



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: June 4, 2021

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OBWB Directors

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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

Doug Holmes, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Rick Knodel, Regional District
of Okanagan-Similkameen

Chris Derickson, 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 July 6, 2021 at
10 a.m. online.**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Water Board preparing for potential drought: The board was told of various activities by staff to prepare for possible drought, including an update to the OBWB's Okanagan Drought Response Strategy. The strategy was developed in 2016 to facilitate timely communication with local water suppliers and the Province of B.C. and promote a more consistent and cooperative valley-wide response to drought. The strategy includes actions to be carried out by staff in a water-short year, including workshops, the release of "Drought Bulletins" to Okanagan utilities and media, and other communication efforts. The OBWB will be participating in provincial Thompson Okanagan Regional Drought Response Team meetings, held each summer to monitor water supplies. The board also heard about the annual Okanagan Water Supply Webinar, held May 12, which included updates on reservoir levels, snow pack, groundwater, a look at the weather and wildfire forecast, and an outlook on the Okanagan fishery. The general consensus was that significant June rains were needed to make up for a very dry spring. The video is posted at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ohdgkGVfk4&t=294s>.

Hydrometric station opens in Okanagan: Directors were briefed on the Water Board's new Hydrometric Information Network Program and the re-establishment of a hydrometric station on Pearson Creek (a tributary of Mission Creek) by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). The program is intended to increase the number of stations in the valley to improve data on water supplies. Plans for this year include the re-establishment of another ECCC station and four more that will be managed by OBWB and Okanagan Nation Alliance.

Milfoil operators prep for harvesting season: The milfoil control program has completed the rototilling season. Operations staff are now preparing for the harvesting season, which is expected to start in late June or early July. Early hot weather, low lake levels and lack of precipitation could result in an early year for milfoil growth, again, around late spring or early summer.

Board getting ready for re-launch of summer water campaigns: The board was updated on the re-launch of its summer "[Make Water Work](#)" campaign – promoting outdoor residential water conservation, and "[Don't Move A Mussel](#)" – raising awareness regarding invasive mussels and promoting protection of Okanagan waters. Both campaigns will include updated websites, messaging, and more.

AquaHacking semi-final announces top 4 teams: On May 18, the OBWB partnered with Aqua Forum to host the AquaHacking 2021 Western Canada Challenge Semi-Finals. A total of 137 participants registered from post-secondary institutes across Western Canada, Ontario and Quebec, forming 21 teams, of which 10 pitched at the semi-final. The four finalist teams are working on solutions to address nutrient capture, toxic algal blooms, optimization of drinking water and innovative social technologies. Find a news release with more on the top 4 teams at <https://bit.ly/2T5qDcb>. Watch a video from the semi-final at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSH0EEvnQaM>. The finals are set for Sept. 14.

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