



Photo courtesy RDCO



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: December 6, 2019

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www.obwb.ca

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

OBWB Directors

Sue McKortoff - Chair,
Regional District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Cindy Fortin - Vice-Chair,
Regional District of Central
Okanagan

Victor Cumming, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Rick Fairbairn, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Bob Fleming, Regional District
of North Okanagan

James Baker, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Colin Basran, Regional District
of Central Okanagan

Toni Boot, Regional District of
Okanagan-Similkameen

Rick Knodel, Regional District
of Okanagan-Similkameen

To be determined, Okanagan
Nation Alliance

Bob Hrasko, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Denise Neilsen, Okanagan
Water Stewardship Council

The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be 10 a.m. Tuesday,
Feb. 4, 2020 at the Regional
District of Central Okanagan in
Kelowna.

Updated Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy received by board: Directors voted to receive the *Sustainable Water Strategy–Action Plan 2.0*. The original strategy, written in 2008, has guided OBWB's technical advisory body, the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council, to develop and act on solutions that help meet the growing need for a clean and sustainable water supply in the region. Ten years later, the updated plan responds to issues that have become more prominent since 2008, including ongoing climate change, population growth, reconciliation with Indigenous communities, the B.C. Water Sustainability Act adopted in 2016, and a new awareness regarding the risk of invasive mussels. The plan includes 50 action items. The strategy is in final production and will be posted to the OBWB website in the new year.

Flood planning for valley amped up: The board heard of several projects underway to address flooding concerns in the Okanagan, and extending earlier LiDAR work. The OBWB is assisting with floodplain mapping for the Okanagan River and mainstem (valley-bottom) lakes, looking at historic observations and what is expected with climate change. Staff will be conducting a gap analysis of flood policies in the valley. The OBWB has also been participating in the Sylix Okanagan Flood and Debris Flow Steering Committee. Activities compatible with OBWB efforts include understanding disaster risk and investing in and enhancing preparedness.

Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant intake opens: The OBWB is now accepting applications to its Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant program. The board increased the amount available to \$350,000. This is the first increase since the program began in 2006. Eligible applicants include local governments, First Nations, irrigation districts and non-profits. Successful applicants can receive between \$3,000 and \$30,000. This year's theme is collaboration, encouraging inter-regional projects. Learn more at www.OBWB.ca/wcqi.

Final numbers in on Don't Move A Mussel & Make Water Work: The board was presented final numbers on OBWB-Okanagan WaterWise's 'Don't Move A Mussel' (DMM) and 'Make Water Work' (MWW) water conservation campaign. Thanks to significant in-kind support from local media partners, the DMM campaign was able to leverage \$49,800 to deliver a campaign worth over \$74,000. Results include 5.5 million billboard impressions, over 2,500 face-to-face interactions, and 4,199 unique visitors to DontMoveAMussel.ca. Matching funds are provided to local government and utility partners for MWW. With a \$56,500 investment from OBWB and partners and in-kind support, this year's campaign was worth over \$80,000. Highlights include three new garden centre partners promoting the MWW Plant Collection, 5.7 million billboard and bus impressions, and 10,120 unique visits to www.MakeWaterWork.ca.

Interest and registration for B.C. AquaHacking Challenge 2020 builds: Some 45 participants have now registered for the B.C. AquaHacking Challenge 2020, the majority from the Central Okanagan, but also the Lower Mainland, Ontario and Quebec. To register and for more info., visit <https://aquahacking.com/en/bc-2020/>.

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