



**Okanagan Basin**  
WATER BOARD

**BOARD REPORT: May 5, 2017**

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### **OBWB Directors**

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Okanagan

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**Cindy Fortin,** Regional District  
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Similkameen

**Peter Waterman,** Regional  
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**Lisa Wilson,** Okanagan Nation  
Alliance

**Toby Pike,** Water Supply  
Association of B.C.

**Brian Guy,** Okanagan Water  
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of  
the OBWB will be at 10 a.m.  
June 6, 2017 at Summerland  
Waterfront Resort in  
Summerland.**

## **Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights**

**Kelowna restoration projects highlighted:** Wayne Wilson with the Central Okanagan Land Trust provided the Water Board with an update on the Mission Creek & Munson Pond restoration projects. Both have received funds through the OBWB's Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program. Work at Munson Pond has resulted in a healthier ecosystem, he noted, with riparian plantings and the installation of turtle logs (as part of the Water Board's Wetlands Project to bring back such areas in the Okanagan). A proper walkway has been added, and a popular bird watching platform. COLT is now looking at installing interpretive signage about the area's flora and fauna. Work at Mission Creek has focused on efforts to naturalize the area. The creek is one of the Okanagan's most important waterways, representing 25% of the inflow into Okanagan Lake. The creek was channelized back in the 50s to address flooding. The result was loss of fish habitat, but it also did not effectively address today's flooding challenges. The Mission Creek Restoration Initiative has included moving the dykes back to allow the creek more room to flow. The result has also been improved fish habitat.

**Directors prepare to take their mussel case to Ottawa:** The board discussed plans to address the threat of invasive zebra and quagga mussels at an upcoming meeting with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. A number of directors will be heading to Ottawa as part of the annual Federation of Canadian Municipalities conference in June and are taking the opportunity to press the mussel issue while there. The Water Board has been asking the federal government to enhance border inspections and allocate funding to improve mussel education, containment and prevention.

**Okanagan's Sustainable Water Strategy to be updated:** The OBWB's Water Stewardship Council, a technical advisory body to the board, is assisting with an update to the 2008 Sustainable Water Strategy. The strategy is a comprehensive guide to water management practices in the Okanagan with the goal of helping manage the increasing water demands of a growing population, adapt to our changing climate and work toward long-term water sustainability in the basin. The updated strategy will include new and emerging issues facing our valley, including adoption of B.C.'s new Water Sustainability Act, the potential for invasive mussels, and more. It's expected the updated strategy will be completed by May 2018.

**Okanagan Nation hosts 3<sup>rd</sup> Water Forum:** The Okanagan Nation Alliance is holding a water forum May 30 at UBC Okanagan in Kelowna. The theme this year is "Forward Thinking: Syilx Knowledge Informing Watershed Planning." The forum will highlight Syilx projects, tools and practices related to water, share an understanding about Indigenous Water Rights, and build opportunities to work together to protect water in the Columbia Basin. There will also be a water art exhibit. The forum is intended for Syilx (Okanagan) citizens, government staff, and regional water stakeholders to collaborate. For more details and to register, visit <https://tinyurl.com/kmo5pcj>.

**For more information, please visit: [www.OBWB.ca](http://www.OBWB.ca)**