



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: March 5 , 2015

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OBWB Directors

Doug Findlater - Chair,
Regional District of Central
Okanagan

**Juliette Cunningham - Vice-
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North Okanagan

Doug Dirk, Regional District of
North Okanagan

Bob Fleming, Regional District
of North Okanagan

James Baker, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Tracy Gray, Regional District
of Central Okanagan

Andre Martin, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waterman, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waardenberg,
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. May 5, 2015
at Regional District of Central
Okanagan in Kelowna.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Board grants \$300,000 to projects that protect valley water: Directors approved \$300,000 in funding to 18 projects through its Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program. The projects include several innovative research projects (e.g. on wastewater, and the impact of various land uses on water), habitat restoration, WaterWise landscaping and irrigation, and more. In all, there were 34 applications with a total ask of \$643,138. Since the program began awarding funds in 2006, the OBWB has awarded \$3.2 million to 197 projects throughout the Okanagan. Projects must meet a number of criteria, including the ability to demonstrate water savings or improvements to water quality, show collaboration, and provide valley-wide benefit. Find the news release & a full list of grant recipients here: www.obwb.ca/funds-flow.

Canada Water Week panel and contest makes a return: Canada Water Week (CWW) is March 16-22. As part of the festivities, the Water Board and its Okanagan WaterWise program are holding a number of events around the theme of wetlands. The fun begins on March 18 with a guided wetland tour of Kelowna's Rotary Marshes, 4 to 6 p.m., followed by our annual panel discussion at the Laurel Packinghouse, from 6 to 8 p.m. CBC Daybreak South host Chris Walker returns to MC this popular event. Refreshments will be served and registration is required. Registration opens Monday, March 9. CWW also marks the launch of the annual Okanagan WaterWise Youth Challenge – a multi-media contest. For wetland tour details, panel registration and more on the youth challenge visit: www.OkWaterWise.ca.

Issues with milfoil control prompt outreach: There has been an increasing number of issues getting in the way of milfoil control operations on our lakes. This is related to foreshore development in areas traditionally used to launch the program's machines and used as weed transfer sites. To address these concerns the OBWB will be sending a letter to local governments explaining the situation with an offer to meet and discuss further.

OBWB applies for funds to study water needs of fish: The board gave staff approval to pursue a large grant proposal to the province. The grant would help fund studies to calculate the amount of water needed to remain in streams for fish. The studies would be conducted in preparation for the province updating its water licencing protocol.

Okanagan Nation Alliance presents Syilx water strategy update: The Water Board heard a presentation from the Okanagan Nation Alliance's Tessa and Carrie Terbasket who provided an update on the Syilx water strategy and delivered a copy of the Syilx Nation Declaration on Water. The strategy is intended to help address water issues and describe how to properly protect and manage water use and allocation in a respectful and holistic way. It's expected the strategy will be completed and released within the year. For more information, visit: www.syilx.org/operations/natural-resourcesland-use/water/.

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