

# OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

*A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board*

## **AMENDED MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD THURSDAY, September 8, 2016, AT OKANAGAN REGIONAL LIBRARY, 1430 KLO ROAD, KELOWNA, B.C.**

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### **COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

#### Present

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch  
Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.  
BC Agriculture Council  
BC Ground Water Association  
BC Wildlife Federation – Region 8  
City of Kelowna  
Environment and Climate Change Canada – West and North  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Interior Health Authority  
Interior Health Authority  
Ministry of Agriculture  
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops. (Resource Mgmt)  
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program  
Okanagan Forest Sector  
Okanagan Nation Alliance  
Regional District of North Okanagan  
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen  
UBC Okanagan

Scott Smith (alt.)  
Don Dobson  
Hans Buchler  
Marta Green  
Lorne Davies  
Jason Angus (alt)  
Ian Rogalski (alt)  
Doug Edwards  
Rob Birtles (Chair)  
Judi Ekkert (alt)  
Andrew Petersen  
Grant Furness  
Tanis Gieselman  
Murray Wilson  
Natasha Lukey  
Renee Clark  
Zoe Kirk  
Bernie Bauer

#### Regrets

BC Cattlemen's Association  
BC Fruit Growers Association  
BC Water Supply Association  
Canadian Water Resources Association  
City of Penticton  
City of Vernon  
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce  
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops. (OSNR)  
Okanagan College  
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board  
Regional District of Central Okanagan

Lee Hesketh/Linda Allison  
Denise MacDonald/Glen Lucas  
Toby Pike/Patti Meger  
Brian Guy/Dwayne Meredith  
Andrew Martin  
Ed Stranks/Rob Miles  
Caroline Grover/Tom Dyas  
Robert Warner/Ray Crampton  
Allison MacMillan/Leif Burge  
David O'Keefe  
Margaret Bakelaar

### **STAFF**

OBWB, Executive Director  
OBWB, Water Stewardship Director  
OBWB, Operations and Grants Manager  
OBWB, Communications & Planning Specialist

Anna Warwick Sears  
Nelson Jatel  
James Littley  
Kellie Garcia

### **GUESTS**

CAPSA, Laval University, QU  
Irrigation Industry Association of BC  
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Res. Ops. (Resource Mgmt)  
UBC-O  
UBC-O  
UBC-O  
Westcoast CED Consulting

Natasha Neuman  
Sylvain Jutras  
Ted van der Gulik  
Amy Nixon  
John Janmaat  
Jonathan Bepplles  
Nargiz Rahimova  
Karol Hansma

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Rob Birtles called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. and welcomed members and guests. Before the meeting was started, Renee Clark with RDNO said a few words on the passing of Anna Page who was a long time OWSC member and alternate member for RDNO.

**2. APPROVE AGENDA**

**Moved by Don Dobson**

**Seconded by Ted van der Gulik**

***“That the agenda for the September 8, 2016 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.”***

**CARRIED**

**3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**Moved by Bernie Bauer**

**Seconded by Doug Edwards**

***“That the minutes from the May 12, 2016 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved with the above noted changes.”***

**CARRIED**

**4. BOARD REPORT—Ms. Warwick Sears**

There has not been an OBWB meeting since July. Their annual public meeting is being held tomorrow (September 9, 2016) where there will be discussions held on all the projects they have been working on this year. There will be a short OBWB meeting following the public meeting. It has been a quiet summer but very productive with work being done on the EFN by Nelson Jatel, drought planning projects by Kelly Garcia, water conservation and DMM projects by Corinne Jackson and milfoil related projects by James Littlely.

**5. OKANAGAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WETLAND PROTECTION BYLAWS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION (Amy Nixon & Grant Furness, FLNRO)**

Grant Furness talked a bit about the work that the Ministry is doing to identify wetlands that do not meet the definition of stream under the WSA or under the old Water Act and mechanisms to conserve those wetlands as well as what local governments have in their toolkit. There is enabling legislation that governs local governments that they have looked at and done an assessment on. Amy Nixon provided a look at

the results of that assessment. Amy has been working on this project since February but it follows up on work she has done over the past few years on wetland protection and local government by-laws. Amy spoke about Okanagan wetlands, their importance and some of the threats to them. She also highlighted what they are seeing as a gap in provincial legislation as it pertains to wetland protection. Finally, she provided a review of the assessment and the results in terms of how well local government tools are currently being utilized to fill the gap and where there may be potential for improvement or collaboration. Wetlands are a broad ecosystem with lots of diversity. The thing that ties them altogether is that their soil is saturated for all or part of the year meaning that water determines the soil types and the vegetation that is present. Wetlands provide a variety of habitat values for wildlife and provide habitat for a variety of species and ecosystems at risk. Wetlands are pretty rare due to our arid conditions but also due to activities happening on the land and they are at risk. Ephemeral wetlands, where surface water is lacking for some if not all of the year, are really at risk. In terms of wetland protect and the WSA, the new WSA clearly includes wetlands in the definition of a stream. There is a gap in the legislation in terms of ephemeral wetland protection because they don't have water all of the time and don't easily fall into the legal definition of a stream. Local government is seen as a really important partner in filling this gap and one of the goals of this project was to try and figure out how well local government by-laws address the ephemeral wetland gap currently and how to improve and ensure a consistent approach to wetland protection including ephemeral wetlands, across the valley.

Some of the summary points include: most local governments have recognized the value of wetlands in general but the ephemeral wetlands are falling through the cracks a little; development permit areas are being used for environmental protection but mapping availability seems to determine if a wetland is being included in a DPA; requirements and guidelines for DPAs are variable and require a more consistent approach; and soil bylaws are seen as a way to address some of the gaps but would require some revisions; and the Okanagan, there is growing momentum around wetlands as a result of the Wetland Strategy led by the OBWB.

## **6. WATER GOVERNANCE (Sylvain Jutras, Laval University)**

Mr. Jutras is a professor from Laval University and he spoke to the Council on water governance based on a Quebec watershed and some of the lessons they have learned. Quebec has a recent legislative framework enabling integrated watershed management. It is based on a citizen participatory governance and a non profit organization – CAPSA which is a watershed organization recognized by the government and an NPO that supports, advises, and is aligned through concerted integrated management of water in watersheds Sainte-Anne, Portneuf and La Chevrotière sector.

Water is in abundance in Quebec. They have high rainfall (pluviometry). They have no dry season or wet season. It is pretty much the same throughout the year. This plays a big role in the water governance and causes mainly flooding issues not drought problems. Who is responsible for water governance in Quebec? There is no Ministry of Water. There are specific roles in relation to water within the Government, i.e. the Ministry of Environment is responsible for protection and monitoring. The municipalities have a lot of responsibility as they are in charge of drinking water, waste water and it is where the money is being invested. In the 1980s, there was a move to the protection of rivers and streams due to high pollution from specific industries. In 1994, the Ministry of Environment started the first pilot project of integrated watershed management. In 1996, the Saguenay flood caused \$1.5 billion in damages and 10 deaths. It was a mixture of exceptional rain and dam failures that caused the flood but it was unclear who was responsible. This generated a lot of debate and a public hearing on water governance was held. In 2000, Beauchamp's report was published which stated that sectoral governance was ineffective and another solution was necessary. The concept of GIEBV was formed which means the integrated management of water with a watershed perspective. Through the National Water Policy of 2002, the Quebec government committed to reforming water governance by establishing integrated watershed management. 33 (now 40) basin organizations were founded each with \$65,000/yr to promote and build some water master plans for their watersheds and in 2009, it was recognized that integrated water resource

management is successful/working. With the adoption of their Water Act, it signified the first time in Quebec law that it was written that water is a collective resource. Each of the basin organizations is different in terms of their size and operation. CAPSU has a smaller structure with seven Board of Directors, 5 (to 7) full time employees and 3 (to 5) seasonal employees. Some of the challenges faced by Basin organizations in Quebec are: NPO with own autonomy versus Government mandate; diversifying revenues; maintaining neutrality (not all organizations are neutral but CAPSA is); continuously reaching stakeholders (new election every four years municipally); and linking citizen participatory governance (best practices) to municipal authority. From the first day CAPSA was created they believed in going beyond plans and get the action done (action is the best way to get a good plan done). More information on CAPSA can be found at [www.capsa-org.com](http://www.capsa-org.com).

## **7. ROUNDTABLE – MEMBER UPDATES**

Council members and guests were invited to provide an update:

- Ms. Green (BCGWA): continues to work on writing letters encouraging government funding of WSA. There will be a webinar.
- Mr. Jutras (guest): pass
- Ms. Nixon (guest): pass
- Mr. Furness (FLNRO): they are keeping an eye on the water levels of a few systems. There has been an increased milfoil level at Vaseux Lake and they are not yet sure if it is a local issue or a cyclical issue. Dock monitoring continues. There are still some issues with new docks being built.
- Mr. Petersen (MAG): spent time on drought even though it was a completely different year. There has been a lot of work with the WSA regarding Dugout Regulation, Livestock Regulation and supporting BC Cattleman's Association with well registration. He would like to do a few irrigation talks and is hoping for a Jan/Feb timeframe. If interested, get in touch with Andrew.
- Mr. Janmaat (UBCO): wrapped up two summer projects. First was determining how much work it will be to make a data set that can be used to see whether property values are impacted by water quality. The second project involved supervising a student on a cost/benefit of small stream rehabilitation project. He is going to be part of a panel discussion on the State of Water Resource Economics and Future Directions at a

conference in Washington.

- Mr. Wilson (OFS): Rita Winkler was asked to put out a briefing note regarding clear cut areas and ECA caps and explaining the process better.
- Mr. Buchler (BCAC): early on in the process of applying for groundwater license. Wondering about taking a more holistic view of the process and look at the bigger picture of dam safety and inspections as there are certain implications and side effects if a dam is removed that need to be considered if someone opts to have a dam removed and not licensed.
- Ms. Kirk (RDOS): they have purchased wetlands adjacent to the Okanagan Falls wastewater treatment plant. It will be a restoration project. The West Bench meters have been in for 14-18 months and they have now been looking at all of the leaks in the system on the homeowners' side. They have an RFP out for the first phase of their regional Drought Management Plan with a flood component. They are replacing water main upgrades in Olalla. They have been granted \$40,000 from RBC water project and are organizing riparian workshops.
- Mr. Smith (BCFGA): no report. Provided comment regarding the West Bench meters – it is remarkable the technology that is in place.
- Ms. Neumann (guest): worked on a contract with OBWB to build and populate an Aquarius database with water data from the Okanagan. This is ongoing.
- Mr. Beppe (guest): Masters Graduate from UBCO looking for opportunities in the sustainability or environmental sector.
- Mr. van der Gulik (IIABC): there is now a reporting feature in the Water Calculator that allows the user to report on erroneous data.
- Mr. Dobson (APEGBC): recently he has worked on two cases where residents have been having issues with water coming onto their property. In both cases, the water tested was chlorinated water. The MCRI has moved into the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage (fish enhancement) of the project. A few months ago the concept of watershed stewards and the possibility of grant funding to cover the costs was discussed at the Council. Susan Lapp has been working on the idea with Renee Clark, Patti (Lake Country) and Nelson Jatel to try and figure out how this might work. When they spoke with the compliance and enforcement agencies within the various groups, there is huge interest in making something work. There is a good opportunity to provide the major water providers in the valley with the opportunity to have someone in their watershed over the snow free period.
- Ms. Clark (RDNO): they have started the boat capacity project and have been collecting data over the summer. They are considering renaming their drought response update to supply shortage plan. In October, they are lifting their intake up off the bottom of Kal Lake. The Grizzly Recreation Site that they have been working with Rec Sites & Trails BC is now a site and they have had a host there on Fri/Sat/Sun. Dam safety has become a big issue that encompasses a lot of time and now they have to develop a Pest Management Plan to deal with burrowing animals.
- Ms. Rahimova (guest): PhD student at UBCO.
- Ms. Gieselman (OCCP): has been helping a number of organizations carry out their environmental projects, i.e., helping with foreshore inventory mapping of Okanagan Lake. In early November, they are hoping to offer a workshop for planners. They are helping the Students without Borders group with some environmental assessments/mapping. They are working on a resource curriculum for teachers to help them develop outdoor education.
- Mr. Bauer (UBCO): 2 projects. Work underway on a small watershed in Armstrong. It is part of the group environmental farm plan. They have about 1.5 years of data. Working with Debbie Roberts, Professor, on a water contamination study looking at the impact of livestock waste (E Coli, Cryptosporidium), and the potential impact of ATV traffic, on drinking water.
- Ms. Ekkert (IH): in the spring, Kaleden Irrigation District completed their source water assessment for Skaha Lake. They received funding from OBWB and were granted an extension.
- Mr. Rogalski (ECCC): busy summer on lots of different policy development fronts.
- Mr. Angus (City of Kelowna): the city is moving into the final budget process for 2017. One of the main projects will be replacing of the water meters. They are also revising their servicing subdivision development bylaw.
- Mr. Davies (BCWF): the provincial organization completed a 3-year project to advance watershed conservation and sustainability in BC. This was done in collaboration with the Fraser

Basin Council. BCWF is working with ONA on the Rainbow Trout Study on Skaha Lake. The RAPP application has an I-phone version that is almost ready to be released. The Peachland Club is building a fishing wharf in Peachland. They are looking for contributions.

- Ms. Lukey (ONA): reminding everyone that ONA owns and operates 40 hydrometric stations in the Okanagan Basin so to please check in with them when looking for data as they may have some available. The Sockeye harvest has been successful and they are moving into broodstock for the egg take and milt collection. This summer, OBWB provided some resources for a BCWF hosted and led wetland mapping and training course. ONA is hosting a Salmon Feast on Sep 18<sup>th</sup>. On October 18 & 19 ONA, Kari Alex, is hosting 15 Years of Restoring Salmon Habitat in the Okanagan River Workshop at En'owkin.
- Mr. Edwards (DFO): busy summer. Starting last week they have noticed that the fish have been building up in the Shuswap Lake but it is shallow at the mouth and they had to decide on a plan. They approached many of the large irrigation users to see if they would voluntarily reduce their intake until September 10<sup>th</sup>. They have seen some success but will be revisiting next week. Progress is being made on Wilsey Dam. They hoping for some kind of fish passage solution. Working with Ori and ONA with the fish fence in the river at Penticton and have got approval to hire a consultant to look at more spawning areas in Penticton. They have had about 50 projects approved in the Interior since June. These are mostly restoration and fish passage type projects. There will be calls for applications coming up in the fall, i.e. Pacific Salmon Foundation, Pacific Salmon Commission, Recreational Fisheries Partnership project. They are getting close to implementing the Nicola Water Management tool.
- Mr. Littley (OBWB): there have been increased calls from the residents around Vaseux Lake regarding the milfoil. The milfoil has taken over the lake. It is a migratory bird sanctuary with the Canadian Wildlife Service. There are no areas currently available to pick up the weeds, and no motors are allowed on the lake so the OBWB would require federal approval. In July, he was at PNWER and they will be mimicking the call for

the federal government to increase resources to the Western provinces and more action from CBSA on zebra/quagga mussels.

- Mr. Jatel (OBWB): working on the EFN and data management. There are teams of people in the field collecting data. September 14<sup>th</sup> is the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Water Stewardship Council. They are looking at some habitat mapping on Mission Creek along with some thermal profiling coupled with iconic exchange. They are pulling together an Okanagan Drought strategy from the OBWB perspective and focusing in on communication and ensuring information flow in times of drought. The 18<sup>th</sup> month term of the Council is coming to an end with next month's meeting. The incoming Chair is Brian Guy. There has been some discussion about changing the membership to include two new categories. One would be non-organization affiliates (i.e., people retiring, not associated with an institution) and the other a student position (i.e., under 25 and actively involved in a program). These are up for discussion. Send any comments to Nelson.
- Mr. Birtles (IH): there have been no reports of algal blooms this year but it is still early. IH is involved in a program that is teaching small (and large) water suppliers emergency response planning. MOE contacted IH to help distribute WSA materials by handing out pamphlets and talking to particular suppliers and directing them back to FLNRO should they have any questions. Ministry of Health is relooking at lead in large systems.

## **8. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

Comment was made that Suzan Lapp and Jesse Zeaman should connect over the new RAPP application that is being developed.

## **9. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The committees were well attended. The EFN committee will continue to provide an opportunity to talk about EFN for streams but also some of the social trade offs (i.e., when and how much water is needed in the streams and the implications for agriculture). With regard to drought, the province has made some big changes for drought management. There has been less activity on the ground but more thought as to how to manage during future years of drought.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be on Thursday, October 13, 2016 from 12:30 to 4:30 at Okanagan Regional Library, 1430 KLO Road Kelowna.

October will be Rob Birtles' last meeting as Chair and unfortunately he will not be in attendance. Bernie Bauer acknowledged Rob Birtles' commitment to the OWSC. Thanking him for his time and efforts.

**CERTIFIED CORRECT:**

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Chair

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Moved by Marta Green

*"That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of September 8, 2016 be adjourned."*

**CARRIED**

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Executive Director