

OKANAGAN WATER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A Technical Advisory Body to the Okanagan Basin Water Board

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD THURSDAY, March 14, 2019, AT
COAST CAPRI HOTEL, KELOWNA, B.C.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Present

Emeritus

BC Ground Water Association

BC Wildlife Federation – Region 8

Canadian Water Resources Association

City of Kelowna

Engineers & Geoscientists BC

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Interior Health Authority

Irrigation Industry Association of BC

Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of FLNRORD (Resource Mgmt)

Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program

Okanagan College

Regional District of Central Okanagan

Regional District of North Okanagan

Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association

Thompson-Okanagan Tourism Association

Water Supply Association of BC

UBC Okanagan

Denise Neilsen, Chair

Marta Green

Lorne Davies

Brian Guy

Rod MacLean & Ed Hoppe

Mike Nolan

Doug Lundquist

Doug Edwards

Rob Birtles

Bruce Naka & Ted van der Gulik

Andrew Petersen

Ray Crampton

Scott Boswell

Allison O'Neill

Danika Dudzik

Renee Clark

Ted Swab

Ellen Walker-Matthews

Dawn Williams

Bernie Bauer & Craig Nichol

Regrets

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada

BC Agriculture Council

BC Fruit Growers Association

BC Cattlemen's Association

City of Vernon

Ministry of FLNRORD (Fish/Wildlife)

Okanagan Indian Band

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Kirsten Hannam

Hans Buchler

Glen Lucas

Lee Hesketh

Ed Stranks

Lora Nield

Tim Isaac

Zoe Kirk

STAFF

OBWB, Executive Director

OBWB, Water Stewardship Director

OBWB, Operations and Grants Manager

OBWB, Policy and Planning Specialist

OBWB, Water Demand Model Specialist

Anna Warwick Sears

Nelson Jatel

James Littley

Kellie Garcia

Stefanie Wenker

GUESTS

UBC Okanagan

Orchardist

UBCO

UBCO

Marni Turek

Scott Smith

Adrian Arts

Nargiz Rahimova

Mathieu Bourbonnais

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Denise Neilsen called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm by welcoming members and guests and acknowledging that we are meeting in the unceded territory of the Sy'ilx people, the original inhabitants of the Okanagan.

2. **APPROVE AGENDA**

There was a change in agenda: "More time was set aside for Kellie Garcia's breakout sessions on updated draft of Sustainable Water Strategy; followed by 15 min break and 15 minutes wrap up session".

Moved by Rob Birtles
Seconded by Scott Boswell

***"That the agenda for the March 14, 2019 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved with noted date change."
All in favor. CARRIED***

3. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Moved by Bernie Bauer
Seconded by Brian Guy

***"That the minutes from the March 14, 2019 meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council be approved with noted changes."
All in favor. CARRIED***

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

a) Sub-committee updates:

Policy committee (Brian Guy):

Engaged in 6-7 topic areas, with movement happening in every area. Today's meeting focused on addressing Board's request to write a response to the province regarding the announcement of 3-year delay in groundwater licensing. Will put together some insights on strategies that need to be employed to ensure successful transition this time. Another sub-committee working on issues of remote sensing data availability, within Canada (CSA) and inter-jurisdictionally with the USA (NASA). While some limited data is available free of charge (RADAR satellite), acquiring other essential data can be costly. Brian will get in touch with Mattieu for more details.

Source water protection committee (Renee Clark):

Next meeting on March 21st. The group is looking at several issues, including release of all completed assessments through Ecocat; developing a flowchart of assessment and response planning processes; looking at funding and collaboration. Will have a report by the next meeting.

Flood and drought planning committee (Scott Boswell):

Event on March 4th in Capri Hotel on different uses of LiDAR went well - 75 people attended to discuss how LiDAR data can be used collaboratively.

Irrigation Management Committee (Bruce Naka / Ted van der Gulik):

Hosted a training session for irrigation managers on

March 13th in Vernon (Vernon Lodge). 18 people attended and training was delivered in 5 modules. There were requests to include other modules to accommodate variability in farm types and irrigation technologies. Working on organizing more sessions, most probably one with the RDOS. Will prepare a manual as well.

Dams and reservoirs committee (Bernie Bauer):

Will have a committee meeting in a month. All writing duties are distributed and pending to come back, summarized and presented.

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

Last Board meeting took place a week ago in Penticton. Had two guest delegations - Invasive species society talking about their mussels monitoring program, and staff from Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) with the update on EFN project. LiDAR project continues, first dataset arrived covering lakeshore areas flooded in 2017 mainly. Local government already has the data. OBWB is working on umbrella data-sharing agreement with GeoBC so that local governments and ONA don't need a separate agreement. Others will have to enter the agreement but GEO BC will come up with better processes later in 2019.

A researcher from SFU, Dr. Dianne Allen will start groundwater study in the Okanagan; planning to hire two graduate students for 2 years to study ground and surface water interaction in time of drought. She also applied for funding to cover workshops and field trips for local communities.

Received funding from Fraser Basin Council for a climate data project - Jeremy Fyke and Denise will be working on that.

On behalf of Corinne - rain barrel sale going on for RDCO residents.

Board requested to write a letter to the Province with regard to groundwater licensing deadline extension and working with policy committee to get this letter out.

6. **SOURCE PROTECTION PLANNING - Rob Birtles (IH), Renee Clark (RDNO), Heather Larratt (Consultant)**

Rob Birtles presented with source protection overview. The purpose is to identify hazards and assess risks, then plan and minimize negative effects. B.C. has the highest number of enteric illness, most of it water-borne. Source protection is a foundational piece to multi-barrier approach to drinking water protection, particularly in multi-use watersheds. There is a need for planning in the Okanagan, where there is an issue of turbidity and sediments with contamination. Rob also went through examples where the absence of SPP led to human disease outbreaks; described ways to protect source water using examples from other jurisdictions.

Issues include absence of a consistent approach to planning - so far only two cities in the Okanagan that have two full protection plans (Vernon and Lake Country); there are 17 individual source protection

plans. Province is lacking leadership; there is no template, no guidance, no coordinated approach. OBWB can help create a model, establish coordinated approach, expand number of actors involved in the conversation.

Renee Clark has further elaborated on source protection framework and responsibilities. Source protection is a shared responsibility – 14 provincial government agencies with responsibilities for drinking water protection; source to tap assessment guidelines.

Kal lake developed a system with 2 hours notification system (water sock) that made it possible to have 2 hours ahead time to know what coming toward their water intake. System has no filtration but able to shut down the intake should the hazard exists. Kal lake stakeholder advisory committee since 2014 engage in collaborative approach to identifying threats and mitigation actions. Climate change challenges result in increasing water treatment costs. This needs to be addressed through ensuring safe water supply for all and protecting infrastructure.

Heather Larratt spoke about hazards associated with logging, recreation, ranching, reservoirs draw-downs and risks of erosion, introducing pathogens or other pollutants. Whereas roads and stormwater are leading cause of trouble, we underestimate the role of riparian setbacks in protecting water. Current setback of 30 m is insufficient and setting setback to 85m is necessary to restrict development and prevent disturbance in critical areas. She pointed out the importance of water socks (2 hours protection under moderate winds) but emphasized the need to establish an integrated approach wherein such intake protection zone is nested inside bigger protection plan.

7. OKANAGAN SUSTAINABLE WATER STRATEGY.

Kellie Garcia

Kellie conducted another breakout session following the recent round of updates to SWS. Number of actions has been reduced from 99 to 55, grouped into 3 chapters. Strategy was also reorganized to include action statement, agency(ies) in charge, and the role of OBWB in promoting the recommended action.

Following the breakout sessions, members were provided the opportunity to comment on sidebars and come with additional ideas for stories / examples to include in sidebars. Recommended stories included Okanagan river restoration initiative, water management program.

Next steps for Kellie would be to further flesh out the action plan, meet with editorial group, look for photos, and send sections to specific people for a final review. Next month strategy will be released for an adoption.

8. MEMBER UPDATES: ROUNDTABLE

Council members and guests are invited to provide an update on their organization's activities:

- Mr. Littley (OBWB): Corinne's OK Water wise challenge for kids will start soon, posters available to distribute. This year's theme is climate hero and various prizes are available for winners.
- Ms. Clark – pass
- Ms. Williams (WSA) – Annual meeting this year will take place at OK golf centre, look for details on website;
- Mr. MacLean (City of Kelowna) – Few years focus on Mill Creek and flood aspects around airport (Spencer road project one of them). 2017 flood destroyed culverts and there is grant from provincial and federal sources to finance replacement.
- Mr. Peterson (MAG) – Groundwater licensing deadline was extended for another 3 years – planning to continue working with farmers motivating them to apply for licences. Changes to EFP emphasize merit-based allocation of resources on irrigation site. Launching Nicola pilot project - intergovernmental water management project (in collaboration with 6 First Nation governments)
- Mr. Nolan (EGBC) – look at a website for information on learning opportunities about climate change
- Mr. van der Gulik (IIABC) – pass
- Ms. Dudzik (RDCO) – waiting to hear the results of grant application; then will continue partnering with OCCP
- Mr. Birtles (IH) – Health Canada changed max Mn (manganese) concentration - provincial government responded by advising health authorities to determine the areas of excess to declare water quality advisory. Lead concentration is about to change too.
- Dr. Bourbonnais – pass
- Mr. Smith - pass
- Mr. Arts (Summerland orchardist) – attended ACARN climate change education session at UBC; this session was about water. Agricultural sector in B.C. expressed concern about water availability but it appears there were no answers to address these concerns.
- Ms. Green (GWABC) – annual AGM will take place in Langley on April 9-11
- Mr. Boswell (OCCP) – next month meeting with district of Lake Country, Coldstream and Vernon to discuss boat safety study and recommendations;
- Mr. Swab (Forestry Association) – talked about project for fire interface and public meeting that will take place in with respect; companies look at proper ways for service roads decommissioning;
- Ms. Turek (UBC Okanagan) – looking forward to WSABC conference coming up and two faculty members will be speaking, 15 students from freshwater sciences and engineering will attend as well; next Friday on World Water day there will be a tour with ONA in Peachland watershed;

- Mr. Lundquist (ECCC) – freshet expected to be closer to average, so watch out for supply as change is possible depending on precipitation in May and June; some fire weather risks even if May-June are wet; if late summer months are too dry there will be an increased chance of fire weather;
- Mr. Ray Crampton (FLNRORD) – looking forward to expanding collaboration and make resources available for source protection; pointed out the importance of watershed tours organized by ONA;
- Dr. Brian Guy (CWRA) – last year’s ONA event was great and this year’s takes place next Friday; Last meeting Zoe Kirk (RDOS) mentioned a document developed by RDOS with funding from Real Estate Foundation – climate change resource guide for landowners – an excellent document and educational tool;
- Mr. Lorne Davies – mentioned presentation from provincial wildlife biologist who expressed concerns about road density. Due to increased stress levels there are more deer droppings 100 m away from the road; also roads are excellent corridors for predators.
- Mr. Doug Edwards (DFO) – his last meeting as he retires end of March. He has been busy working on Okanagan River restoration project; continues working with ONA. Weasley Dam fish passage committee issued recommendations to BC Hydro and they are in the process of technical review and developing business case. Hopefully the process will end by dam decommissioning.
- Dr. Bernie Bauer (UBCO) – involved in research with Dr. Debbie Roberts (contracts with FLNRO and OBWB) to report on the impacts from highway vehicles. They are tracking the turbidity levels (Debbie looks at cryptosporidium and E. coli). Roads are big concerns to deal with; turbidity flumes result from cumulative contribution from human landscape. In multiple use watersheds roads provide people and animal access to areas that need to be protected.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Landscapes change as a result. Roads need to be decommissioned but the process has to be carefully planned to prevent people and animal from assessing and allow trees and plants grow back.

- Mr. Naka (IIABC) – IIABC celebrates 40th anniversary this coming fall
- Mr. Jatel (OBWB) – information about annual water supply webinar with quick snapshot of 2019 freshet will go out next week
- Dr. Warwick Sears (OBWB) – received a message from Geo BC that open data portal will be established in Aug-Sep 2019

9. CHAIR REPORT

LiDAR event was fantastic; extended thanks to Doug Edwards; due to unusual weather conditions in February there was substantial damage to cherry buds (50-90% damage to cherries)

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the OWSC will be Thurs., April 11, 2019 from 12:30 to 4:30 pm at the Coast Capri Hotel, 1171 Harvey Avenue, Kelowna.

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

Moved by Brian Guy

Seconded by Lorne Davies

“That there being no further business, the meeting of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council of March 14, 2019 be adjourned.”

CARRIED

Chair

Executive Director