



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: October 6, 2022

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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

Doug Holmes, 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.

Scott Boswell, Okanagan
Water Stewardship Council

The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be held January 10,
2023., online.

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Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Nk'mip (Osoyoos Lake) water forum returns: Directors were updated on the Nk'Mip (Osoyoos Lake) Water Science Forum planned for Oct. 27-29, in Osoyoos. Previous forums were held in 2007, 2011 and 2015. This year's forum, co-presented by OBWB, Osoyoos Indian Band, Okanagan Nation Alliance, the International Joint Commission and Town of Osoyoos, will bridge Indigenous and western approaches to knowledge, science and management of water. The event includes guided field tours of Nk'mip Desert Cultural Centre and klilx'w (Spotted Lake). Current local water research will be on display. Presentations & discussion will look at how the lake is managed, what Indigenous knowledge tells us about lake health and management, climate change impacts, and more. Registration is \$20-35 thanks to sponsor support, and free to First Nations members and students. Details at www.OBWB.ca/olwsf.

Drought planning and response update provided: Staff reported on meetings they attended with the Thompson Okanagan Drought Response Team, made up of provincial, First Nations, regional and local government staff. The purpose is to monitor and respond, as needed, to drought conditions. The meetings are normally held May to September, but have been extended this year due to dry, warm conditions. While the Okanagan remains at Drought Level 1, some south Okanagan fish-bearing streams are being monitored closely and are at Level 3 where adverse impacts are possible. Staff also noted that the [Planning Guides](#) database hosted on CivicInfo BC was recently updated and includes several toolkits to help local governments address climate-related issues.

Invasive mussel inspection numbers are in: The board heard that between April and Sept. 28, B.C.'s Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) inspected 19,400 watercraft of which 12 were transporting adult invasive mussels. The watercraft were traveling from Ontario (10), Manitoba (1), and Quebec (1), and destined for the Lower Mainland (5), Okanagan (4), Thompson-Nicola (2), and Vancouver Island (1). The board was also told that most recent water testing suggests no mussels have been introduced into Okanagan waters this summer. In June, OBWB requested additional support for the IMDP to B.C.'s Budget 2023 Consultation committee. That committee has now recommended 24/7 inspection facilities at all major border crossings. A full update on the OBWB's OkWaterWise "Don't Move A Mussel" campaign will be provided at the next Water Board meeting.

Board approves 2023 water project grant program: The board approved the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program for 2023. The program awards grants up to \$30,000 to Okanagan local governments, improvement districts and non-profits, with \$350,000 total available. A call for applications and details about this year's grant theme will be announced in November.

Directors say goodbye as municipal elections near: Okanagan regional district (RD) appointed directors said goodbye to each other and OBWB staff as all are up for re-election on October 8, except Dir. James Baker who is retiring as Lake Country mayor. The Water Board's next meeting is Jan. 10, 2023, once RDs have had a chance to appoint directors to the board.

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