

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Agenda



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

DATE: Tuesday, April 4, 2023

TIME: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

PLACE: Regional District of North Okanagan
9848 Aberdeen Road,
Coldstream, B.C.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

1.1 Acknowledgement of First Nations Traditional Territory

We acknowledge that we are holding this meeting on the unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation and Splotsin First Nation.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 7, 2023 held online. (page 1)

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Executive Director Report (page 6)

5.1.1 B.C. Watershed Security Strategy

5.2 Deputy Administrator Report (page 21)

5.3 Policy and Planning Director Report (page 23)

5.4 Water Stewardship Director Report (page 25)

5.5 Communications Director Report (page 29)

6. IN-CAMERA

6.1 In-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(m) of the Community Charter)

7. RISE & REPORT FROM IN-CAMERA

8. NEXT MEETING

8.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be an abbreviated meeting on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 9 a.m. at the Manteo Resort, followed by a joint Board-Okanagan Water Stewardship Council meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

*** NOTE:** Meetings of the Okanagan Basin Water Board are open to the public, and only closed for in-camera sessions as set out in the B.C. Community Charter. From time-to-time, the board will be holding its meeting online. If you are interested in attending this online meeting, please contact our Communications Director Corinne Jackson at corinne.jackson@obwb.ca for further details. Thank you for your patience and understanding.



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD MARCH 7, 2023, ONLINE
OKANAGAN, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Vice-Chair Blair Ireland	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Wayne Carson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Charlie Hodge	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Christine Fraser	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt. Director Adrienne Fedrigo	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Rick Knodel	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C.
Alt. Director Jeremy Fyke	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)

REGRETS

Director Victor Cumming	Regional District North Okanagan
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GUESTS

Simone Runyan	District of Coldstream
Lisa Scott	Okanagan & Similkameen Invasive Species Society

STAFF

Anna Warwick Sears	Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo	Office and Grants Manager
Corinne Jackson	Communications Director
Kellie Garcia	Planning and Policy Director

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McKortoff called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

Chair McKortoff respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

The board was provided with the province's Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

"THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of March 7, 2023 be approved as amended."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of Feb. 7, 2023, held online.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on Feb. 7, 2023, held online, be approved.”

CARRIED

5. DELEGATION

- 5.1 Lisa Scott, Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS) – 2022 invasive mussel prevention efforts overview

Ms. Scott provided an update to the board noting that when OASISS began 27 years ago it was mainly addressing invasive plants. In recent years they expanded to deal with aquatic invasive species.

Core funding for its aquatic invasive efforts is provided by OBWB’s Okanagan WaterWise program where OASISS’ focus is on education and outreach, mainly tackling invasive mussels and helping deliver the Don’t Move A Mussel (DMM) program. In addition to outreach, the group does sampling in waterways for mussels and in Osoyoos, specifically, for invasive clams. Additional funders include the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (with funds provided by the Province of B.C. and federal government), and RBC. Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen provides additional funds for invasive plant efforts.

Funding from the OBWB went to hiring an aquatic invasive program supervisor from May to October, and three summer staff from June to August. Outreach included boat launch surveys, community events and presentations, distribution of DMM materials (hard copy and digital items).

With COVID restrictions relaxing last year, staff interacted with about 3,500 people, an increase from the previous year. Some 150 Okanagan water recreation-related businesses requested DMM materials, staff attended 13 community events and presented to 116 youth at nine summer camps. This year, there are already invitations to attend events including boat shows which are returning for the first time since 2019. An interactive video about invasive mussels was developed with RBC funding. This is being uploaded to iPads and will be included in 2023 outreach.

In addition to outreach, water monitoring for invasive mussels was done in valley lakes, and shoreline surveys for invasive clams were done in Osoyoos with the help of Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society volunteers. All tests and surveys came back negative.

Surveys conducted with boaters indicates a drop in awareness about invasive mussels. It is not clear why this is, but it may be due to an increase in the number of people with water recreation equipment since the start of COVID-19. The survey reported that 24% did not stop at inspection stations and said they either didn’t have time, didn’t know they were supposed to stop (e.g. non-motorized watercraft), or the line-up was too long. In some cases, they indicated that the inspection station was closed.

There was some discussion about general difficulties hiring and retaining staff and that this also affected the province’s inspection program. Ms. Runyan asked about B.C.’s Early Detection and Rapid Response Plan and was told that an update is expected, along with an updated costing of a potential infestation. In the meantime, the OBWB recommended additional funding for the province’s inspection station program which was approved for the 2023 budget. The water board is also working on developing a vulnerability assessment toolkit for water utilities.

There were additional comments about the Idaho inspection sticker program, concerns about

floatplanes, and the need to continue outreach and education efforts.

6. **STAFF REPORTS**

6.1 Executive Director Report

Dr. Sears updated the board on the hiring of an intern to work on the OBWB's climate indicators project and a posting that has now gone out to hire a half-time communications coordinator.

The Okanagan Flood Story website is being updated with new maps and to make it more public-user friendly. The updates will include flood hazard maps that show flooding under current operations (how lake levels are currently managed) and under recommended changes to dam operating rules. A simplified set of maps will be added under a "Public User" tab showing what communities should be designing around under current operating conditions. Map layers will show vulnerable areas, including lower-income areas, those with cultural values, and those with high-economic impacts. The website was recently showcased by the Province of B.C. as a case study.

The board was updated on meetings held in February with the Healthy Watersheds Initiative (HWI), a collaboration of B.C. water-groups working to conserve and restore watersheds, including the OBWB. Dr. Sears explained that in 2021-22, the province distributed \$27. mill. to the HWI, with funding administered through the Real Estate Foundation of B.C., as part of its COVID-19 economic recovery. The OBWB received \$50,000 for its Source Water Protection Toolkit and another \$50,000 was awarded to Penticton Indian Band and En'owkin Centre's k'əmcnitkw Floodplain Re-engagement Project. At the most recent HWI meetings, there was much emphasis and consensus on the importance of including Indigenous knowledge and voices at the decision-making table, she added.

The province's recent budget announcement includes a \$100 mill. commitment to establish a Watershed Security Fund. The province has also released a B.C. Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper. First Nations consultation is very intentionally woven into the document, the board was told. The province is now asking for feedback on the paper. Dr. Sears added that recommendations will be brought to the board for consideration and invited directors to provide input in advance.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated March 1, 2023, be received."
CARRIED

6.2 Policy and Planning Director Report

Ms. Garcia provided an overview of the Source Water Protection (SWP) Toolkit, developed to help water utilities protect drinking water supplies. There are several contamination threats in multi-use watersheds, like in the Okanagan, and protection at the source is one of the most effective ways utilities can ensure a healthy supply. Plus, the benefits extend beyond public health, she added.

Water suppliers are required to have source protection plans and often have an assessment completed, but no action plan. The toolkit is intended to help address the barriers to creating one, including funding, policies, plans and bylaws, education and engagement, and more.

As part of the SWP project, staff held webinars featuring the various topics covered in the toolkit. A "Choose Your Watershed" poster was also created as a public education piece, showing the dos and don'ts for a healthy watershed. A healthy watershed is key to clean, abundant water, Garcia said, adding collaboration is key. Water suppliers can lead through their source protection plans

which can lead to cumulative effects and benefits.

“THAT the Policy and Planning Director’s Report, dated Feb. 28, 2023, be received.”
CARRIED

6.3 Water Stewardship Director Report

Dr. Jatel gave an update on the last and upcoming council meeting. At the upcoming meeting, provincial staff will present on recent changes with the various ministries involved in water and explain the differences. Also, this will be Scott Boswell’s last meeting as chair. As of April, Vice-Chair Jeremy Fyke will become chair.

Work on the Hydrometric Service Program has consisted of monitoring quality assurance and quality control, with no installations over the winter. However, staff are preparing for six new stations in the spring.

The board was told the Okanagan flood risk assessment project is wrapping up soon. Dir. Fraser raised concerns regarding forestry practices in watersheds and was invited to forward any further concerns to the executive director.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated Feb. 15, 2023, be received.”
CARRIED

6.4 Office and Grants Manager Report

Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo provided an overview on applications to the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program. In all, 22 applications were submitted with a total ask of \$587,637. There is \$350,000 available. Staff will be reviewing the applications based on the board-approved criteria and recommendations will be brought to the next board meeting.

“THAT the Office and Grants Manager’s Report, dated March 1, 2023, be received.”
CARRIED

6.5 Communications Director Report

Ms. Jackson reported on plans for an online film screening of *DamNation* and panel discussion on March 21st, celebrating UN World Water Day which is held March 22nd. The film was chosen as a good jumping off point for discussions around the modernization of the Okanagan Lake Regulation System.

Meetings are being held with partners to begin planning for the OBWB-Okanagan WaterWise’s two outreach and education campaigns, Make Water Work and Don’t Move A Mussel. Both run May to October, coinciding with residential outdoor watering and water recreation.

“THAT the Communications Director’s Report, dated March 1, 2023, be received.”
CARRIED

7. NEXT MEETING

7.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at 10 a.m. at the Regional District of North Okanagan, Coldstream B.C.

8. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 7, 2023 be adjourned at 12:02 p.m.”

CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
April 4, 2023
Agenda No: 5.1

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears
Date: March 29, 2023
Subject: **Executive Director Report**

Watershed Security Strategy Intentions Paper Consultation

The Province of B.C. has invited public input on their Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper (available [here](#)). I am working with an ad hoc committee from the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) to prepare a two-page submission. At our March meeting, I went quickly over some highlights, but I will be doing a short powerpoint presentation at this April meeting to get feedback or questions from the board. Submissions are due April 17th.

Water Supply Association of BC meeting

Ms. Garcia and I are both attending the WSABC spring workshop in Kelowna, on March 30 & 31, participating on a panel about watershed governance and the new Watershed Security Strategy. The OBWB is the oldest watershed governance body in B.C. (53 years!), and there are numerous different structures that have been tried and proposed. The strategy makes a number of commitments that should support water suppliers, without having to create a whole separate governance structure.

Canada Water Agency in the 2023 Federal Budget

In 2021, the OBWB, with the help of the OWSC, provided a letter to Environment and Climate Change Canada about this proposed Canada Water Agency. For the benefit of new OBWB directors, I have included this as an attachment. The federal budget released this week (March 28, 2023), specifically proposes funds to initiate the Canada Water Agency, as a standalone entity (i.e. not folded into another ministry), headquartered in Winnipeg. This announcement has been a long time coming, and people in the water field are looking forward to the new agency with cautious optimism.

Budget 2023 also proposes to provide \$85.1 million over five years, starting in 2023-24, with \$0.4 million in remaining amortization and \$21 million ongoing thereafter to support the creation of the Canada Water Agency, which will be headquartered in Winnipeg. By the end of 2023, the government will introduce legislation that will fully establish the Canada Water Agency as a standalone entity.

International Joint Committee Semi-Annual Meeting in Washington D.C.

The International Joint Committee (IJC) is interested in establishing an International Watershed Board across the U.S./Canada boundary from New Brunswick to B.C. They have approached the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC), and are planning to conduct interviews and studies to determine the feasibility of converting the IOLBC from a control board to a watershed board. They are holding a workshop on International Watershed Boards at their semi-annual meeting in Washington D.C. during the week of April 24. The IJC is supporting my travel costs as a member of the Osoyoos board, and I will report to the OBWB at the May water board meeting. There may be significant new resources available if the Osoyoos board becomes an International Watershed Board, allowing a broader mandate to work on transboundary climate change response. An International Osoyoos Watershed Board would complement, not overlap with Okanagan Basin Water Board responsibility.

UBCM Workshop Proposal

I have had a series of meetings and conversations with local government partners and others about developing a workshop proposal on flood policy implementation in B.C. Although B.C. has a draft Flood Strategy (available [here](#)), and has moved forward rapidly to develop flood maps for most of Southern B.C., few communities in the province have developed flood bylaws, zoning, or other policy to protect vulnerable neighbourhoods. The goal for this proposed workshop is to identify best practices that can be used as templates for communities that have yet to implement such policy. Proposals are due by June 2nd.

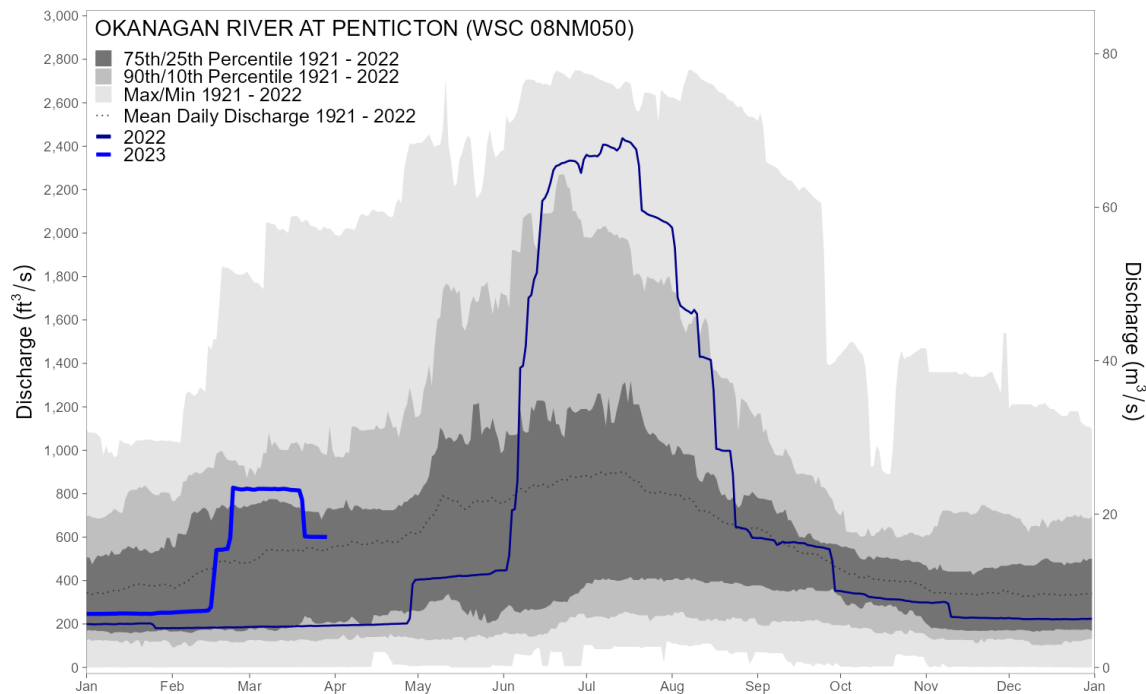
Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

I have applied again to present in person to the provincial finance committee. In recent past years, the OBWB has called on the province to fund work on the Okanagan Lake Regulation System review, for more funding for invasive mussel prevention, and for the development of a Watershed Security Fund. These are all three major priorities, but with the planned launch of the Watershed Security Fund in B.C., our comments may be directed to how this fund is administrated, and eligibility for local projects.

Weather Report

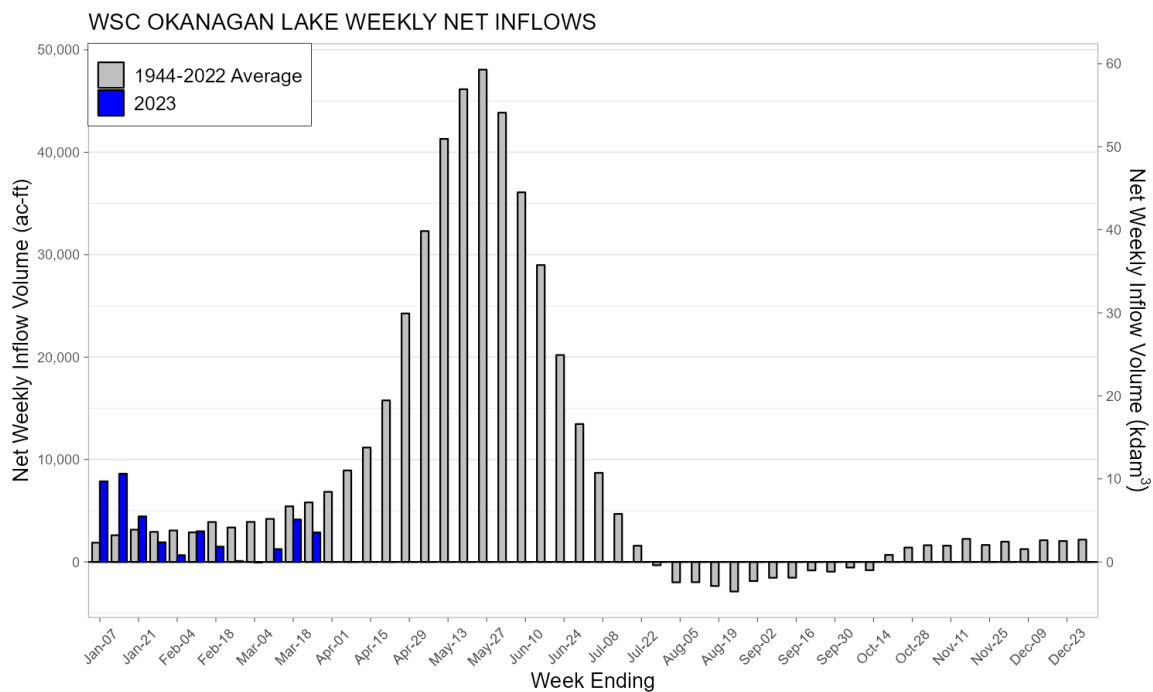
The BC River Forecast Centre's most recent biweekly snow conditions commentary (March 22) finds the Okanagan's snowpack to be slightly above normal (106%) compared to the long-term median. The next official snow report, which takes into consideration the snow pillow data as well as the manual snow surveys as of April 1st, will be published on April 12th. The April 1st bulletin is the primary bulletin for historic seasonal snowpack comparison.

Okanagan River Releases

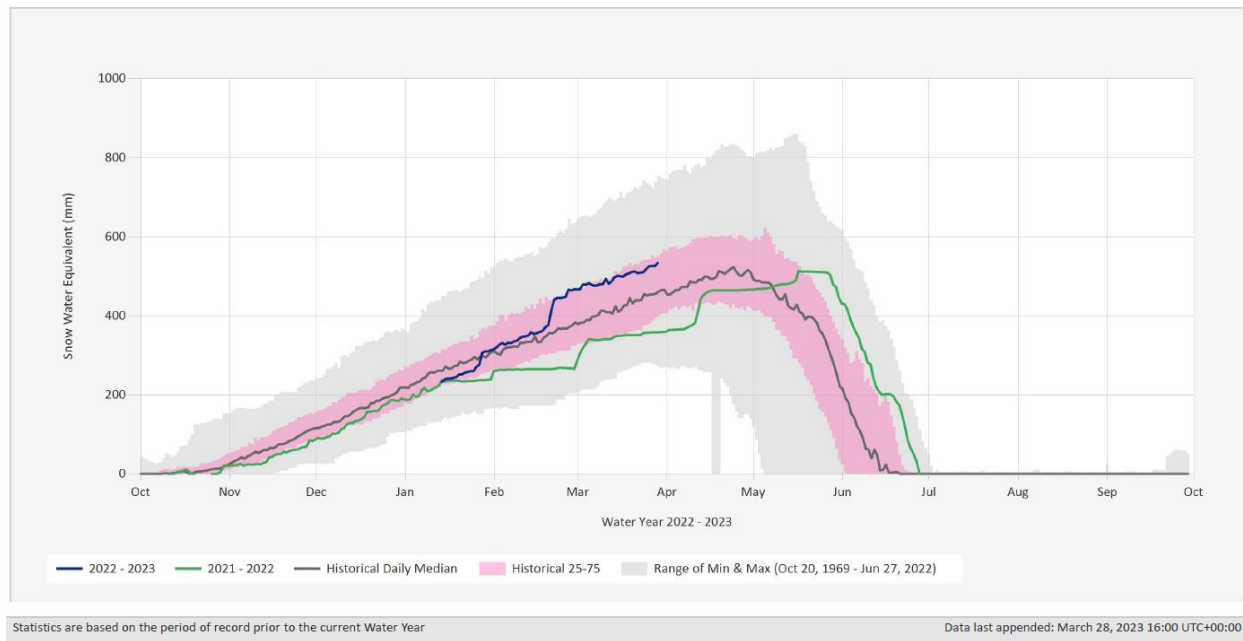


After ramping up releases from Okanagan Lake, the Okanagan Dam operator with B.C. Ministry of Forests has decreased flows again. Although there is still a lot of snow in the hills, Okanagan Lake had been dropping more quickly than forecast, potentially threatening kokanee eggs/alevins. They will re-evaluate after April 1st.

Okanagan Lake Net Inflows

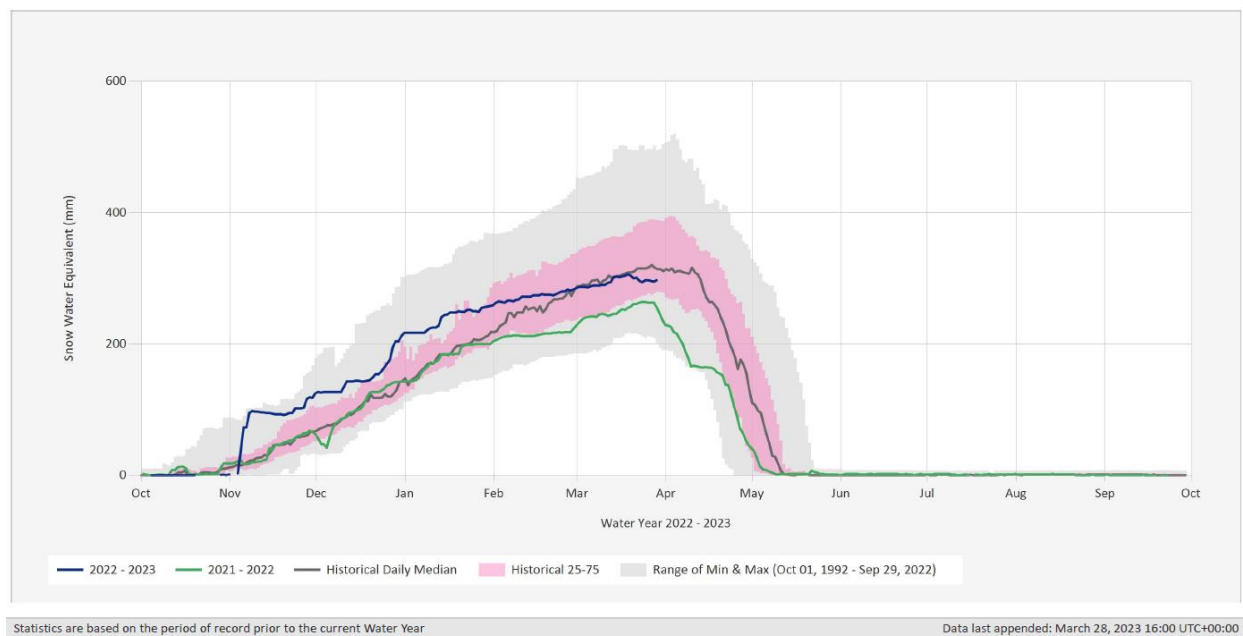


Mission Creek snow pillow – elevation 1780m. Current year given in dark blue. Water year data prior to January 13, 2023 is erroneous.



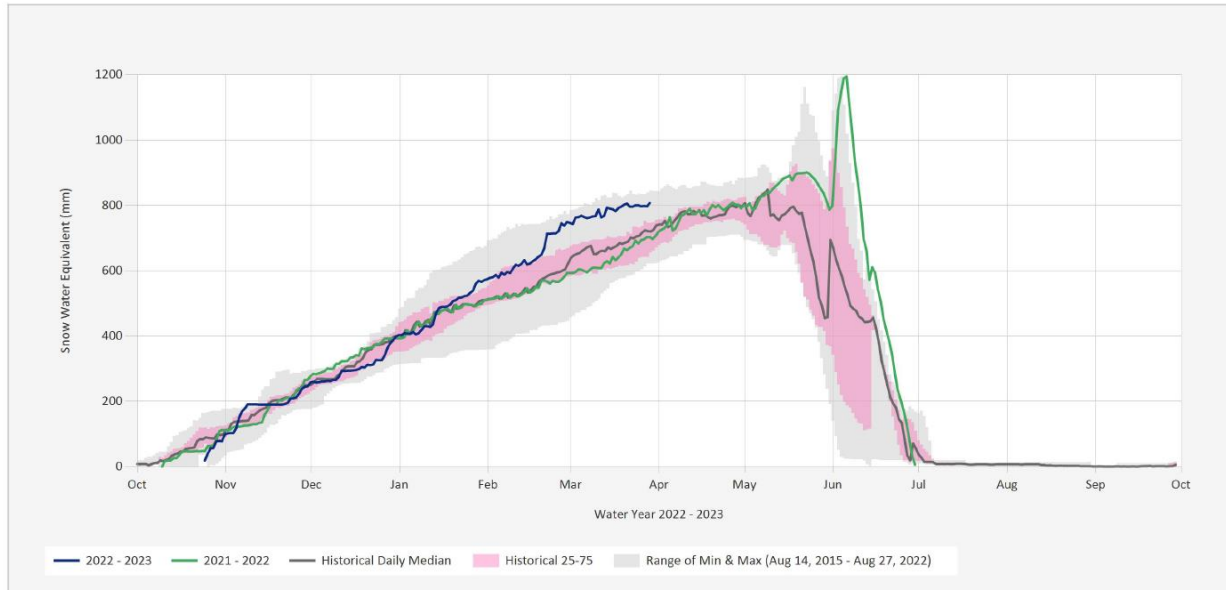
Brenda Mine snow pillow – elevation 1460 m. Current year given in dark blue.

Source Data: SW.Daily@2F18P
Location: Brenda Mine, Latitude: 49.8623611, Longitude: -119.9821111, Elevation: : 1460 m



Silver Star snow pillow – elevation 1840 m. Current year given in dark blue.

Source Data: SW.Daily@2F10P
Location: Silver Star Mountain, Latitude: 50.37136, Longitude: -119.06211, Elevation: : 1840 m



Statistics are based on the period of record prior to the current Water Year

Data last appended: March 28, 2023 16:00 UTC+00:00

Environment and Climate Change Canada
Via email: ec.water-eau.ec@canada.ca

February 26, 2021

Re: Comments on the document: Towards the Creation of a Canada Water Agency: Discussion Paper (the “Discussion Paper”)

Thank you for inviting consultation on the development of the Canada Water Agency. These considerations are submitted on behalf of the Okanagan Basin Water Board, with the input of its technical advisory body, the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council.

Introduction:

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) is a regional organization founded through Letters Patent issued by the Province of B.C. in 1970, and which promotes basin-wide water management policies and programs in the Okanagan River watershed. The Okanagan River is a tributary of the Columbia River in Washington State, and the watershed is thus an international watershed.

One of the first major issues successfully solved by the OBWB and its partners, including the federal government, was eutrophication of the large valley-bottom Okanagan lakes. Since 1970 the OBWB has played a broad role in exercising its mandate, and the federal government has been a valuable partner – providing strategic guidance, funding, expertise, monitoring, locally-relevant research, and equipment. However, in recent years, the federal role in the Okanagan has decreased, which has negatively impacted many water and climate-related strategic and operational initiatives. The Canada Water Agency (CWA) has an opportunity to re-establish the formerly strong federal role in contributing to the management of Okanagan water.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the CWA Discussion Paper. This letter provides some general comments, and addresses some specific Okanagan water issues which the CWA could positively contribute to addressing.

General comments on the Discussion Paper:

The Discussion Paper is well-written and concise, and comprehensively covers issues and opportunities for the CWA. It is hard to identify significant gaps. We suggest that the primary focus of the CWA should be on the five opportunities identified on page 15 (under Freshwater policy, coordination and multilateral engagement). Strong federal leadership in water management is currently lacking in Canada, and the CWA could provide that leadership.

However, Canada is a large and diverse country, and water issues and priorities vary across the country. We therefore believe that in exercising a strong federal role, the CWA should recognize and respect that water issues should be identified and addressed on a regional basis. The OBWB's technical advisory council (the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council) has developed two Okanagan-focused strategic water plans since 2008 (Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy - Action Plan 1.0

(2008) and Action Plan 2.0 (2019). One possible mechanism for serving regional needs would be to develop federal/provincial (and federal/territorial) policy agreements (similar to the Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada 5-year programs) to provide federal funds for mutually agreed priority programs. The federal and provincial governments would work with regional partners such as the OBWB to identify key regional issues.

Overview of the Okanagan River watershed:

Even though the Okanagan watershed covers only about 8,000 km², it is very diverse, with elevations ranging from about 250 - 400 m above sea level in the valley-bottom to over 2,000 m on the upland plateaus east and west of the north-south trending Okanagan valley. This large range in elevation causes significant variation in temperatures, weather, and hydrology across the basin (from north to south, east to west, and with elevation), and means that water quantity and quality data to support decision-making must be collected at a detailed geographic resolution.

The Okanagan is a semi-arid watershed, and the water supply on a per capita basis is the lowest of any major watershed in Canada. Evapotranspiration is the dominant component of the hydrologic cycle, and evapotranspiration is difficult to measure, making hydrologic modelling very challenging. Water supply is approximately equal to licensed water demand.

In addition, the climate is changing in the Okanagan - many previous studies have identified ongoing trends in temperature and precipitation, and made predictions about the future. In brief, water supply is becoming less predictable, but smaller in the critical irrigation months of late summer when the aquatic environment is stressed due to low flows and warm temperatures, and water demand is increasing.

Specific priorities for the Okanagan:

A: Data:

Due to the geography-driven variability of the Okanagan region, and ongoing changes in water supply and demand related to the changing climate, there is a strong need for more and better water-related data, science, and models to support decision-making.

The current network densities for environmental data currently do not match the need. A CWA could provide federal leadership to significantly increase the network density for water quantity and quality data. Specifically, the Okanagan requires significantly expanded:

- hydrometric networks (streamflow and lake level) - The federal program has shrunk significantly over the past 40 years;
- weather data networks, particularly at middle and high elevations in the watershed;
- groundwater monitoring well networks (for both level and quality, and linked where possible to the surface water monitoring network to help assess surface – groundwater linkages);
- snow depth and density networks; and,
- lake and stream water quality monitoring (including standard protocols for network design and data collection, storage, and dissemination).

In addition, Canada should make much better use of currently available Earth Observation data, e.g. data available from satellites operated by the Canadian Space Agency and the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). This data would be much more useful if it were more widely available. Earth Observation data would support research, modelling, and management of both water quantity and water quality.

In addition to routine monitoring of environmental variables in support of a broad spectrum of uses, there is a strong need for the CWA to support project-specific data collection programs, for example:

- lake bathymetry and over-lake wind data (to improve flood hazard mapping);
- over-lake wind and lake evaporation measurements (to improve lake evaporation models); and,
- evapotranspiration measurements and research on the upland plateaus surrounding the Okanagan valley (to improve evapotranspiration models).

B: Science and modelling:

The CWA should support or lead water-related science and modelling in the Okanagan, for example:

- Hydrologic and hydraulic modelling;
- Seasonal lake inflow modelling;
- Water supply and demand studies;
- Drought and flood planning;
- Research on individual groundwater aquifers, including numerical modelling;
- Research and modelling on aquatic ecosystem health;
- State of the Environment reporting; and,
- Communication of information to decision-makers and the public.

C: Other Okanagan challenges and recommendations for the CWA:

C1: Aquatic ecosystems

The continued degradation of aquatic ecosystems in the Okanagan, exacerbated by climate change, threatens remaining aquatic habitat and the viability of many aquatic species that depend on that habitat, including Species at Risk Act-listed species. About 90% of Okanagan wetlands have been destroyed. The OBWB provides leadership on these issues, and the CWA should significantly expand the federal role in:

- monitoring the health of Okanagan aquatic ecosystems;
- protecting remaining intact ecosystems;
- restoring lost or damaged aquatic habitat and the associated terrestrial habitat that contributes to aquatic ecosystem health; and,
- supporting science-based decision-making.

An example of such an opportunity is the potential to re-naturalize the Okanagan River. The Okanagan River was channelized and straightened in the 1950s to provide flood control benefits. The project caused significant loss of aquatic and riparian habitat. Since 2000, the Okanagan River

Restoration Initiative (a collaboration amongst First Nations and other governments) has been re-naturalizing small portions of the river. There is growing interest for a major project to significantly expand this effort. The CWA could contribute federal resources, expertise, and leadership to a project of this magnitude.

C2: Agricultural water

Agriculture and agri-tourism are major contributors to the Okanagan economy, and to the aesthetic appeal of the region. Due to the aridity of the area, Okanagan agriculture could not exist without irrigation, and agricultural irrigation is by far the dominant user of water in the Okanagan. Issues related to Okanagan agriculture include:

- climate change is altering the amounts, timing, and variability of water supply to agricultural water systems;
- most of the economically-viable water storage sites have already been developed;
- there is growing interest in local food security, yet declining confidence in the continued availability of water for growing food;
- the Okanagan population continues to grow, which is threatening the agricultural water supply because much of the water needed for agriculture is delivered as part of municipal water systems, without a long-term commitment for agricultural use.

The OBWB works with agricultural organizations such as Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada; the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries; the BC Fruit Growers Association; the BC Cattlemen's Association; the BC Agriculture Council; the Partnership for Water Sustainability in BC; and the Irrigation Industry Association of BC on these issues. Strong federal leadership based on the principles underlying the CWA could significantly assist regional work to address these issues.

C2: Water quality

Robust long-term water quality information supports a myriad of uses. The CWA could lead and support regional and provincial work to monitor and report water quality. For example, the CWA could:

- coordinate regional, provincial and national water quality monitoring activities (e.g. the large lake ambient water quality monitoring program in B.C.);
- initiate a rainwater quality monitoring program – rainwater quality is relevant to agricultural production and the natural environment;
- work with the Province of B.C. to modernize the Permits to Discharge program - many parameter targets need to be updated, and cumulative impacts need to be considered; and,
- provide a national repository for water quality monitoring information.

Community health is heavily dependent on water treatment and wastewater treatment infrastructure. Okanagan challenges include:

- the responsibility for supplying potable drinking water in the Okanagan is divided amongst hundreds of agencies, with varying levels of infrastructure and resources;
- water suppliers have little control over activities within the watersheds that provide surface and groundwater to their communities;

- training and education for the operators of those facilities is inconsistent, leading to ongoing health risks, and the risk of system failure.

The CWA can play a significant role in helping to solve these issues. A simple example is providing increased federal financial support for construction and operation of small water treatment plants, and ensuring that operator training and succession planning are undertaken.

C3: Invasive aquatic species

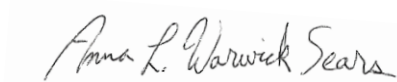
For the past several years, the OBWB has played a leadership role in influencing federal and provincial policy and actions focused on preventing the introduction of invasive zebra and quagga mussels into Okanagan waters. To date, the federal response has been weak, which is disappointing considering the severe economic and environmental costs associated with these invasive mussels. The CWA could play a significant role in supporting this regional-based leadership.

C4: Indigenous reconciliation

The OBWB works closely with the Okanagan Nation Alliance and its member Bands, and we are actively advancing the process of reconciliation. It is very important that all levels of government show leadership on this issue. A 2020 OBWB report identified 13 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) articles and 3 of the 94 Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report that are specifically relevant to OBWB's basin-wide water management mandate. In November 2019, the Province of B.C. passed Bill 40, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which enshrines the UNDRIP principles into provincial law. The federal Government is considering a similar law. The CWA should support OBWB's leadership in regionally-based Indigenous reconciliation.

Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to comment. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Anna Warwick Sears, Ph.D. — Executive Director
Okanagan Basin Water Board
1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, B.C. V1W 3Z4
Office: 250.469.6251
Email : anna.warwick.sears@obwb.ca

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
April 4, 2023
Agenda No: 5.2

To: OBWB Directors
From: James Littlely
Date: March 23, 2023
Subject: Deputy Administrator Report

Invasive Mussel Infrastructure Vulnerability Assessment Toolkit

Working with RNT Consulting, we have now completed a first draft of a vulnerability assessment toolkit to address the impacts of invasive mussels on raw water infrastructure. The draft has been sent to several public works and utilities, as well as provincial staff, for review and feedback by late April.

The toolkit is a step-by-step guide for facilities managers to assess the vulnerability of their source water and facilities, and will include information on how to create financial, operational and maintenance plans to mitigate risks. All raw water infrastructure can be assessed using this toolkit, protecting water supplies for drinking water and agriculture, municipal and private systems, as well as industrial facilities. Assessing the risks and understanding the costs of invasive mussels in advance can help reduce the shock of increased costs and maintenance. At the board meeting, I will present highlights of the first draft and solicit feedback from the board.

Amphibious Milfoil Harvester RFP

In January, the board approved releasing a Request for Proposals for an amphibious milfoil harvester to replace one of our aging harvesters, and to address several of the accessibility issues in our lakes. The RFP was the final competitive phase of a search process that included several rounds of direct outreach to manufacturers, a formal Request for Expressions of Interest, and finally the RFP.

We are currently in the process of clarifying and negotiating terms with the highest ranked bidder, after which I will create a final recommendation for the board, including information about required changes to the five-year asset replacement plan.

Sewerage Facilities Assistance Grant Program Review

We are continuing to work on the many aspects of the SFA program review. We have engaged Mark Koch, a former planner at Lake Country and West Kelowna, as a consultant to review existing bylaws throughout the Okanagan to assess compliance with the current terms of the program, especially the one-hectare policy. We are also working to map remaining eligible areas, and to review development decisions from the past five years for those local governments which may have granted variances to the one-ha. policy, contrary to their funding agreements. The final report to the board will identify any relevant occurrences, or bylaw inconsistencies.

The SFA program was modelled based on provincial infrastructure funding, and until 2017, we required that all projects had undergone technical review by provincial staff. Since that time, we have allowed for smaller

projects, such as sewer extensions that would otherwise not have required technical review, to be eligible. Several provincial ministries are part of the current technical advisory committee (TAC) assisting with the SFA review. The TAC also includes local government staff from throughout the valley. There will be more opportunities for engagement as the initial audit and bylaw review portion of the project is completed, and before any recommendations for changes are brought to the board.

We have had initial discussions with staff from the B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, who remain strongly supportive of the one-ha. policy. Dr. Sears and I have another meeting planned early in April, and I will update the board again in May on this ongoing review.

Alternative to the one-hectare policy

We have also had some recent communications with various local governments who are currently receiving SFA funding but are advocating changes to the one-ha. policy. Since the policy was put in place by the province and mirrored by OBWB, there has been the option to create a provincially approved Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) which would allow the policy to be waived without jeopardizing funding. A LWMP is similar to an OCP, but for sewer infrastructure.

An approved LWMP may allow infill small lot development with on-site wastewater systems, provided future infrastructure upgrades are provided for in the LWMP. This would allow local governments to address the need for densification and housing without jeopardizing community water resources. Developing an approved LWMP also fulfills the requirement for public consultation on infrastructure development. In other words, once specific infrastructure is approved in a broad LWMP, the local government does not have to consult the electors again to borrow funding to build that approved infrastructure. Communities with an approved LWMP would continue to be eligible for SFA funding, without the one-ha. requirement.

More information on LWMP's is available here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/waste-management/sewage/liquid-waste-management-plans>

Since the beginning of the SFA program, OBWB has distributed more than \$75 million in funds for local government sewer infrastructure throughout the valley. The outcome has been a greater than 10x reduction in municipal phosphorus loading to our lakes. Provincial technical reviews on failed septic systems show that more than 90% of all septic problems can be addressed by adhering to the one-ha. policy. Although fully functioning and well-maintained septic is an acceptable wastewater treatment system, there are many examples where this is not the case, leading to costly environmental pollution affecting nearby residents or directly polluting water sources. Responsible development in the Okanagan should continue to protect our shared community water sources.

Finally, as the SFA program is funded by all communities in the Okanagan, the rules must be applied consistently for the benefit of all. This long-term, shared funding model is unique, and has helped facilitate responsible development in the valley since 1970, while protecting water. The funding is distributed at the same rate for all areas, so that while it has helped develop some more urban areas in the past, much of the remaining eligible area is rural, and will still benefit from the fund. It is critical that the rules and benefits are consistent and applied fairly. The program review will consider all of these factors, and will include significant engagement with planning departments throughout the valley.

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
April 4, 2023
Agenda No: 5.3

To: OBWB Directors
From: Kellie Garcia
Date: March 27, 2023
Subject: **Policy and Planning Director Report**

Last month, my memo focused on source water protection projects. This month, I am informing the board about two other initiatives I am leading at the OBWB: drought planning and response and the modernization of the Okanagan Lake Regulation System.

Drought Management

My drought-related work focuses on the following outcomes: 1) help Okanagan water suppliers apply robust, consistent, and coordinated approaches to drought planning and response; 2) support relationship-building and relay information between water suppliers and senior governments; 3) manage projects and develop tools that improve our understanding of drought in the Okanagan; 4) facilitate clear, accurate, and timely communication with water suppliers during a drought so they can see the full picture and respond accordingly.

Each year, I participate on the Province of B.C.'s Thompson Okanagan Regional Drought Response Team, which meets bi-weekly between April and October. The team is comprised of provincial staff, including aquatic ecologists, fisheries biologists, ecosystems officers, hydrogeologists, hydrologists, agrologists, and district water officers. Advisors from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Agriculture Canada, First Nations organizations, local governments, and other groups also participate. Being part of this team has enabled the OBWB to support B.C. provincial staff with decision-making by providing information about local water supply conditions and watering restriction stages (i.e., local utility drought response). We have also been able to better coordinate the timing and content of our communications, so the public is not confused by different drought messages and water suppliers are not blindsided by provincial drought declarations and better understand why the province is moving to a higher level and what response is expected.

The drought-related projects I have led over the last six years can be found at www.obwb.ca/drought. Projects include preparing templates for water conservation plans and drought management plans; working with a technical team to develop drought stage trigger guidelines for Okanagan mainstem lakes and river; creating a dashboard for water suppliers to check the triggers; and working with the province to create a special stream watch tab for the Thompson-Okanagan in their Drought Information Portal. Drought bulletins, which I prepare with Ms. Jackson, are also found here.

Improving Lake Level Management in the Okanagan

Lake levels in the Okanagan are managed by the province using a series of dams and other structures located on major lakes and the Okanagan River between Penticton and Osoyoos. The system was constructed by the federal and provincial governments in the 1950s to control flooding and (secondarily) to provide water for irrigation. A comprehensive water study in the early 1970s led to the Okanagan Basin Agreement, which recommended target lake levels and river flows to achieve several other benefits in addition to flood control. Those recommendations formed the basis for the lake level operating plan that is still in use today.

It is increasingly challenging to manage the level of Okanagan Lake because of the intensity and frequency of floods and droughts brought on by climate change. The worst flooding in living memory occurred in 2017, and the lake was near the lowest level in its recorded historical range in 2021. Increased development along shorelines and in floodplains has resulted in more impacts to infrastructure.

Improving the lake level regulation system will provide an opportunity to reflect societal priorities and values that have changed since the 1950s. For example, environmental protection is considered more important than it was half a century ago. While the lake level regulation system has provided significant benefits to society, its construction drastically altered the Okanagan River to a mostly straight and narrow engineered channel, significantly impacting natural river and floodplain processes. In addition, the system was designed and constructed without consultation with or the approval of the syilx people, and its impacts on syilx society have not been thoroughly documented. Indigenous rights and title must now be considered, and Indigenous leaders and technical staff must be included as equal partners in planning processes.

A report commissioned by the OBWB and the Government of B.C. in 2021 provides a 'Plan of Study' that outlines 18 discrete studies: 17 scientific and engineering studies leading to a final planning study during which a plan for modernizing the OLRS will be developed. Design and delivery of a broad-scale community engagement plan is also recommended in the report. As the studies are completed, additional knowledge gaps are likely to emerge, some of which may require investigation before decisions about modifying the OLRS can be made. As the OBWB lead on this initiative, I am working with the province and the Okanagan Nation Alliance, along with other OBWB staff members, to coordinate completion of the studies. Our next meeting is April 5. More information on the OLRS modernization can be found at www.obwb.ca/lakelevelmanagement/.

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
April 4, 2023
Agenda No: 5.4

To: OBWB Directors
From: Nelson R. Jatel
Date: March 29, 2023
Subject: **Water Stewardship Director's Report**

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)

It was brought to our attention that three B.C. ministries have unique and overlapping responsibilities related to water. Our guest speaker for the March 9th council meeting was **Mr. Ray Crompton**, District Manager for B.C. Ministry of Forests, who presented an overview of the three ministries: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (formerly known as MoE), the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (a newly formed ministry), and the Ministry of Forests (formerly known as FLNRORD). Each play a vital role in safeguarding and managing B.C.'s natural resources.

As noted at the meeting, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy is responsible for preparing a strategy to adapt to climate change and meet greenhouse gas reduction targets, as well as safeguarding and managing B.C.'s natural resources, including water, land, air, and living resources.

The Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship was established to develop water allocation policies and implement new water governance and watershed planning tools. Their focus is on creating a secure watershed strategy and funding it.

Finally, the Ministry of Forests is responsible for making statutory decisions related to the Water Sustainability Act (WSA), managing provincial Crown land, and ensuring the sustainable management of forests, wildlife, water, and other land-based resources. The regional and district operations of the Ministry of Forests include water licensing, responding to fire, flood, and drought, as well as mitigation and recovery efforts.

We must understand the distinct responsibilities of each of these ministries, as well as the areas in which they overlap, to ensure the effective and sustainable management of the province's natural resources. We will continue to watch the activities of these ministries and collaborate with them to achieve our shared goals. Highlights of the March council meeting are attached to my report.

Council Committees

As outlined in the council's 2021-23 work plan, sub-committees have been named to support and respond to OBWB board requests/needs and advance priorities set by the council. This term, the council has seven committees, including Policy, Water and Climate, Alluvial Fans, Wetlands, Agriculture Water, Water Quality, and Source Protection (a permanent standing committee). The committee chairs meet monthly to discuss progress and cross-cutting issues, inform the guest speaker selection process, and discuss council leadership and membership.

A current and critical consideration for the council policy committee is the review of the recently released *Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper* released by the B.C. government. This document outlines five key areas of focus, including enabling new approaches to watershed governance through inclusion, capacity building, and collaboration, pursuing legislative change, policy development, and aligning laws and policies with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, building a solid foundation of watershed science and knowledge accessible to Indigenous Peoples, local governments, and communities, applying holistic approaches to watershed management, and balancing water supply and demand at the watershed scale to address the needs of people, the environment, and the economy. The government has designated \$100 million to complete these five priority areas.

The deadline for submissions regarding this document is April 17th. To recommend Okanagan priorities and key messages to include in OBWB correspondence to the province, the policy committee is meeting on Wednesday, March 29th. The council looks forward to working together to ensure our Okanagan community's interests are represented and our voices are heard in the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper.

April Water Stewardship Council meeting

Mark your calendars! Our next council meeting is fast approaching on Thursday, April 13th, from 12 to 4 p.m. at the Kelowna Coast Capri Hotel. We are excited to announce that we have an exceptional guest speaker, **Ms. Gwen Bridge**, who will be presenting on Indigenous governance and decision-making. Ms. Bridge is a highly respected authority on this subject, and we are honoured to have her share her knowledge and expertise with us. This is an incredible opportunity to learn about an important and timely topic that affects us all. We hope to see some board members in attendance and look forward to a productive and enlightening meeting. Take advantage of this valuable learning opportunity! We hope to see you there.

Okanagan Water Supply Webinar

The Okanagan region is no stranger to severe weather patterns that induce floods and droughts, causing significant impacts on our economy and quality of life. For the past 15 years, our organization has organized a state of the watershed meeting to present various aspects of the Okanagan's flood and drought risk for the upcoming year.

The annual Okanagan Water Supply Webinar aims to support water management decisions in the Okanagan. This one-hour discussion will cover several perspectives, including snowpack, groundwater, and weather, providing relevant and up-to-date information to support practical water management decisions in the region. We are currently soliciting best dates to host the webinar in early May, recognizing the importance of providing timely information. This webinar is a valuable opportunity for the Okanagan community to work together to ensure a sustainable water supply in the region. We encourage everyone to attend and look forward to seeing you there.

Okanagan Lake Collaborative Monitoring Agreement – 2022 summary report

The OBWB administers the Okanagan Lake Collaborative Monitoring Agreement on behalf of the B.C. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, in partnership with local municipalities. This program was commissioned as a condition of the permit to release high-quality treated wastewater to Okanagan Lake and has been monitoring water quality since 2011. This coordinated effort to monitor water quality and the effects of effluent on shared waters is a cost-effective and efficient

way to monitor Okanagan Lake water quality trends. The 2022 report reveals that the Okanagan is already feeling the effects of climate change with repeated swings between large freshets and intensely dry summers. The Armstrong Arm is most impacted by continued human activities and watershed degradation, and the White Rock Lake wildfire will likely worsen the situation. To address these issues, the report recommends continued monitoring that includes an analysis of taxonomy samples in Okanagan Centre and Armstrong Arm.

Successful Mitacs Postdoctoral Fellowship grant application

We are pleased to announce the recent Federal Mitacs grant award to the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) and its partners, a significant milestone in advancing sustainable water management for the Okanagan region. This grant enables implementation of an innovative, bottom-up cost-benefit analysis (CBA) approach, actively involving local governments and the agricultural community in addressing environmental challenges arising from climate change, population growth, and the region's fragile landscape. This inclusive process empowers Okanagan citizens by incorporating their local knowledge, encouraging dialogue, and ultimately promoting better decision-making and implementation. The OBWB's dedication to transparency and communication will be reinforced by integrating economic impact analysis, ensuring the CBA results are accessible and comprehensible to the broader community. This grant highlights the commitment of the OBWB and its partners to collaborate with local governments and the agricultural community in building a more sustainable future for the Okanagan region. Dr. John Janmaat, an Economic professor at UBC Okanagan, is the lead researcher for this analysis.

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

Technical advisory committee to the OBWB



March 2023

Council Members (Term 10, April 2021-March 2023)

Appointed representatives | alternates.

- **AAFC, Research Branch**
Kirsten Hannam | Thomas Forge | Jesse MacDonald
- **BC Agriculture Council**
Hans Buchler
- **BC Cattlemen's Association**
Lee Hesketh | Keith Manders
- **BC Fruit Growers Association**
Katie Sardinha | Glen Lucas
- **Ministry of Forests**
Sheena Spencer (Research Hydrologist)
Kelly Chiatto | Ray Crampton
- **BC Ground Water Association**
Marta Green | Doug Geller
- **BC Water Supply Association**
Patti Meger | Bob Hrasko | Shawn Grundy
- **BC Wildlife Federation – Region 8**
Lorne Davies | Jackson MacPherson | Nick Kozub
- **Canadian Water Resources Association**
Brian Guy (past chair) | Dwayne Meredith
- **City of Kelowna**
Rod MacLean | Ed Hoppe
- **City of Penticton**
Mike Firlotte (TBD)
- **City of Vernon**
Ed Stranks
- **Fisheries and Oceans Canada**
Lynda Ritchie | Sue Lemke | Teri Ridley
- **Environment and Climate Change Canada**
Jeremy Fyke (vice-chair) | Dave Hutchinson | Alyssa Charbonneau
- **Emerita**
Denise Neilsen (past chair)
- **Engineers & Geoscientists BC**
- **Interior Health**
Rob Birtles | Judi Ekkert
- **Irrigation Industry Association of BC (IIABC)**
Bruce Naka | Ted van der Gulik (past vice-chair)
- **Ministry of Agriculture**
Stephanie Tam
- **Ministry of Environment and CC Strategy**
Kym Keogh | Dennis Einarson
- **Ministry of Land, Water & Resource Stewardship**
TBD
- **Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program**
Scott Boswell (chair)
- **Okanagan College**
Allison O'Neill | Rob St Onge
- **Okanagan Indian Band**
Patrick Riley | Dan Wilson | Tim Isaac
- **RD Central Okanagan**
Jing Niu | Todd Cashin
- **RD North Okanagan**
Tricia Brett | Zee Marcolin
- **RD Okanagan –Similkameen**
Shelley Fiorito
- **Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association**
Randy Hardy | Matt Scott
- **Thompson - Okanagan Tourism Association**
Ellen Walker – Matthews | Mike Overend
- **University of British Columbia - Okanagan**
Bernie Bauer (past chair) | Craig Nichol | Derek Gratz

Council Meeting Highlights

Responsibilities of Provincial Ministries

Ray Crampton, District Manager – Ministry of Forests, presented on three B.C. ministries that have unique and overlapping responsibilities: the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (formerly known as MoE), the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (a newly formed ministry), and the Ministry of Forests (formerly known as FLNRD). The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy is tasked with preparing a strategy to adapt to climate change and meet greenhouse gas reduction targets. They are also responsible for safeguarding and managing B.C.'s natural resources, including water, land, air, and living resources. The Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship was created to develop water allocation policies and implement new tools for water governance and watershed planning. Their focus is on creating a secure watershed strategy and funding it. Finally, the Ministry of Forests handles making statutory decisions related to the Water Sustainability Act (WSA). They are also responsible for managing provincial Crown land and ensuring the sustainable management of forests, wildlife, water, and other land-based resources. In addition, the regional and district operations of the Ministry of Forests include activities such as water licensing, responding to fire, flood, and drought, as well as mitigation and recovery efforts.

Discussion on “Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper”

The B.C. Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship recently released its "Watershed Security Strategy and Fund Intentions Paper" which is an important step towards developing and implementing its strategy and fund. They have invited people and organizations to provide feedback by 4 p.m., April 17, 2023. Council members discussed the paper and named certain sections to focus on in detail (including 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 3.2, 4.2, 5.1, 5.3). WSC members were asked to discuss the paper with their respective organizations and forward feedback to the council to be considered as part of a submission to the OBWB's Board of Directors. The board would then review and forward the submission to the province. Council members were asked to provide input by March 24th.

Other news

- Water Supply Association of BC's 2023 spring workshop series 'More Better Water' will be held at the Okanagan Golf Club in Kelowna, March 30-31. For more information, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2023-wsabc-spring-workshop-more-better-water-march-30-and-31-2023-registration-543151389427>
- OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise will hold a special online screening of the film “DamNation” followed by a panel discussion on Tuesday, March 21, 2023, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. PDT for UN Water Day (celebrated on March 22). Register at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/damnation-screening-and-panel-discussion-tickets-558140201367>

For more information contact:

Nelson Jatel, Water Stewardship Director
Okanagan Basin Water board

nelson.jatel@obwb.ca

(250) 469-6295

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The Council provides technical advice to the Board & connects the broader Okanagan community.

MEMORANDUM

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
April 4, 2023
Agenda No: 5.5

To: OBWB Directors
From: Corinne Jackson
Date: March 29, 2023
Subject: Communications Director Report

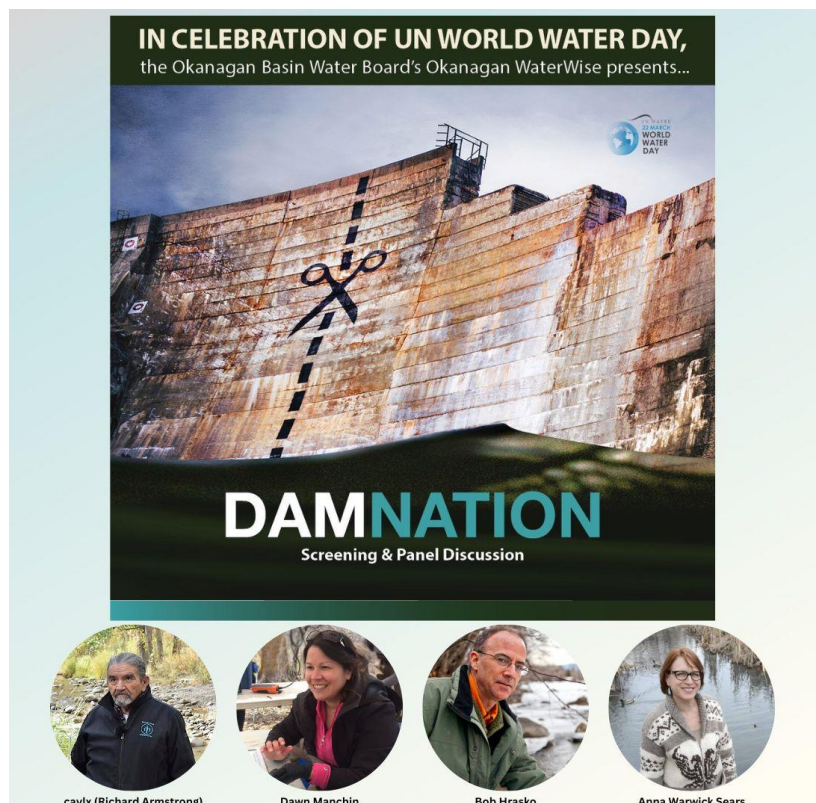
UN World Water Day

The last few weeks were busy preparing for, promoting, and finally, presenting our 8th annual film screening and panel discussion on March 21st to celebrate UN World Water Day (formally marked on March 22). I moderated the event which included a special online screening of the documentary *DamNation*, followed by panel presentations and Q&A session.

The panel included:

- OBWB Exec. Dir. **Anna Warwick Sears** speaking on the Okanagan Lake Regulation System (OLRS) and opportunities to participate as the process moves forward,
- Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) fisheries department biologist **Dawn Machin**, talking to Okanagan River restoration efforts done in the valley bottom, the benefits, the challenges, and what future work is planned,
- Black Mountain Irrigation District Administrator **Bob Hrasko**, on dams and upland reservoirs in the Okanagan – what works and what doesn't, or needs improvement, and
- Syilx Traditional Ecological Knowledge Keeper **caylx (Richard Armstrong)** on the importance of

traditional Indigenous knowledge in helping inform the OLRS review, as well as the significance of upper watershed wetlands (e.g. for the mountain beaver and water health).



We received very positive feedback following the event, from attendees and panelists. About 100 people attended. Several others who were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts requested that we record the event to watch later. Unfortunately there was an issue with recording. For those wishing to watch the film itself, it is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laTibNVDQN8>. I may also be able to provide Powerpoint slides from the presenters.

A number of OBWB staff also attended the ONA's Syilx Water Forum, held March 22 in Summerland. The event included a guided tour of salmon restoration efforts at nlux^wlux^wlcwix (Trout Creek) and then a presentation from Dr. Brittany R. Orona (Hupa Valley Tribe), regarding the impacts of Klamath River dams on the Indigenous community and efforts to remove some of the dams and restore the waterway.



Make Water Work & Don't Move A Mussel 2023

Last week, I met with the team at Habit Creations to discuss strategy and creative design for the upcoming Make Water Work (MWW) and Don't Move A Mussel (DMM) campaigns, which run May – October. I will be continuing to gather feedback from our partners as we begin the build out for this season.

I have also met with Okanagan Xeriscape Association staff regarding MWW outreach support this year and will be finalizing a contract soon. A similar meeting will be held with Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society in the next couple of weeks, regarding DMM, and to do the same.

Other communication initiatives

Our posting for a permanent part-time **Communications Assistant** ends today. I will be reviewing applications in the coming days and short-listing for interviews. We are looking to have someone in place by the end of April.

In addition to the above, communications support has been provided to a number of in-house projects this month, including review of the **Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum** final report, printing of the **Choose Your Watershed poster**, and more. I also provided support to **ONA, Allan Brooks Nature Centre-RDNO**, and **Peachland Watershed Alliance** with promotion of their World Water Day events.

Summary of OBWB-Related News Coverage

March 2	“Lake Country has taken a close look at the impact the White Rock Lake wildfire had on water quality in Okanagan Lake,” <i>Castanet.net</i>
March 4	“Pilot project hopes to ‘future proof the valley,’” <i>TimesChronicle.ca</i>
March 7	“Former Armstrong mayor hand picked timbers for new City Hall,” <i>Castanet.net</i>
March 9	“Column: Taking the initiative to protect Summerland’s drinking water,” <i>Summerland Review</i>
March 11	“Okanagan Basin Water Board to address valley water issues,” <i>Vernon Morning Star, Kelowna Capital News, West K News, Penticton Western News, Salmon Arm Observer, Eagle Valley News, Lake Country Calendar, Summerland Review, Keremeos Review, Similkameen Spotlight</i>
March 13	“Water documentary pulls plugs on dams,” <i>Penticton Herald</i>
March 16	“Column: Where Summerland’s drinking water comes from,” <i>Penticton Herald</i>
March 18	“Public invited to watch documentary on emerging water issue,” <i>VernonMatters.ca</i>
March 22	“Kelowna has some of the best tap water in the world,” <i>KelownaNow.com</i>

Recent Presentations

March 21	“DamNation – screening and panel discussion” to public audience – Anna Warwick Sears and Corinne Jackson
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Upcoming Presentations

March 30	“OBWB’s Role in Source Protection & Watershed Security Governance” to Water Supply Association of B.C. – Anna Warwick Sears and Kellie Garcia
April 20	“OBWB Update & Board Training” to RDNO board and staff – Anna Warwick Sears
April 20	“Climate change & the future of Okanagan water,” to Okanagan Climate Hub – James Littlely
April 25	“Climate change & the future of Okanagan water,” to Southern Interior Local Government Assoc.
April 27	“Hydrology modeling in the Okanagan and Similkameen” to International Joint Commission and Boards of Control – Anna Warwick Sears