



Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: October 4, 2018

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www.obwb.ca

OBWB Directors

Tracy Gray - Chair,
Regional District of Central
Okanagan

**Juliette Cunningham - Vice-
Chair,** Regional District of
North Okanagan

Doug Dirk, Regional District of
North Okanagan

Rick Fairbairn, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Doug Findlater, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Cindy Fortin, Regional District
of Central Okanagan

Ron Hovanes, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Peter Waterman, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Lisa Wilson, Okanagan Nation
Alliance

Toby Pike, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Denise Neilsen, Okanagan
Water Stewardship Council

The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be 10 a.m.
**Wednesday, December 12,
2018,** at Regional District of
Central Okanagan in Kelowna.

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Last meeting of current board acknowledged: This was the last meeting of the current board before upcoming local government elections. At least three of the nine local government representatives will not be returning: Chair Tracy Gray (representing Regional District of Central Okanagan), Vice-Chair Juliette Cunningham (RD North Okanagan) and Dir. Peter Waterman (RD Okanagan-Similkameen). Chair Gray noted board accomplishments over the last four years, including a review of the Water Conservation & Quality Improvement Grant Program, stronger invasive mussel protection including approval of stable provincial funding for inspection stations, valley floodplain mapping, and more. A new board will be convened in December once elections are held and appointments are made by the three Okanagan regional districts.

Board updated on Okanagan flood mapping project: Directors were updated on the floodplain mapping project, first announced in April. The mapping is using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), a radar technology that is a form of aerial imaging, as well as geo-referenced aerial photos to map the landscape. The intention is to map where water is likely to flow and help communities plan and prepare for future flooding. The project has had a few setbacks, with wildfires, rain and heavy cloud impeding the work. But tragically, there was also the unfortunate death of the pilot and mapping technician on Aug. 1 when the plane they were using crashed on its way home to Alberta. The board forwarded a letter of condolence to the families through the company contracted to do the work. Efforts to recover the data on the plane are underway but some of the LiDAR may need to be redone. The board also approved a contract to proceed with lake level modeling.

Drought Trigger project for valley-bottom lakes outlined: Staff presented on a project to help water utilities that draw off the Okanagan's mainstem (valley-bottom) lakes to determine water restrictions based on lake levels and severity of drought. The drought triggers project was prompted by the 2015 drought. These purveyors requested assistance from the Water Board since they do not control the levels of the lakes, their reservoir: the Province of B.C. does. The project included input from water utilities, the Province, hydrology experts and others. The intention is to have these triggers integrated into local drought plans to help utilities respond to water demands during water-short years.

Water Board pushes for B.C. legislation to check all incoming watercraft: In reviewing the latest provincial mussel inspection stats, the board agreed to repeat their call for legislation that requires all watercraft entering B.C. to report to an inspection station before launching in provincial waters. The board first called for this legislation in 2016. As of Sept. 23, 22 mussel-fouled watercraft were intercepted coming into B.C. The watercraft were coming from: Ontario (12), Manitoba (2), Arizona (4), Michigan (2), Utah (1), and Nevada (1). They were headed to: the Lower Mainland (9), Vancouver Island (5), Thompson-Nicola/Shuswap (4), the Okanagan (3), and Kootenays (1). B.C.'s inspection team received advance notice on 17 of the 22 watercraft from other state or provincial inspection teams or Canada Border Services Agency officers.

Registration for Environmental Flow Needs conference strong: Registration for the "siwtk^w (WATER) FOR ALL - OUR RESPONSIBILITY... *Environmental Flow Needs Conference 2018: Science, Policy & Practice*," Oct. 17-18, 2018 in Kelowna is nearing capacity. For details and to register, please visit www.EFN2018.ca.

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