

OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL
A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2013, AT
BEST WESTERN INN, 2402 HWY. 97N, KELOWNA, B.C.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Present

UBC Okanagan	Bernie Bauer, Chair
Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.	Don Dobson, vice-chair
BC Agriculture Council	Hans Buchler
BC Fruit Growers Association	Lorraine Bennest
BC Ground Water Association	Remi Allard
BC Wildlife Federation – Region 8	Lorne Davies (alt.)
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture	Andrew Petersen (alt.)
B.C. Ministry Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops.(Fish/Wildlife)	Grant Furness
Canadian Water Resources Association	Brian Guy
City of Kelowna	Andrew Reeder
Environment Canada – Pacific & Yukon Region	Ian Rogalski
Interior Health Authority	Rob Birtles
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program	Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo
Okanagan Nation Alliance	Zoe Masters
Regional District of Central Okanagan	Margaret Bakelaar
Regional District North Okanagan	Renee Clark
Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association	Kerry Rouck
Water Supply Association of BC	Bob Hrasko

Regrets

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch	Denise Neilsen
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Agri-Enviro. Branch	Doug Edwards
BC Cattlemen’s Association	Lee Hesketh
B.C. Ministry Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops.(Resource)	Ray Crampton
City of Vernon	Rob Dickinson
Okanagan College	Leif Burge
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board	David O’Keefe
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen	Evelyn Riechert

STAFF:

OBWB, Executive Director	Anna Warwick Sears
OBWB, Water Stewardship Director	Nelson Jatel
OBWB, Communications Director	Corinne Jackson
OBWB, Office and Project Manager	James Littlely

GUESTS:

Canadian Water Resources Association	Dwayne Meredith (alt.)
District of Coldstream	Gyula Kiss
ESSA Technologies	Frank Poulsen
Interior Health Authority	Gordon Moseley
SNC Lavalin Environment	Mike Schutten
UBC Okanagan	Craig Nichol
UBC Okanagan	Grace Fan
UBC Okanagan	Natasha Neumann
UBC Okanagan	Jen Simkins
Westcoast CED	Victor Cumming
Western Water Associates	Bryer Manwell

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Bauer called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed members and guests.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Remi Allard

Seconded by Zoe Masters

“That the agenda for the Sept. 12, 2013 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.”

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held May 9, 2013, at Manteo Resort in Kelowna.

A small amendment was noted.

Moved by Don Dobson

Seconded by Brian Guy

“That the minutes from the May 9, 2013 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

4. RECEIVE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP NOTES

Chair Bauer introduced the report. Vice-chair Dobson suggests that the formation of the WSC be added as a timeline item for 2006.

Mr. Cummings noted, as a facilitator for the workshop, it was interesting to see the number of people with an in-depth understanding of water issues engaged and committed to finding solutions to complicated issues.

In response to questions, Dr. Warwick Sears added that board feedback on the strategic planning session and draft report has been positive and directors were pleased to see the high level of engagement by council members. Staff are now developing a five-year strategic plan based on the workshop – a plan that will work in partnership with the Water Management Plan that is underway and the Sustainable Water Strategy. This plan will be presented for discussion to directors at their October meeting.

Chair Bauer noted the role of the board is different than the council. Whereas the WSC looks at issues from a technical perspective, the board is a political body which needs to “sell” recommendations to address water issues to their boards and councils, and constituents. That said, he added, the board has been very supportive of the council’s work and values its input.

Moved by Remi Allard

Seconded by Renee Clark

“That the Strategic Planning Workshop notes be received.”

CARRIED

5. BOARD REPORT

Dr. Warwick Sears provided a report on the OBWB Annual General Meeting noting a couple of highlights. Leon Louis, a Syilx Knowledge Holder, provided a First Nations perspective on Okanagan water issues. And Bob Sandford, Canadian Chair of the UN Water for Life Decade, delivered a special presentation on climate change and the impact on water, especially in the Canadian west.

A regular board meeting followed the AGM. Discussion items included an update on work by the federal Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans to develop and pass legislation to make it illegal to transport

zebra/quagga mussels. This legislation is required as a first step in implementing inspection stations.

Also, the board requested a package of OBWB materials (e.g. correspondence and reports), regarding the provincial sale of reservoir lease lots around drinking water reservoirs, be collated and forwarded to the province to make sure the Premier and new ministers were aware of the issue. A copy of the package was presented to the board.

A report on the Sewage Facilities Grant program and recommendations regarding its potential expansion to include stormwater infrastructure projects was also delivered.

Staff also provided a copy of a report that was sent to the province regarding next steps in finding a permanent home for the BC Water Use Reporting Centre.

The board approved a motion to have the province reengage on the creation of a national park in the South Okanagan, noting its interest in water protection.

Dr. Warwick Sears noted that she recently attended the Osoyoos Lake Board of Control's annual meeting and met with members of the International Joint Commission and discussed concerns around z/q mussels. The concerns are shared and the IJC is looking at how it can help advocate for federal legislation.

6. PRESENTATION: IN-STREAM FLOWS

Frank Poulsen, ESSA Technologies Ltd.

Mr. Jatel introduced Mr. Poulsen, noting his past work on the OBWB's Water Supply and Demand project and the recent eco-system valuation of Okanagan River, and his more recent involvement in developing software to help understand and manage in-stream flow needs for fish.

Mr. Poulsen presented on the new software adding the program looks at how flows affect habitat and provides recommendations to ensure the needs of fish are met. The software includes a trade-off analysis and thresholds for water managers to consider, allowing them to go below the threshold for short periods of time without serious impact to fish.

The software was initially developed to respond to issues on Middle Vernon Creek which has run dry during kokanee spawning. There is also concern for rare plants and water storage needs for Lake Country, added Mr. Poulsen. The software can be adjusted to the issues a particular water body is facing, all with a view to helping ensure the best conditions for fish, he said.

Mr. Rouck entered the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

There was some discussion about the tool. Mr. Furness said that the tool could be helpful to his ministry in water licencing decisions.

Ms. Restrepo-Tamayo exited the meeting at 2: 15 p.m.

Mr. Dobson provided a brief update on appeal board hearings regarding the issuing of domestic water licences on water reservoirs in Lake Country and the South East Kelowna Irrigation District.

7. PROJECT UPDATE: HYDROMETRIC MONITORING STATIONS

Mr. Dobson gave an update on the project to re-establish hydrometric monitoring stations in the Okanagan and noted that a station at Clark Creek is now operating. Another at Vernon Creek, near the Swalwell reservoir will be installed in the fall, and the committee is talking with RDNO about a station possibly on Coldstream Creek.

Chair Bauer said that the same collaborative model used to install groundwater monitoring wells in the valley is being used on this project and is working well, bringing local and senior governments together.

The committee is also looking at re-establishing hydromet stations in the southeast and northwest sides of the basin, but will be based on finding appropriate partners, council was told.

8. DISCUSSION: OKANAGAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Jatel provided an overview of the draft Okanagan WMP. The plan includes chapters on local government agreements (e.g. universal water metering in the Okanagan, topsoil bylaws), aligned approaches with First Nations and local governments, senior government roles and responsibilities, and a request under part 4 of Water Act to have the plan approved by the province.

It still needs to be determined whether the three regional districts would sign off on it, or the 15 local governments and four First Nations bands.

There was discussion about how best to approach local government with the document and the possibility of approaching irrigation districts. It was also noted that it's possible to move forward on a plan without it being approved by the province.

Additional comments:

- a "vision" statement might be useful
- council members were asked to go back to the agencies they represent on the council, collect feedback and report back
- would there be benefit to expanding Ch. 2 from local government to include other sectors
- OBWB staff will be compiling a baseline of water metering, drought plans, etc. to see where communities are at

9. ROUNDTABLE – MEMBER UPDATES

Council members and guests were invited to provide an update:

- Mr. Furness: FLNRO has grad students doing assessments on milfoil and mussels; The ministry is also looking at the Christina Lake bio-control trial for milfoil and translocation work with Rocky Mountain ridged mussel, and working on Phase 2 of the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative (ORRI).
- Dr. Guy: Thanks to ONA, ESSA and others, making it easier for sockeye to return to the Okanagan as they did historically, enjoyed sockeye salmon fishing in Osoyoos this summer.
- Mr. Rouck: The forestry sector is finding mountain pine beetle manageable now and we're back to more normal forest management. The beetle and need for heavy logging was causing concerns for hydrology. Moving from high volume to less material to work with requires greater planning.
- Mr. Buchler: Although there have been water quantity issues in Twin Lakes in the past, there was an abundance this year. This has highlighted the need to educate people more on water cycles.
- Mr. Meredith: CWRA has its AGM in Hamilton June 2-4. The CWRA is updating its website. Those interested in advertising events can contact us.
- Mr. Reeder: City of Kelowna has signed off on an innovative water supply plan between the city and four large irrigation districts intended to improve water quality. This was a condition to provincial funding to IDs. With the province's approval of the plan the IDs will be applying for funding; The city is completing UV treatment plant plans and will go to tender soon, it is also reviewing its sewage master plan.
- Ms. Bakelaar: RDCO applied OBWB grant funding to a project that has significantly reduced potable water use from 19,000m³ to 3,400m³ in the 1st and 2nd quarter. Staff anticipate an annual drop of 25,000m³ – worth \$12,000 a year; The regional district is working with OBWB and BCWF on a wetlands strategy; The Regional Growth Strategy is going to final review soon; The RDCO's

silvopasture project with District of Lake Country, and funded by the OBWB, has been nominated for a premier's award.

- Mr. Peterson: Min. of Ag has posted for a position in Vernon.
- Mr. Birtles: Interior Health helped Alberta public health with their flooding situation; Staff are working with local small water systems on what plans are in place for source water protection, and working with RDCO on a source water protection plan.
- Mr. Allard: BCGWA is hosting the national groundwater conference in Kelowna in June 2014 and would like to include some of the work being done with the OBWB.
- Mr. Dobson: It was interesting to hear Bob Sandford speak at the Water Board AGM and the challenge for engineers to address the impacts of climate change to our water systems.
- Mr. Kiss: There is concern about the RDNO's proposed Water Master Plan, in particular the cost for water delivery to ag users. Discussions are continuing.
- Mr. Davies: The BCWF held a workshop to see what kinds of wetland restoration projects it can do in the Okanagan (e.g. a marshland project with the Peachland Club). The club is aware of the wetland strategy that is underway with the OBWB and is working to make sure that there is some synergy between the two efforts.
- Ms. Masters: ORRI Phase 2 work is underway; It was good to see the Make Water Work and Don't Move a Mussel (DMM) messaging throughout the valley this summer; In response to some of the discussion happening around climate change and our reaction to it, we need to be careful not to try to control and instead work with nature. Going back to traditional First Nations ways will be important.
- Ms. Clark: RDNO is supporting a UBCO project aimed at bacterial source tracking to track contamination back to particular herds and is looking at best management practices; The Water Master Plan has been updated and looks at how to provide water in the Greater Vernon Water area to 2040; Our initial Kalamalka Lake response plan meeting was recently held with MoE and others in attendance; A water quality monitoring station is being installed as an early warning system for water quality on Coldstream Creek which impacts Kal Lake. It would give us six hours to turn the water system off; RDNO is working with Allan Brooks Nature Centre and holding a Rivers Day celebration and stream clean-up on Sept. 29.
- Mr. Littley: Staff put out a bid for hydrometric monitoring project and are conducting a review of the WCQI grant program.
- Ms. Jackson: Summer was busy with the re-launch of our outdoor water conservation campaign – www.MakeWaterWork.ca and the launch of a new campaign to help prevent the introduction of invasive mussels – www.DontMoveAMussel.ca.
- Dr. Warwick Sears: Attended Al Gore's Climate Reality Project training this summer and will be going to a BCWWA workshop on how to effectively communicate on climate change.
- Mr. Jatel: Okanagan wetlands strategy phase 1 has launched. Staff are working with UBCO to develop a conference for 2015 regarding forests and water in a changing environment.
- Mr. Cummings: North Okanagan commissioner is looking at every single boat that launches (e.g. at Paddlewheel Park and Kal Lk) and there is likely a good opportunity to connect with them on the DMM message.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be at the Best Western Inn on October 10, 2013.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Moved by Rob Birtles

"That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of September 12, 2013 be adjourned."

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Chair

Executive Director