

OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD THURSDAY, September 7, 2017, AT COAST CAPRI HOTEL, KELOWNA, B.C.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Present

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Research Branch
BC Agriculture Council
BC Ground Water Association
BC Ministry of Agriculture
BC Water Supply Association
BC Wildlife Federation – Region 8
Canadian Water Resources Association
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Interior Health Authority
Irrigation Industry Association of BC
Min of Forests, Lands, Nat. Res. Ops. & Rural Devt (OK Shuswap)
Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program
Okanagan College
Regional District of North Okanagan
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Assn
UBC Okanagan

Denise Neilsen (Vice Chair)
Hans Buchler
Marta Green
Andrew Petersen
Bob Hrasko
Doug Flintoft/Lorne Davies
Brian Guy (Chair)
Doug Edwards
Rob Birtles
Bruce Naka
Robert Warner
Scott Boswell
Allison MacMillan
Renee Clark
Zoe Kirk
Murray Wilson
Bernie Bauer

Regrets

Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.
BC Cattlemen's Association
BC Fruit Growers Association
City of Kelowna
City of Vernon
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce
Min of Forests, Lands, Nat. Res. Ops. & Rural Devt (Resource Mgmt)
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board
Regional District of Central Okanagan

Don Dobson/Susan Lapp
Lee Hesketh/Linda Allison
Glen Lucas/Richard MacDonald/Kevin Day
Joel Shaw/Jason Ough
Ed Stranks/Rob Miles (alt)
Tom Dyas/Jeff Robinson
Lora Nield
David O'Keefe/Howard Newfeld (alt)
Danika Dudzik/Chris Radford

STAFF

OBWB, Executive Director
OBWB, Water Stewardship Director
OBWB, Communications Director
OBWB, Policy & Planning Specialist

Anna Warwick Sears
Nelson Jatel
Corinne Jackson
Kellie Garcia

GUESTS

Associated Environmental Consultants Inc.
Associated Environmental Consultants Inc.
Assoc. of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C.
BC Wildfire Service's Kamloops Fire Centre
BC Cherry Assn
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Nat. Res. Ops. & Rural Devt (Ecosystems)
OBWB, Chair
Okanagan Nation Alliance
Trail Mix Author/Columnist
UBC-O
UBC-O
UBC-O
Westcoast CED Consulting

Natasha Neumann
Rebecca Schultz
Drew Lejbak
Rob Larson
Shawn Badasha
Rob Schweitzer
Christine Lindy
Ryan Whitehouse
Tracy Gray
Elinor McGrath
Judie Steeves
John Janmaat
Marni Turek
Nargiz Rahimova
Karol Hansma

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Brian Guy called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. and welcomed members and guests.

2. **APPROVE AGENDA**

Moved by Denise Neilsen

Seconded by Scott Boswell

“That the agenda for the Sep 7, 2017 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved.” CARRIED

3. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Chair Guy noted a few changes that needed to be made. On page 2 in the Board Report, 4th line from the bottom, FLNRO should be DFO; and under OK Large Lake Boating Environmental Impacts, 9th line down, Evasive should be Invasive and the acronym should be OASISS not OSESS. Chair Guy also noted a change for the June 6, 2017 Joint Board – Council Meeting. On page 1, 3rd line from the start, raided should be raised.

Moved by Doug Edwards

Seconded by Andrew Petersen

“That the minutes from the May 11, 2017 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council and the minutes from the June 6, 2017 Joint Board – Council meeting be approved as amended” CARRIED

4. **BUSINESS ARISING (from previous meeting):**

Dr. Sears was asked to provide some comment on communications the Board has had with the new BC Government. The Board has sent out a “getting to know you” letter to the BC Government letting them know who the OBWB are, what they do, some of their main areas of concerns. It was a positive letter to connect the Government on what is happening in Okanagan communities.

Mr. Jatel spoke about communication between the Board and a variety of BC Professional organizations. At the June 6th meeting, Heather Larratt identified the potential for professionals not being as aware of transporting and infecting lakes as they could be. There is a need to communicate with professionals and to ask them to provide information to their members around Z&Q mussels and the potential for them to be inadvertently transported into the area. Mr. Littley drew up a note with some background and additional information and recommended actions. Mr. Jatel is looking to OWSC members for input on what would be the best way to communicate with their professional organizations/colleagues. The Council

was invited to share their ideas with Mr. Jatel by email. Ms. Jackson indicated that she will send out the information to the various professional organizations but will require a list of the groups that it should be sent out to.

Mr. Guy reported on the August 31st meeting of the nomination committee which held a conference call to discuss Council memberships. The Council agreed that *emeritus membership* on the Council would be desirable but that the membership would follow a strict definition and should be capped at three. The committee is recommending that the OBWB make it possible, but not necessary, to add up to three positions, which are not aligned with a particular organization, on Council. This will be used as a last resort after all opportunities to contribute have been considered. It will be reserved for those who have been a member of Council in the past and who are in a position to offer substantial value across the workings of the Council. The committee is also recommending that the nomination committee be changed from an ad hoc committee to a Standing Committee with a Terms of Reference. ***Mr. Guy moved that the Nomination Committee report be received and approved by the OWSC. Bob Hrasko seconded the motion and the floor was open for discussion.*** Following the discussions, Mr. Guy noted that these recommendations will be presented to the OBWB for them to move forward on. Mr. Guy asked for the Council to vote on the motion and approve the recommendations to be presented to the Board. All Council members were in favor and none were opposed. The motion was carried and the nomination committee report and recommendations will be presented to the OBWB.

5. **BOARD REPORT (Ds. Warwick Sears)**

The Board met on August 1st and MP Mel Arnold spoke to the group on his concerns about invasive aquatic species, working with the OBWB to support local prevention efforts, and getting things done in Ottawa. OBWB has reached out to the new BC Government on Okanagan water issues. They had discussions on the floods events review and there is a lot of interest in understanding what to do to mitigate further floods and improve the response. The OBWB is currently working with local governments on floodplain mapping for future flood mitigation. They are also pushing for EMBC to do a liDAR flight over the Okanagan. They have a new Water Demand Model internship through a grant from Ag Canada. The Board was updated on the Mission Creek ground/surface water interaction project. Mr. Littley recently attended the PNWER summit meeting and reported to the Board on new initiatives dealing with invasive mussels. Information was presented on the various

communication efforts being undertaken throughout the summer and there was an update on the Sustainable Water Strategy, the Agriculture Water Supply Communications Pilot Project, Mainstem Drought Triggers project and the Toolkits and Guides project. The OBWB's Annual Public Meeting is being held tomorrow (Sep 8) prior to their regular meeting. It will focus on climate adaptation and the extreme weather events that we have been experiencing.

6. **ENVIRONMENTAL FLOW NEEDS PROJECT (Elinor McGrath, Drew Lejbak, Natasha Neumann)**

Phase 1 of the EFN project involved the recommendation of a desktop method for the first cut at estimates for an EFN flow regime and then a recommendation on a field base method. Phase 2 involves implementation of the two methods. Drew Lejbak is working on the desktop method and Elinor McGrath is heading up Phase 2 of the EFN project and the field based data collection and modeling work. Natasha Neumann is responsible handling, storing and managing all of the data being collected. In terms of Phase 2, the EFN team is still in the field amassing the data.

The presentation focused on the two methods being used in the process and the work being done to support those methods. The main goal of the EFN project in the Okanagan is to develop defensible, transparent and robust values for Okanagan tributaries. In Phase 1, the Okanagan Tenant Method (desktop method) was established as the method to be used when there is adequate data already available or it is a low risk stream. The Okanagan Weighted Useable Width method is a more intensive field base method and is being used for higher risk situations. In Phase 1, 19 streams were identified and in Phase 2 11 of those streams became the focus for data collection. In May, the Phase 1 report was drafted and comments have been received from ONA, OBWB, and a number of ministry people. They are hoping to have it finalized in the next few weeks. Phase 2 involves intensive data and field base collection. They have uploaded most of the field data into Aquarius and they are starting to develop rating curves. The next step will be to test drive the two methods, documenting the process, recommending improvements and considerations and looking at how the methods work and how they compare.

2017 FOREST FIRE REPORT (Rob Schweitzer)

Bob Warner introduced Rob Schweitzer, Manager of the Kamloops Fire Centre for about 1 ½ yrs. Rob is responsible for the fire zones in Kamloops, Penticton, Salmon Arm, Cascades, and US Border which follow the boundaries of the Thompson

Okanagan Region. Rob and his staff were also instrumental in helping with the flood season.

It has been a crazy year with flood response followed by fire response and the recent drought issues at some locations. It has been a long season for the Fire Centre staff. Approximately 44,000 people have been evacuated at one point this summer which is unprecedented. Normally, there is about 400 staff working throughout the summer (8 months of the year) and 80 full time staff. This summer, there was about 1200 personnel working in the centre and right now there are about 800. The number of hectares that have burned in the Province are, as of today's date, around 1.2 million which is the most hectares burned in recorded history of the Province. The average is usually about 154,000ha. In terms of cost, it has been the highest year for suppression costs.

The precipitation totals for all of the weather stations in the Centre show minimal rain if none at all since June 15th. Penticton has Apr – Jun 15 at 132mm and since June 15 there has been 0.6mm. Rob reviewed the fire indices from a few of the weather stations to show how inline this year is with the maximum ever recorded and even much greater. He also reviewed some of the major fires that they are dealing with right now including: Elephant Hill, Philpott Road, Diamond Creek, and Finlay Creek. At the moment, the Province has about 3600 fire fighters on the ground. That number was 4800 at one point. They have exhausted all of the contracting crews in the Province and have had to work with their National partners to bring in crews and then they had to go internationally and bring in crews from Mexico, New Zealand, and Australia. Following the presentation there was a great group discussion raising questions such as: is this the new "normal", a need for broader operational plans to deal with flood, fire, drought, and fuel management in community watersheds, and the role of ecosystem restoration. There will be a number of reviews this Fall and Winter evaluating the processes and outcomes.

7. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The *Irrigation Committee* (Bruce Naka) met in the morning. Their first few meetings were spent prioritizing and today they reviewed and summarized the committee's work plan. They feel some more time needs to be spent looking at the specifics of IM given a variety of horticultural requirements of the various plants. They are also looking at extending education efforts to cover

more irrigators and encourage them to adopt more efficient irrigation practices.

The **Source Protection and Wetland Committee** (Renee Clark) met in the morning on a teleconference call. The summer has been slow for the committee but lots of work has been completed on Task 2 (Wetlands) by Tanis and Amy and working with Nelson on guidance for municipalities. There will be a workshop in November. Task 4 is progressing and they are looking at a GAP/SWOT analysis on how agencies are interacting and communicating with each other. The fifth task, looking at watershed assessments that have been completed throughout the Okanagan to date, is progressing. The committee will be meeting face to face on Oct 5th.

The **Communication Committee** (Zoe Kirk) has three major goals. Nelson, Corinne and Inge Friesen have done a great job establishing a tool for intercommunication. There is a new tool (chat room) which has undergone several stages of beta testing and is about to be implemented. The Leadership team has tested it already. This tool will complement and enhance virtual meetings and increase efficiency and decrease the need for travel.

The **OK Supply & Demand Study Committee** (Denise Neilsen) has not had a lot happen since May but OBWB has received funding from AgCda for an intern and that person will be looking at the BC Assessment Data and the domestic side of water demand. They have applied for a grant to look the hydrology modeling and they are working towards an RFP for an integrated water supply and demand study.

The **Sustainable Water Strategy Committee** (Kellie Garcia) met the third week of June and time was spent going over the guiding principles and some time has been spent working on the annotated bibliography outline. She will be garnering feedback on the outline after October.

The **EFN Committee** (Doug Edwards) has not had a lot of activity yet. They have had a couple of meetings looking at what the mandate should be and how they can take the information gathered in Phase 2 of the EFN project to see how it can be useful for FLNRO. They are scheduled to have a meeting in October.

The **Policy Committee** (Rob Birtles) – no report

The **Drought & Flood** (Scott Boswell) – no report

8. **MEMBER UPDATES: ROUNDTABLE**

Council members and guests were invited to provide an update:

- Mr. Buchler (BCAC): pass
- Mr. Bauer (UBCO): noted that Marni Turek is working at getting some money from the VP

Research to create a water cluster on campus that will bring together the faculty members with an interest in water (about 15-20). They are hoping to create nodes of excellence to help inform the type of research that UBCO should be doing. He encouraged Council members to support the initiative by writing letters of support.

- Ms. Rahimova (guest): pass
- Mr. Petersen (MoAg): quiet as the majority of staff has been pulled into priority fire response duty. His focus has been the drought.
- Ms. Schultz (guest): pass
- Mr. Badasha (APEGBC): pass
- Ms. Neumann (guest): working with OBWB on populating the Aquarius database. The data is starting to come together. She is also pulling together third party data (purveyors, RDs, local governments) with different standards, and communicating with the Province as they are building their own database for surface water.
- Mr. Jatel (OBWB): busy summer working on the EFN project as well as on Mission Creek and trying to better understand surface to ground water interactions. Reminder of the OBWB AGM tomorrow (Sep 8) in West Kelowna.
- Mr. Warner (FLNRO): main focus has been a flood recovery project and getting some funding for staffing.
- Ms. Kirk (RDOS) – BC Grape Growers sponsored a Well Registration workshop. Mr. Warner, AE and OBWB helped host a forum on the challenges of the flood and mapping for the future. Tenders are out for some sewer extensions. Flood repairs are underway. They are expecting to do a source protection for Fall 2018. They are consolidating the Regional by-laws for more cohesion. Drew Lejbak will be presenting drought and flood GAAP analysis to their Board.
- Ms. Green (BCGWA): fall regional meeting is in Vernon Oct 20th and they are hoping to get an update on how the licensing processing is proceeding. Their ground water protection handbook is being updated. Work is being done around flowing artesian wells. She was part of a debrief on the Hullcar Aquifer contamination.
- Ms. Clark (RDNO): updated their stage of water restrictions and will remain at Stage 1. They have lots of projects going on. Their drought management plan has been finished.
- Mr. Larson (guest): pass
- Ms. Garcia (OBWB): attended post flood meeting mid-summer for all of the RDs. She is hoping to have a basin wide flood debrief/post flood workshop by the end of 2017. She has been attending all of the recent drought calls. They have sent out two information bulletins. The

communication has been much better between the Province and OBWB. Phase 1 is wrapping up for two projects: Mainstem Drought Triggers project and Water Supply Alerts project. They are working on a grant application to FCM, a National funding program to help integrate climate adaptation into municipal work plans. They are applying for about \$320k over two years to hire a water and climate action specialist to work one on one with local governments in the valley.

- Mr. Flintoft (BCWF): pass
- Mr. Davies (BCWF): Wetlands Institute being held Sep 23-28 in Canal Flats.
- Mr. Naka (IIABC): two courses are being held in by the IIABC in Nanaimo and Vernon regarding irrigation scheduling mainly for commercial landscaping businesses but others may benefit.
- Mr. Hrasko (BCWSA): conference in Salmon Arm Oct 26-27. One of the issues facing all water suppliers is the changing Worksafe BC regulations. There is a huge industry lobby with BCWWA, WSABC, and Coastal Waters to get the regulation adjusted. There is major change happening with the water utilities in Kelowna. SEKID is becoming part of the City in the next year and a half.
- Mr. Wilson (SOFA): gave a presentation to UBCO-Marni Turek, Jeff Curtis and Adam Wei in June on the opportunities and challenges the forest sector has with water. They are hoping to work more collaboratively together and are pursuing expanding their relationship with the academic world.
- Mr. Edwards (DFO): in May, the Minister announced the \$1.5 billion program for the Oceans Protection plan. The announcement about cutting the Salmon Enhancement Program was followed by public resentment, which was heavily resonated in the media, resulting in the reinstating of the program a month later. A lot of streams were affected by the floods and time has been spent rebuilding and fixing those. Recent focus has been on drought and water management issues.
- Ms. Neilsen (AAFG): involved in the selection of 150 sites to gather information for two projects: 1) UBCO – Agriculture Green House Gas Project (5yrs) and 2) Ag Canada Project (3yrs). They are looking at the effects of irrigation on soil carbon

accumulation and soil carbon dynamics as well as biodiversity and soil health.

- Mr. Guy (Chair): two upcoming conferences. CWRA Annual Conference in Victoria in May. OBWB will be helping organize the conference and in particular will provide a full day of presentations covering the work that is being done in the Okanagan. If there are any suggestions on topics that should be covered, please get in touch with Nelson or Anna. There is joint OBWB/CWRA Conference focusing on EFN next October 2018. Nelson & Brian are co-chairs. The organizing committee is being finalized and they are looking for volunteers to help.

9. CHAIR REPORT

The issue of attendance at the OWSC meetings was addressed. Participation on Council constitutes a significant contribution and members are expected to attend all meetings. Attendance has been dipping over the years. They have been working hard at making meetings more relevant. An email memo will be sent out to follow up and reiterate the importance of attendance at the meetings.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council will be Thur., Oct. 12, 2017 from 12:30 to 4:30 at the Coast Capri Hotel, 1171 Harvey Avenue, Kelowna. Some of the information being presented at the meeting will include: research that UBCO is doing around fisheries, information around mussels, and a report on the flooding. November will be dedicated to presentations from Council members showcasing their organizations projects. December will involve talks around climate change (globally but also how the Okanagan is nested within that).

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

Moved by Murray Wilson

“That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of September 7, 2017 be adjourned.”

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Chair

Executive Director