



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: November 6, 2014

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OBWB Directors

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James Pepper, Okanagan
Nation Alliance

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Don Dobson, Okanagan Water
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB is 10 a.m. February 3,
2014 at Regional District of
Central Okanagan in Kelowna.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Water grants program now accepting funding applications: The Water Board invites non-profit community groups, local governments, and irrigation or improvement districts in the Okanagan to submit applications to its Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program. With \$300,000 available in total, successful applicants can receive up to \$30,000 for their project. While the board will review all applications that meet the conservation and quality improvement criteria, special consideration will be given to projects that address priority areas identified in the OBWB's 2014-19 Strategic Plan and which help close some of the gaps in the valley-wide management of water. Those categories include: Drought Planning, Groundwater, Irrigation, Metering, Restoration, Source Protection, Water System Improvement (Quantity and Quality), and Water Flow Monitoring. This year's application deadline is 4 p.m. Friday, February 6, 2015. For more info. please visit www.obwb.ca/wcqi.

Okanagan Water Board weighs in on proposed groundwater regs: Directors voted to send a letter to the Province regarding new groundwater regulations, proposed as part of B.C.'s Water Sustainability Act. In particular, the letter recommends adequate funding and staff resources to ensure successful groundwater protection. The letter, developed in consultation with water managers, agriculture sector representatives, and groundwater experts in the Okanagan, also recommends: improved groundwater data collection and interpretation; a recognition that groundwater and surface water are interconnected and equally important; and adequate and meaningful consultation with local government, First Nations and water users. It also suggests running a pilot project for the new regulations in the Okanagan.

Water Board requests Zosel Dam operators to protect from mussels: In its continued effort to protect the Okanagan from invasive zebra and quagga mussels, the Board will be sending a letter to the Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (OLBC) which is responsible for the operation of Zosel Dam, just south of the Canadian border. The OBWB is recommending that OLBC develop an emergency response plan to address the potential for the mussels' arrival.

OBWB call for action prompts B.C. response on blue-green algae: The Water Board was provided an update from Interior Health on a B.C.-wide protocol to deal with blue-green algae blooms. The protocol is the result of a request from OBWB to have a system put in place after it became apparent this was missing during a bloom at an Osoyoos beach in the summer of 2013. Since then, Interior Health has been working to develop a protocol. The system will help local governments and B.C. Ministry of Health better address the issue, knowing when to post signs at beaches and alert the public.

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca