



BOARD REPORT: July 8, 2016

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Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

OBWB Directors

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Regional District of Central
Okanagan

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District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waterman, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

To be announced,
Okanagan Nation Alliance

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Rob Birtles, Okanagan Water
Stewardship Council

**The next meeting of the OBWB
will be at 12 p.m. Sept. 9, 2016
at the Laurel Packinghouse in
Kelowna, following our
Annual General Meeting.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

B.C. Mussel Inspection staff report 2016 program results: Invasive Mussel Program Coordinator, Martina Beck and Staff Sgt. Josh Lockwood attended this week's board meeting, providing an overview of the province's 2016 mussel inspection program since it began April 1. This year, there are now 32 conservation officer staff conducting inspections at five locations along the B.C.-Alberta border and three along the B.C.-Washington border. The inspection stations operate eight to 10-hours per day, seven days a week. As of April 1, 6,100 watercraft have been inspected, and 240 of them were identified as coming from high risk areas. Of those, eight were found infested with quagga or zebra mussels. In reviewing the statistics, the board thanked provincial staff for their efforts and noted that they will continue to ask the B.C. and federal governments for an even stronger defence. The OBWB has a number of concerns, including the need for longer inspection hours .

Swan Lake water quality findings show need for further study: Water Board Dir. Bob Fleming and Regional District of North Okanagan's Regional Planning Projects Manager Laura Frank presented findings from a recent study looking at Swan Lake. Research found elevated levels of ammonia, sulfate, sodium and uranium. While the uranium may be naturally occurring, it was noted that failing septic systems, use of agricultural fertilizers and improper road salting and salt storage may be the cause of the other pollutants. The board was told more study is needed to determine cause. The Water Board helped fund the initial research through its Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program.

New project will help agriculture water users during drought: The OBWB recently received a \$31,500 grant through the federal Growing Forward 2 Grant and will be working with the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative to develop an outreach program to help agricultural water users during drought. The Okanagan farming community identified a need for the program following last year's drought, finding it difficult to prepare and respond. The grant will help fund the development of communication strategies.

Board supports Water Asset Management program for utilities: The board voted to provide in-kind support for a project that will have UBC Okanagan assist Okanagan local governments conduct asset management benchmarking of drinking water infrastructure. The project will provide participating utilities information to guide long-term infrastructure improvements and will lead to development of a tool to help small to medium-sized communities across Canada address the challenges posed by aging drinking water infrastructure.

OBWB welcomes California water researcher at Annual Meeting The September OBWB meeting will be held immediately following our Annual General Meeting on September 9th, at the Laurel Packinghouse in Kelowna. Keynote speaker for the meeting will be Dr. Amber Manfree, a researcher at the Center for Watershed Sciences at the University of California, Davis. Dr. Manfree will provide an overview of California's current water situation and relate it to the Okanagan.

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