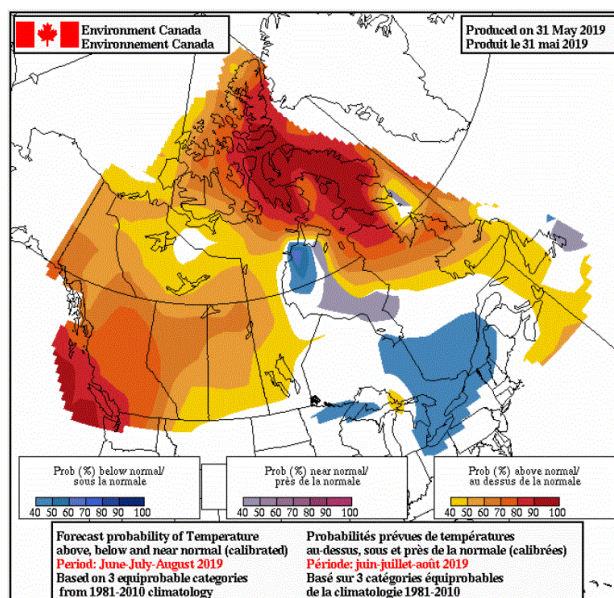
Information about drought levels and streamflows is available on the [Drought Information Portal](#). See the [River Forecast Centre bulletins](#) for snow survey and water supply information.



## WEATHER FORECAST

Forecasts for summer indicate a high likelihood of warmer than normal temperatures. Cooler temperatures and scattered precipitation this past week were a welcome break, but temperatures are expected to rise again over the next few days.

It is more difficult to accurately forecast long-range precipitation. Continued dry weather would drive extremely low flows this season, but there is also a chance that wet weather could dominate the summer season and at least partially ease the risk of low flows.



## ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO CONSERVE WATER



Photo: (l to r) Sandy Melvin of Shepherd's Hardware in Armstrong with OBWB-OkWaterWise's Karen Christensen, showing off some of the Make Water Work Plant Collection. The garden centre joined as a new partner this year.

The OBWB, through its Okanagan WaterWise outreach and education program, launched the 9<sup>th</sup> annual **Make Water Work (MWW)** campaign on May 16 at Kelowna's École Glenmore Elementary. Make Water Work is a valley-wide water conservation initiative developed and delivered in partnership with Okanagan water utilities and aimed at tackling the 2nd largest use of water in our valley—residential outdoor use.

The campaign includes a website at [www.MakeWaterWork.ca](http://www.MakeWaterWork.ca) where residents can find conservation tips, watering restrictions for their community, information about the *Make Water Work Plant Collection*, developed specifically for the Okanagan, and more.

As part of the launch, some 250 Glenmore students and mayors from throughout the valley joined forces, sharing their efforts to conserve water and inspiring others to do the same. The event served as an opportunity for students to celebrate the opening of their "Seeds of Learning" garden, featuring the *MWW Plant Collection*, and for students to partner up with mayors to complete some additional planting in the garden. The mayors also pledged to conserve water this summer and encouraged their residents to do the same for a chance at WaterWise yard prizes and the chance to win the title of 'Make Water Work Champion Community.' Pledges can be made at [www.MakeWaterWork.ca](http://www.MakeWaterWork.ca).

We have also grown our garden centre partnership from six to nine centres, promoting the *MWW Plant Collection* and helping residents make WaterWise yard choices.

For more on the MWW program, please contact Corinne Jackson at [corinne.jackson@obwb.ca](mailto:corinne.jackson@obwb.ca) or 250-469-6271.