

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Agenda



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

DATE: Tuesday, March 4, 2025

TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

PLACE: ONLINE

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- 1.1 Acknowledgement of First Nations Traditional Territory

We acknowledge that we work on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded tm̓x̓w̓úlaʔx̓w̓ (land) of the syilx (Okanagan) people who have resided here since time immemorial. We honour and respect this land and the siw̓łk (water) which flows through the valley and connects us all.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of January 7, 2025 held online.

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5. PRESENTATION

- 5.1 During the meeting Mr. Littley will deliver a presentation titled “Owning Our Destiny with Invasive Species – Backcasting with ‘The Mussel Guy’.” This is a presentation that he delivered to the Provincial Invasive Species Forum on February 25.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 6.1 | Executive Director Report | P. 9 |
| 6.2 | Communications Manager Report | P. 11 |
| 6.3 | Deputy Administrator Report | P. 17 |
| 6.4 | Water Stewardship Director Report | P. 19 |
| 6.5 | Water Science Specialist Report | P. 22 |
| 6.6 | Office and Grants Manager Memo | P. 29 |

7. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. CORRESPONDENCE

- 8.1 Following the board's letter to Minister Neill (Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship), the following individuals and organizations have sent the OBWB their letters of support (attached):

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- Boundary-Similkameen MLA, Donegal Wilson
- Health Officer’s Council of B.C., Chair, Dr. Mark Lysyshyn
- District of Coldstream, Mayor and Council
- District of Lake Country, Mayor and Council
- Penticton and Wine Country chamber of Commerce, President, Jordan Knox and Executive Director, Michael Magnusson
- City of Kelowna, Mayor Tom Dyas
- Tourism Revelstoke, Taniell Hamilton, Destination & Sustainability Manager
- Thomspson Okanagan Tourism Association, CEO, Ellen Walker-Matthews

- 8.2 Letter from Christopher Garrish, Senior Manager of Planning Services at the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen regarding Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grants Program Terms of Reference “1.0 Ha Policy” – Accessory Dwellings

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9. **NEXT MEETING**

- 9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., at the Regional District of North Okanagan office, 9848 Aberdeen Road, Coldstream.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

** **NOTE:** Meetings of the Okanagan Basin Water Board are open to the public, and only closed for in-camera sessions as set out in the B.C. Community Charter. From time-to-time, the board will be holding its meeting online. If you are interested in attending an online meeting, please contact communications@obwb.ca for further details.*



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD
HELD FEBRUARY 4, 2025, ONLINE**

PRESENT

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Chair Blair Ireland | Regional District Central Okanagan |
| Vice Chair Doug Holmes | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Director Rick Fairbairn | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Director Victor Cumming | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Director Bob Fleming | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Alt Director Shirley Fowler | Regional District North Okanagan |
| Director Wayne Carson | Regional District Central Okanagan |
| Director Sue McKortoff | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Alt Director Subrina Monteith | Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen |
| Director Jeremy Fyke | Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) |
| Director Bob Hrasko | Water Supply Association of B.C |

REGRETS

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Director Tim Lezard | Okanagan Nation Alliance |
|---------------------|--------------------------|

STAFF

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Anna Warwick Sears | Executive Director |
| James Littley | Deputy Administrator |
| Nelson Jatel | Water Stewardship Director |
| Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo | Office and Grants Manager |
| Sandra Schira | Water Science Specialist |
| Amanda Burnett | Communications Coordinator |

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

OBWB Executive Director Anna Warwick Sears chaired the meeting, and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

She respectfully acknowledged that we work on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded tm̓x̓w̓úlaʔx̓w̓ (land) of the syilx (Okanagan) people who have resided here since time immemorial. We honour and respect this land and the siw̓łk̓ (water) which flows through the valley and connects us all.

2. ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

2.1 Dr. Sears welcomed directors re-appointed for 2025.

Directors appointed to the board:

From **Regional District of North Okanagan**

Victor Cumming

Rick Fairbairn

Bob Fleming

Alternates – Christine Fraser, Shirley Fowler

Regional District of Central Okanagan

Wayne Carson
 Charlie Hodge
 Blair Ireland
 Alternate – Kevin Kraft

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Doug Holmes
 Sue McKortoff
 Alternates – Adrienne Fedrigo, Subrina Monteith, Matt Taylor

Water Management Appointments

Okanagan Nation Alliance

Tim Lezard
 Alternate – TBD

Water Supply Association of BC

Mr. Bob Hrasko
 Alternate – James Kay

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

Chair Jeremy Fyke
 Alternate – Sheena Spencer

Dr. Sears requested nominations for chair. Dir. Cumming nominated Dir. Ireland. Dir. Ireland accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dir. Ireland was elected chair.

Chair Ireland requested nominations for vice-chair. Dir. Holmes was nominated by Dir. McKortoff and accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Dir. Holmes was elected vice-chair.

“THAT Director Blair Ireland be elected as OBWB Chair and OBWB Director Doug Holmes be elected as Vice-Chair of the Okanagan Basin Water Board for the year 2025.”
CARRIED

2.2 IN MEMORY OF RICK KNODEL

Directors acknowledged the passing of OBWB Director Rick Knodel, and shared memories of his time on the water board, noting that he will be greatly missed. Directors spoke of Dir. Knodel’s humour, his positive impacts, his dedication to his community, and commitment to the water board.

3. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

No late items.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

“ THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 4, 2025 be approved.”

CARRIED

5. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of December 3, 2024, held online.

“THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on December 3, 2024, held online, be approved.”

CARRIED

6. DELEGATION

- 6.1 Lisa Scott, Executive Director of the Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS).

Ms. Scott presented to the Water Board about the 2024 work of OASISS's Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program, and OASISS's delivery of the OBWB's Don't Move A Mussel awareness campaign about the risks of invasive zebra/quagga mussels.

The presentation highlighted the outcomes and impacts of the Program in the Okanagan during 2024 – it's 12th year. This year focused on education and outreach, as well as lake monitoring for invasive mussels and clams. With one supervisor and two staff, OASISS conducted 986 public surveys at 15 boat launches, interacted with more than 5,200 members of the public at 24 community events, distributed AIS resources to 187 businesses, and presented to 677 youth at seven summer camps and four schools throughout the Okanagan. OASISS also conducted invasive mussel monitoring bi-weekly from June to September, during which time they collected 153 samples from eight lakes and one river, at 25 sites - with no mussels detected.

OASISS also found that 83 per cent of people surveyed had heard of the Don't Move A Mussel campaign, with the top sources of knowledge being OASISS, highway billboard signs, and signs at boat launches.

Ms. Scott was thanked for her presentation and exited the meeting.

7. STAFF REPORTS

- 7.1 Executive Director Report – Dr. Anna Warwick Sears

Dr. Sears updated the board on the new communications manager, who is scheduled to start February 18. Carmen Weld is joining the OBWB from the City of West Kelowna. With a background in journalism and local government communications, Ms. Weld brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the OBWB.

Dr. Sears provided directors with a courtesy notification from the auditors of the upcoming annual audit – the audit will begin in April. Directors received item 7.1.1, the Audit Planning Report. Findings from the audit will be presented to the board at the June meeting.

Dr. Sears also reported on the Mission Creek Water Use Plan planning process. This has been a priority for the water board for some time, especially for emergency response planning. The Plan is an opportunity to engage with the agricultural community and provide water users and the public with improved knowledge, and to reduce conflict during times of water scarcity in Mission Creek.

Following several months of project scoping and grant application development for the Mission Creek Water Use Plan update, the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) has submitted a grant application to the Real Estate Foundation, aligning the work with the Syilx Water Responsibility Plan and the Okanagan Similkameen Collaborative Leadership Table. The OBWB will closely collaborate with the ONA, especially providing support for the water science aspects of the project. Engagement will also include the City of Kelowna, Black Mountain Irrigation District, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, and other relevant stakeholders. This plan is an opportunity to collaborate with the ONA and to pilot the Syilx Water Responsibility Plan methodology.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated January 29, 2025, be received."

CARRIED

7.2 Deputy Administrator Report - James Littlely

Mr. Littlely presented to the Board about the B.C. Invasive Mussel Defense Program (IMDP). The OBWB has been concerned about the lack of increase in funding to the Program and has been calling on the Province to increase funding to the Program since 2019.

To provide adequate funding for the IMDP total program costs and given the closer proximity and increased threat from quagga mussels in Idaho and golden mussels in California, staff recommends the Water Board call on the B.C. Provincial Government for increased funding of \$5.5 million to the IMDP in 2025 from all sources. This increase in funding would fund the potential future introduction of mandatory watercraft inspections, salary, travel, vehicles, lake monitoring, public outreach, equipment and maintenance, and further work on the Wildlife Act review.

Alberta has advanced its aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention by establishing a politically led Task Force, including diverse stakeholders. Within six months, the Alberta AIS Task Force produced a comprehensive report recommending mandatory watercraft inspections, a sticker initiative, and enhanced early detection and rapid response measures, aligning with OBWB's previous advocacy. Key recommendations include a mandatory watercraft sticker program with dedicated revenue, mandatory inspections at provincial borders, and increased chemical treatment options through federal advocacy. The Task Force also proposes the implementation of an eDNA monitoring program, the development of invasive mussel-specific response plans, and the execution of training exercises. Following OBWB's August 2024 calls for collaborative AIS prevention with Alberta, including the creation of a Western Canada Invasive Mussel Free Zone, it is recommended that OBWB and the Okanagan-Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group reiterate these calls to the new B.C. Minister.

Recommendation:

THAT OBWB send a letter to Minister Neill, calling for the following actions:

1. \$5.5 Million funding to B.C. IMDP in 2025;
2. Mandatory inspections for all watercraft entering B.C.;
3. B.C. call on the federal government for resources and support;
4. B.C. work with Alberta to create a Western Canada Mussel Free Zone, including a politically led AIS Task Force;
5. B.C. work with Alberta to align penalties across provinces; and
6. Create clear policy to limit chemical use as a rapid response.

Directors requested some changes in the wording to the letter to Minister Neill.

"THAT staff be directed to send the letter to Minister Neill of WLRS re: Invasive Mussel Prevention with changes as noted."

CARRIED

Mr. Littlely also provided the board with an update on the Milfoil Control Program. He requested that directors remind local governments about the milfoil control program, and the need for the milfoil machines to access beaches, so when changes are made to lakefront parks or boat launches they account for OBWB's operational needs.

"THAT the Deputy Administrator's Report, dated January 27, 2025, be received."

CARRIED

7.3 Water Stewardship Director Report – Dr. Nelson Jatel

Dr. Jatel provided board directors with the regular update on the work of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC).

At the December 12, 2024 meeting, the OWSC received updates from the ONA's Tessa Terbasket, and Scott Boswell from the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, on the Watershed Responsibility Planning Initiative, which had achieved a significant milestone with a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) by 30 elected leaders, formalizing collaborative watershed governance centered on Indigenous collaboration and shared priorities like salmon restoration. On January 9, 2025, Jason Schleppe from Ecoscape Environmental presented to the OWSC on Habitat Conservation Banking as a tool to balance habitat losses and restoration, emphasizing its potential to streamline permitting and encourage proactive restoration, while acknowledging challenges in implementation and governance. The presentation highlighted the need for regional governments to adapt to the 2019 Fisheries Act framework and explore local opportunities like expanding the Mission Creek Habitat Compensation Bank. The upcoming February meeting will feature research on the economic, cultural, and environmental impacts of agricultural water use in the Okanagan, aiming to inform policy decisions and address water access challenges. The research will explore the economic value of irrigated agriculture and the opportunity costs of water use, while also addressing future water allocations and irrigation investments. The council continued to focus on collaborative, long-term solutions for watershed management.

The Board received an update on the ongoing Hydrometric Program. The annual Technical Advisory Committee meeting for the OBWB Hydrometric Program, held on December 10, 2024, reviewed updates on collaborative hydrometric data collection, station installations, and flood monitoring. Discussions centered on improving data sharing and quality control, with plans to install new stations on Mission Creek and upgrade data systems. Future goals include creating interactive maps, integrating data into provincial systems, and assessing the economic value of hydrometric data for regional water management.

Finally, Directors heard about the ongoing work on the Cyanobacteria Threat to Drinking Water Working Group. The Cyanobacteria Working Committee held its second meeting December 11, 2024, which focused on refining the project scope and tackling key water quality challenges in the Okanagan. Co-chaired by Ed Hoppe (City of Kelowna) and Krista Derrickson (Westbank First Nation), discussions focused on assessing sub-basin water quality, expanding nutrient monitoring, and developing a model for improved predictions. Members emphasized better data harmonization, enhanced monitoring systems, and advanced predictive modelling to manage cyanobacteria risks effectively.

***“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated January 27, 2025, be received.”
CARRIED.***

7.4 Water Science Specialist Report – Sandra Schira

Ms. Schira presented the board with a final summary of drought and precipitation in the Okanagan in 2024, noting that the year began with a sudden cold snap in January, which caused significant damage to Okanagan fruit trees and vines. Despite some summer rain, the Okanagan remained in drought throughout 2024 due to low snowpack, an early melt, and a prolonged July heatwave. Looking forward, seasonal forecasts for 2025 are indicating a wetter, warmer spring in the Okanagan, which could have impacts on Okanagan droughts this year.

***“THAT the Water Science Specialist Report, dated January 27, 2025, be received.”
CARRIED.***

7.5 Review of B.C. Greens – B.C. NDP Agreement and Mandate Letters Memo

Dr. Sears and Mr. Littley reviewed the ministerial Mandate Letters released in January 2025 from

the B.C. Greens and B.C. N.D.P for items pertaining to OBWB areas of interest to further advocate for watershed protection.

In the memo presented to the Board, there were 22 ministerial mandate items highlighted to have potential interest to the OBWB, including items of food security, agriculture, wildfire, provincial resiliency, B.C.’s energy transition and climate targets, Indigenous partnerships, maintaining environmental standards, and cross-government cooperation. It was noted that in the Hon. Josie Osborne, Minister of Health’s Mandate letter that there was no mention of water as a public health concern, which is a concerning absence. Directors expressed their concern that no Mandate Letter by B.C. ministers mentioned Invasive Species.

***“THAT the Agreement and Mandate Letters Memo, dated January 29, 2025, be received.”
CARRIED.***

8. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No new or unfinished business.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, March 4, at 10:00 a.m., online.

NOTE: Meetings of the Okanagan Basin Water Board are open to the public, and only closed for in-camera sessions as set out in the B.C. Community Charter. From time-to-time, the board will be holding its meeting online. If you are interested in attending an online meeting, please contact communications@obwb.ca for further details.

10. ADJOURNMENT

***“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of February 4, 2025 be adjourned at 12:06 p.m.”
CARRIED***

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| Certified Correct: | | |
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| Chair | | Executive Director |



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears
Date: February 25, 2025
Subject: Executive Director Report

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| Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting March 4, 2025 Agenda No: 6.1 |
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Staff Transitions

Our hiring process for the new Executive Director continues, with many excellent candidates expressing interest in the position. We hope to move forward with the successful applicant this month. I am committed to remaining through the onboarding of the new ED, which will likely extend to sometime in May at the very earliest.

Meanwhile, we also have a call for applicants for the new Water Quality Project Manager, and a new Milfoil Equipment Operator. The Water Quality person will take over much of the responsibilities for the milfoil program lead, the invasive mussel prevention work, source protection, and other related work. The new Milfoil Operator will take the position held by Pat Field, who is expected to retire this summer after 34 years working for the OBWB.

Using Chemicals in Okanagan Waters

In August, James Littlely gave the board a verbal update about recent federal and provincial approvals of aquatic herbicides and pesticides for use in open waters. Chemicals have not been permitted in Okanagan Lakes since the 1970s, when provincial agencies attempted to use 2,4-D to treat invasive Eurasian watermilfoil. This effort was abandoned after very strong public opposition. However, herbicides are commonly used in the U.S. portion of Osoyoos Lake.

Our current concern is about the aquatic herbicide “ProcellaCOR FX”, and an aquatic pesticide formulation of Potash, both now registered for use in B.C. In November, we shared our concerns with the Okanagan Nation Alliance’s Natural Resources Committee, and we have now received verbal assurances of their support for our draft Statement Against the Application of Chemical Pesticides and Herbicides in Okanagan Waters:

“For over 50 years, the Okanagan Basin Water Board has played a crucial role in safeguarding water quality, ensuring access to clean drinking water, supporting healthy agriculture, and maintaining thriving aquatic ecosystems and advocating for source protection. Okanagan communities deeply value and depend on their water, not only drinking water, but for clean, safe water for the environment, recreation and tourism. Our communities strongly oppose the use of chemical pesticides and aquatic herbicides in our lakes, streams, and reservoirs. The Okanagan Basin Water Board stands firmly against the application of these and any other chemicals in Okanagan waters.”

This threat will not go away until we get regulatory protections for Okanagan Lakes and waterways, posing an ongoing risk to the health of our drinking water. As with all initiatives, we are looking for partners and will take a coordinated approach.

Recommended Motion:

That the OBWB adopts the Statement Against the Application of Chemical Pesticides and Herbicides in Okanagan Waters as presented by staff.

Recent Public Speaking

Sandra Schira and I attended the Western Canada Flood Mapping Conference in Calgary last week, where I was invited to give the keynote speech on our Okanagan flood mapping experience. The conference was organized by Natural Resources Canada, with many staff from Environment and Climate Change Canada, the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, and the Northwest Territories, as well as a large number of consulting engineers from across the region. B.C. government staff were on a travel freeze, so could not attend. There was a great deal of interest in our ongoing flood work, as well as the way we approached the process as a collaborative, regional effort.

This Wednesday, I will be participating in a forum to UBCO students with degrees related to sustainability. They are interested in learning more about Okanagan water governance, and how they can support water sustainability as students, and in future careers. On Friday, I will be giving a keynote address to a professional workshop organized by the Okanagan Xeriscape Association, titled, Creating Climate-Resilient Landscapes. In this, I'll be drawing on Sandra Schira's climate indicators work, and on our other recent climate studies and outreach efforts.



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Carmen Weld
Date: February 24, 2025
Subject: **Communications Manager Report**

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| Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting March 4, 2025 Agenda No: 6.2 |
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Introducing myself

My name is Carmen Weld, and I look forward to working with both the Okanagan Basin Water Board Directors and dedicated staff on this organization's vital mandate. I grew up on the Westcoast but have called the Okanagan home for 12 years now. I spent nearly a decade in the Journalism field working as a video journalist and reporter for Castanet before taking on a Digital Editor role with Black Press Media. In 2020, I made the move to Communications, working with the City of West Kelowna for five years. With a focus on digital and community engagement, my role involved everything from social media to strategic planning, reports, news releases, grant writing, graphics, photography, videography, content creation, media tracking, event planning and more.

Building on the past

I am looking forward to building on the legacy left by my predecessor and all the amazing work, campaigns, and branding she did to increase the awareness of the OBWB's work. I will work alongside Amanda Burnett and other OBWB staff to get caught up on the processes and procedures of this department. Together, we will align our Communications goals with the board's strategic priorities to ensure consistent branding, engaging content and effective delivery of key messages. My goal is to increase OBWB's visibility and impact, while continuously evolving communications to support the organization's mission.

Media Tracking

I intend to provide monthly reporting to the Board on media coverage. This charted list is for articles from January 31 to February 25, 2025, in reverse chronological order.

| Date | Source | Headline | Link |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| February 25, 2025 | Castanet | Oliver council on board in fight against mussels | https://www.castanet.net/news/Oliver-Osoyoos/535281/Oliver-council-on-board-in-fight-against-mussels |
| February 25, 2025 | Penticton Western News | Display honours Knodel's role at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen | https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/news/display-honours-knodels-role-at-regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen-7842846 |
| February 25, 2025 | The Similkameen Spotlight | Display honours Knodel's role at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen | https://www.similkameenspotlight.com/news/display-honours-knodels-role-at-regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen-7842846 |
| February 25, 2025 | Keremeos Review | Display honours Knodel's role at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen | https://www.keremeosreview.com/news/display-honours-knodels-role-at-regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen-7842846 |
| February 25, 2025 | Summerland Review | Display honours Knodel's role at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen | https://www.summerlandreview.com/news/display-honours-knodels-role-at-regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen-7842846 |
| February 25, 2025 | newz9.com | Celebrating Knodel's Impact: Showcasing His Contributions to the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen | https://newz9.com/celebrating-knodels-impact-showcasing-his-contributions-to-the-regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen/ |
| February 21, 2025 | The Penticton Herald | RDOS asks for help with invasive mussel program | https://www.pentictonherald.ca/life/article_c1ee23b0-efc7-11ef-9412-a7832939dec5.html |
| February 21, 2025 | Penticton Herald (Print Edition) | RDOS requests help with invasive mussel program | Print edition |
| February 13, 2025 | Vernon Matters | Coldstream to seek grant for Lavington Wetland flood mitigation project | https://vernonmatters.ca/2025/02/13/coldstream-to-see-grant-for-lavington-wetland-flood-mitigation-project/ |
| February 12, 2025 | Castanet | Watch for transformation of OXA demonstration theme gardens | https://www.castanet.net/news/Gardening-with-nature/532977/Watch-for-transformation-of-OXA-demonstration-theme-gardens#532977 |

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| February 10, 2025 | Vernon Matters | Vernon to apply for funding for Polson Park Revitalization water studies | https://vernonmatters.ca/2025/02/10/vernon-to-apply-for-funding-for-polson-park-revitalization-water-studies/ |
| January 31, 2025 | West K News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.westknews.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Penticton Western News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Keremeos Review | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.keremeosreview.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Salmon Arm Observer | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.saobserver.net/home/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | The Similkameen Spotlight | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.similkameenspotlight.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Eagle Valley News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.eaglevalleynews.com/home/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Summerland Review | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.summerlandreview.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Lake Country Calendar | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.lakecountrycalendar.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Kelowna Capital News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.kelownacapnews.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |

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| | | | invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | The Vernon Morning Star | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.vernonmorningstar.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 30, 2025 | Revelstoke Times Review | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.revelstokereview.com/home/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 29, 2025 | Castanet | Learn how to create climate-resilient landscapes | https://www.castanet.net/news/Gardening-with-nature/530201/Learn-how-to-create-climate-resilient-landscapes#530201 |
| January 23, 2025 | Penticton Western News | Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen appoints new director | https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/news/regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen-appoints-new-director-7772048 |
| January 23, 2025 | The Similkameen Spotlight | Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen appoints new director | https://www.similkameenspotlight.com/news/regional-district-of-okanagan-similkameen-appoints-new-director-7772048 |
| January 23, 2025 | Vernon Matters | Grant sought for local water quality assessment project | https://vernonmatters.ca/2025/01/23/grant-sought-for-local-water-quality-assessment-project/ |
| January 23, 2025 | Castanet | Regional District North Okanagan seeks \$30K for Coldstream Creek Watershed assessment | https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/529309/Regional-District-North-Okanagan-seeks-30K-for-Coldstream-Creek-Watershed-assessment#529309 |
| January 15, 2025 | Castanet | Starting your plants from seed can be rewarding | https://www.castanet.net/news/Gardening-with-nature/527567/Starting-your-plants-from-seed-can-be-rewarding#527567 |
| January 5, 2025 | The Vernon Morning Star | North Okanagan Regional District seeking grant to improve water quality | https://www.vernonmorningstar.com/local-news/north-okanagan-regional-district-seeking-grant-to-improve-water-quality-7741056 |
| January 4, 2025 | Castanet | Regional District of North Okanagan seeking approval to apply for \$30k grant | https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/525749/Regional-District-of-North-Okanagan-seeking- |

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|-------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | approval-to-apply-for-30k-grant#525749 |
| January 1, 2025 | Castanet | Plant trees and shrubs to help birds survive winter | https://www.castanet.net/news/Gardening-with-nature/525365/Plant-trees-and-shrubs-to-help-birds-survive-winter#525365 |
| February 21, 2025 | The Penticton Herald | RDOS asks for help with invasive mussel program | https://www.pentictonherald.ca/life/article_c1ee23b0-efc7-11ef-9412-a7832939dec5.html |
| February 21, 2025 | Penticton Herald (Print Edition) | RDOS requests help with invasive muscle program | Print article |
| February 13, 2025 | Vernon Matters | Coldstream to seek grant for Lavington Wetland flood mitigation project | https://vernonmatters.ca/2025/02/13/coldstream-to-seeek-grant-for-lavington-wetland-flood-mitigation-project/ |
| February 12, 2025 | Castanet | Watch for transformation of OXA demonstration theme gardens | https://www.castanet.net/news/Gardening-with-nature/532977/Watch-for-transformation-of-OXA-demonstration-theme-gardens#532977 |
| February 10, 2025 | Vernon Matters | Vernon to apply for funding for Polson Park Revitalization water studies | https://vernonmatters.ca/2025/02/10/vernon-to-apply-for-funding-for-polson-park-revitalization-water-studies/ |
| January 31, 2025 | West K News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.westknews.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Penticton Western News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Keremeos Review | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.keremeosreview.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Salmon Arm Observer | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.saobserver.net/home/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |

| | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| January 31, 2025 | The Similkamee n Spotlight | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.similkameenspotlight.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Eagle Valley News | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.eaglevalleynews.com/home/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Summerland Review | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.summerlandreview.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |
| January 31, 2025 | Lake Country Calendar | Okanagan Basin Water Board issues invasive mussels call to action | https://www.lakecountrycalendar.com/local-news/okanagan-basin-water-board-issues-invasive-mussels-call-to-action-7792854 |



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: James Littley
Date: February 25, 2025
Subject: Deputy Administrator Report

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
March 4, 2025
Agenda No: 6.3

Invasive Mussel Calls to Action

Following the board's letter to Minister Neill (Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship), I reached out to the cc list—including local governments and the Okanagan-Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group—requesting letters of support. I also encouraged members of these organizations to submit input to the Wildlife Act Review public consultation.

While several other partners and local governments have also sent letters, so far, we have been cc'd on the following letters (available in correspondence):

- Boundary-Similkameen MLA, Donegal Wilson
- Health Officer's Council of B.C., Chair, Dr. Mark Lysyshyn
- District of Coldstream, Mayor and Council
- District of Lake Country, Mayor and Council
- Thomspon Okanagan Tourism Association, CEO, Ellen Walker-Matthews
- Penticton and Wine Country chamber of Commerce, President, Jordan Knox and Executive Director, Michael Magnusson
- City of Kelowna, Mayor Tom Dyas
- Tourism Revelstoke, Taniell Hamilton, Destination & Sustainability Manager

Presentation at provincial invasive species forum

This week, I presented at the Invasives 2025 Annual Forum in New Westminster, hosted by the Invasive Species Society of B.C. The forum's theme was "Back to the Future," and my presentation was titled "Owning Our Destiny with Invasive Species – Backcasting with 'The Mussel Guy'."

Presentation Description: *If you could go back in time and change something, what would it be? For invasive mussels, I'd go back to 1985 and change federal law to require cargo ships to exchange their ballast water in the ocean where the salt content would kill anything lurking in their tanks. Unfortunately, we don't need knowledge of the future to see what's coming with invasive mussels. During this session, I will look at possible future scenarios and backcast where we could be in another 25 years, and describe the steps we can take now to own our own destiny.*

Key Findings:

- Modelling suggests we have likely already prevented invasive mussels from arriving in B.C., potentially saving the province hundreds of millions of dollars.
- However, funding and staffing shortages in the Invasive Mussel Defence Program mean that a significant number of watercraft are being missed each year.
- The projections reinforce the urgent calls to action from OBWB and our many partners.

I will deliver the presentation to the board at the meeting.

Sewer Grants Request for Clarification

In early February, RDOS sent a letter to OBWB (see correspondence) requesting clarification to the most recent change to the SFA 1.0 Hectare Policy. The change relates to an exclusion to the 1.0 Ha. Policy in paragraph 4.8.5 which currently reads:

4.8.5 OBWB discourages the creation of new private wastewater systems to serve as community sewer. However, the creation of lots below 1.0 Ha that connect to systems created and managed in accordance with the Municipal Wastewater Regulation will not affect a local government's eligibility for SFA grants.

This clarification was included in the Terms of Reference after consultation with the B.C. Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Municipal Affairs because they judged the Municipal Wastewater Regulation was sufficiently protective of water to allow small-lot subdivision, although it is still recommended to have these systems provided as a service by a municipality or regional district, not by a private company or strata.

RDOS points out that while paragraph 4.8.5 allows for an exclusion for “the creation of new lots,” it doesn’t explicitly include accessory dwellings that connect to systems under the Municipal Wastewater Regulation. I recommend amending paragraph 4.8.5 to make this exclusion explicit to read:

4.8.5 OBWB discourages the creation of new private wastewater systems to serve as community sewer. However, the creation of lots below 1.0 Ha, and/or the allowance of accessory dwellings on lots below 1.0 Ha that connect to systems created and managed in accordance with the Municipal Wastewater Regulation will not affect a local government's eligibility for SFA grants.

Recommendation:

THAT the Board approve the amendment to paragraph 4.8.5 of the SFA program Terms of Reference as outlined above and staff communicate the change to all eligible local governments.



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Nelson Jatel
Date: February 24, 2025
Subject: **Water Stewardship Director's Report**

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| Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting March 4, 2025 Agenda No: 6.4 |
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Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) – a technical advisory body to the OBWB

Meeting Summary – February 13, 2025

Dr. Alberto Ceccacci, a UBCO post-doc researcher from Bologna, Italy, shared early findings from his study on how agriculture in the Okanagan Valley relies on water and what that means for the economy, environment, and local communities. His research examines the economic value of irrigated farming, and the hidden benefits and costs of using water for crops. He also explored how future water use and irrigation systems could change to address more extreme weather, and growing community needs while supporting the local economy.

Key Points from the Presentation

- **The Value of Irrigated Agriculture:** The study looks at the economic benefits of irrigation, gathering input from local experts and communities. It highlights the importance of considering all the costs and benefits, including indirect effects like how agriculture supports the broader economy.
- **Water Management & Climate Change:** The discussion focused on how water is used for many purposes, including helping the environment and supporting economic growth. Some significant risks were identified, including changing water supplies due to climate change, floods, heat waves, and the need for better local water data to make informed decisions.
- **Collaboration & Inclusion:** The meeting emphasized the need for cooperation between different groups, especially Indigenous communities, to make fair and balanced decisions. There was also discussion about the challenges of putting a dollar value on environmental benefits like cleaner water or healthier ecosystems.

Next Steps

- Use feedback from Council members to improve the study on irrigation costs and benefits.
- Hold a workshop in March or April to decide which future water use scenarios should be analyzed.
- Continue research on the financial impacts of different water management choices.
- Ensure all perspectives are considered, especially from Indigenous communities, to ensure decisions reflect a wide range of views and experiences.

March Council Meeting Preview

The next Water Stewardship Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 13, 2024, at the Coast Capri Hotel in Kelowna. Lunch will be served at noon, followed by the meeting from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. This session will feature **Ms. Zailie Hoff**, a UBCO honours undergraduate student, presenting her preliminary findings on Mission Creek groundwater as part of a supervised research project with **Drs. Craig Nichol and Nelson Jatel**.

Additionally, **Mr. Jeff Nitychoruk**, Senior Ecosystems Biologist with the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship (Thompson-Okanagan Region), will introduce a funding opportunity related to Rocky Mountain Ridge Mussels.

Mr. James Littley will also present findings from an invasive mussel back-casting exercise. This meeting will provide valuable insights into regional water management, ecosystem conservation, and emerging research opportunities.

Term 12 Membership – Water Stewardship Council

The OBWB Water Stewardship Council serves as the OBWB's technical advisory committee with a two-year term. Every two years, the Board approves the Council membership, which consists of organizations rather than individuals. Approved organizations are invited to participate by designating a primary representative and an alternate. There are no proposed changes from the previous 2023-25 membership list.

Motion: The Board approve the 2025-2027 (Term 12) Water Stewardship Council membership list consisting of the following organizations:

- 1 Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
- 2 Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC
- 3 BC Agriculture Council
- 4 BC Fruit Growers Association
- 5 BC Groundwater Association
- 6 BC Water Supply Association
- 7 BCWF - Okanagan region
- 8 Canadian Water Resources Association
- 9 City of Kelowna
- 10 City of Penticton
- 11 City of Vernon
- 12 Denise Neilsen, Emerita
- 13 Environment Canada - Pacific and Yukon Region
- 14 Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- 15 Interior Health Authority
- 16 Ministry of Agriculture
- 17 Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
- 18 Ministry of Forestry
- 19 Ministry of Land, Water & Resource Stewardship
- 20 Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program
- 21 Okanagan College
- 22 Okanagan Nation Alliance
- 23 Osoyoos Indian Band
- 24 Penticton Indian Band
- 25 Regional District of Central Okanagan
- 26 Regional District of North Okanagan
- 27 Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
- 28 Shuswap Okanagan Forestry Association
- 29 University of British Columbia Okanagan
- 30 Westbank First Nation

31 Okanagan Indian Band
32 Kelowna Chamber of Commerce



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Sandra Schira
Date: February 24, 2025
Subject: **Water Science Specialist’s Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
March 4, 2025
Agenda No: 6.5

Okanagan Lake Regulation System (OLRS) Modernization Update

Background: The Okanagan Lake Regulation System (OLRS) is operated by the B.C. Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship for flood control in the Valley. The OLRs manages the lake levels for Okanagan Lake, Skaha Lake, and Vaseux Lake, in addition to the Okanagan River flow between Penticton and Osoyoos Lake. The current OLRs was constructed between 1950 and 1958, and the operation plan was developed in 1976.

It is increasingly clear that with ageing infrastructure and climate change, the OLRs will no longer be able to provide reliable flood control and drought management. Therefore, in 2021, a plan of study was made for modernizing the OLRs. The plan included 18 studies to be completed over 7 years, culminating in a final report to inform the decision-making process for modernizing the system.

Current State: Since 2021, some work has been completed on the plan of study. However, due to the project's complexity, and low involvement of provincial staff, there is still significant work to do. OBWB staff are working to organize this project, creating a new project charter and convening a technical advisory committee to help facilitate the project. We will update the board as this progresses.

Location, Location, Location: Canadian Climate Institute Highlights Okanagan in Recent Report

In February, the *Canadian Climate Institute* released a new report titled “*Close to Home: How to Build More Housing in a Changing Climate.*”¹ In this report, researchers modelled the risk across Canada to new homes built by 2030 from flooding and fire damage. Using current land-use policy and development plans, the report found that in B.C., many new homes will likely be built in high-risk areas. These homes will incur significant costs and greatly impact housing affordability if built. They state:

“The financial risk from new housing in flood and wildfire hazard zones could surpass \$2 billion per year in B.C., with some areas facing losses in the hundreds of millions annually.” – Page 94.

¹ Canadian Climate Institute Report: <https://climateinstitute.ca/reports/close-to-home/#:~:text=Our%20report%2C%20Close%20to%20Home,paths%20of%20wildfires%20and%20floods.>

In particular, the Thompson-Okanagan could lose hundreds of millions annually due to new homes being built in high-risk areas. The report found that 92% of wildfire losses to new homes across Canada will be concentrated in just 20 municipalities. Of those 20, seven are in the Okanagan. Average annual losses to new homes in the Thompson-Okanagan are projected to be \$690 Million (Figure 1). The Thompson-Okanagan was also shown to be at risk of significant flood damage to new homes.

Fortunately, none of this is set in stone. With the implementation of sound policy, most of these costs can be avoided. One of the report's most significant findings was that a tiny percentage of new homes built in the most high-risk areas would account for most costs. For example, in the Thompson-Okanagan, 2% of new homes built in the areas with the highest flood risk will comprise 70% of the cost of flood damage to new homes. Therefore, preventing a small number of extremely risky developments will allow the Okanagan to meet housing needs without needlessly adding to the issue of housing affordability.

To help achieve this, the authors recommend that governments implement policies to steer new development away from high-risk areas, especially at the national and provincial levels. To implement these policies, work must be done to improve or create high-quality flood and fire risk mapping.

After all: *“The most affordable home is the one you don’t have to keep rebuilding.”* – Page 9

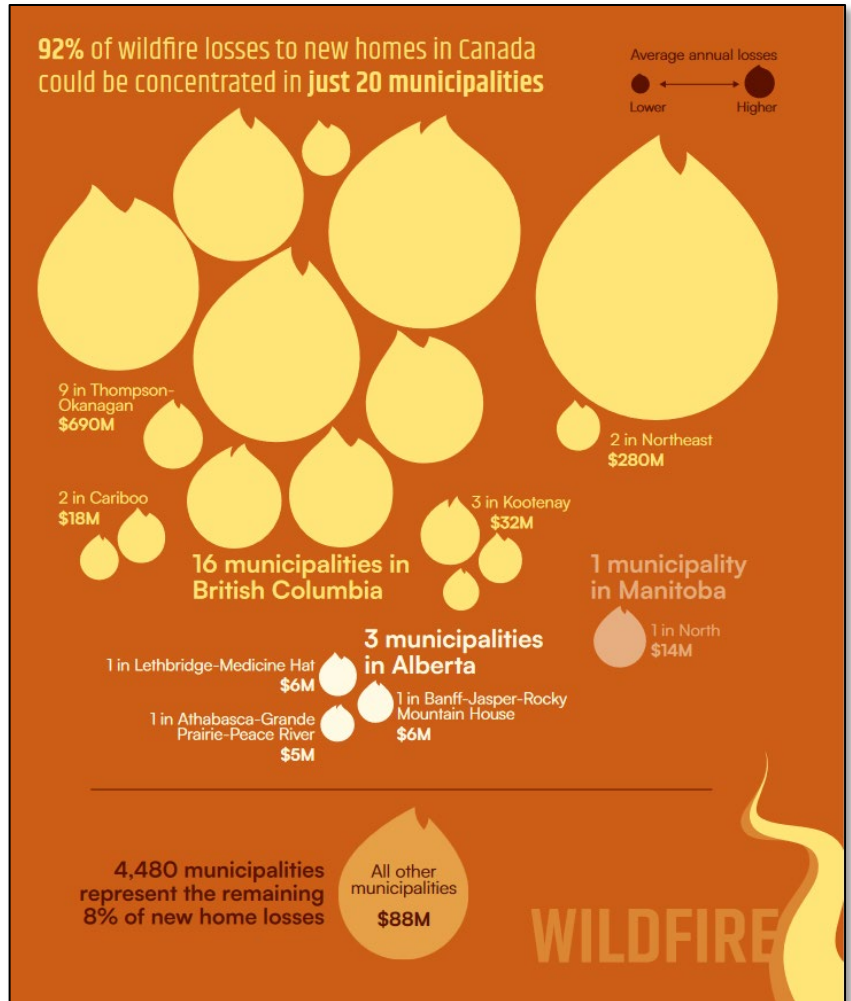


Figure 1 The 20 most at-risk municipalities to wildfire damage to new homes in Canada. – Page 53 of the “Close to Home: How to Build More Housing in a Changing Climate” Report

Weather Update

Snowpack in the Okanagan is Low

According to the Provincial Snow Supply Bulletin on February 12, the provincial snowpack was 72% of normal, and the Okanagan was **84%**. This put the Okanagan snowpack at its **lowest on February 1 since 2017, when an abnormally low mid-season snowpack preceded the flood of the century** (Figure 2)³. The current snowpack levels in the Okanagan are shown in Figure 4. All are low and have spent time at or below last year's values.

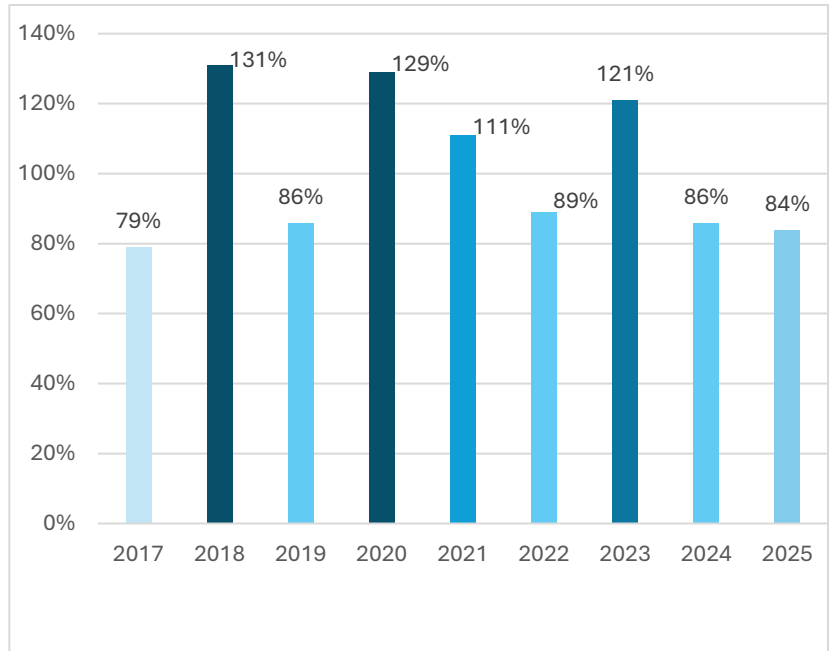


Figure 2 Comparison of February 1 snow index over the last 9 years in the Okanagan. Graph from the February Snow Supply Bulletin.

Precipitation was Low

Precipitation in January was low across the Okanagan. As of February 23, total precipitation was slightly higher than in January for most cities but was still very low (Figure 3). This marks four months in a row with below-normal precipitation in Vernon, three months for Penticton, and six months for Kelowna.

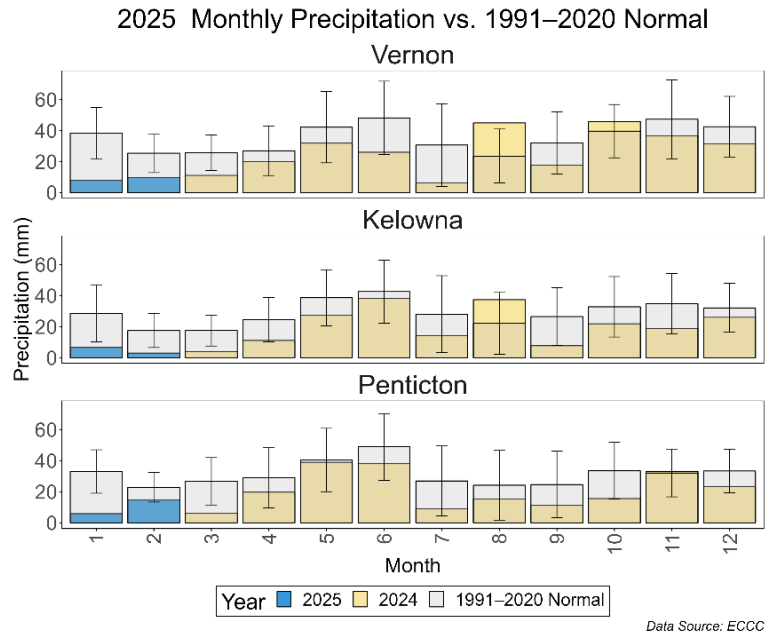


Figure 3 Monthly Precipitation in the Okanagan as of February 23rd. Compared to 1991 to 2020 range. Data retrieved from Environment and Climate Change Canada

² February 1, 2025, Snow Bulletin: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/water/river-forecast/2025_feb1.pdf

³ B.C. Water Data Portal

<https://governmentofbc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c15768bf73494f5da04b1aac6793bd2e>

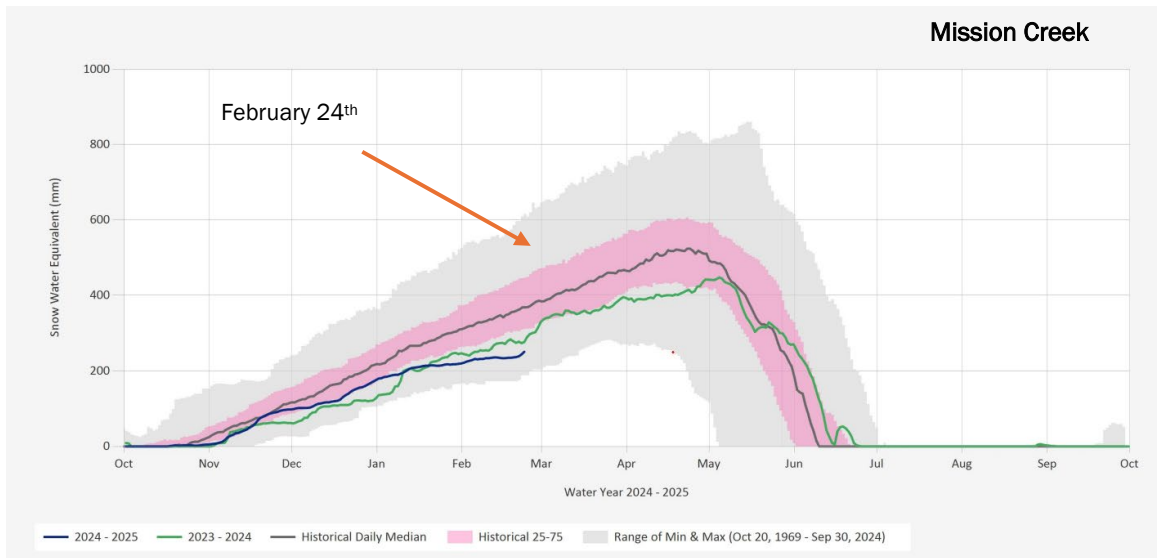
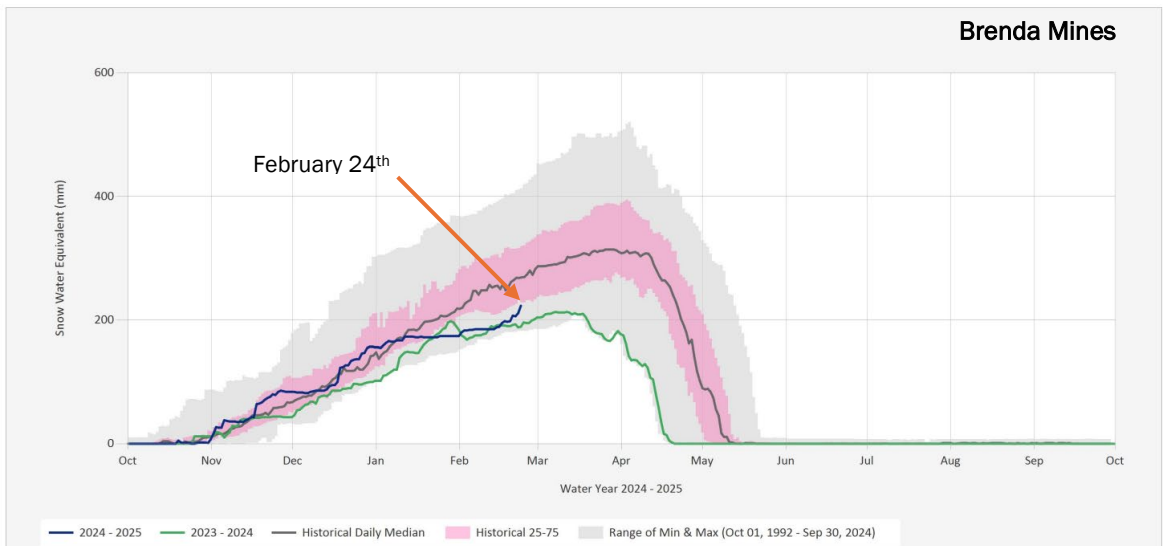
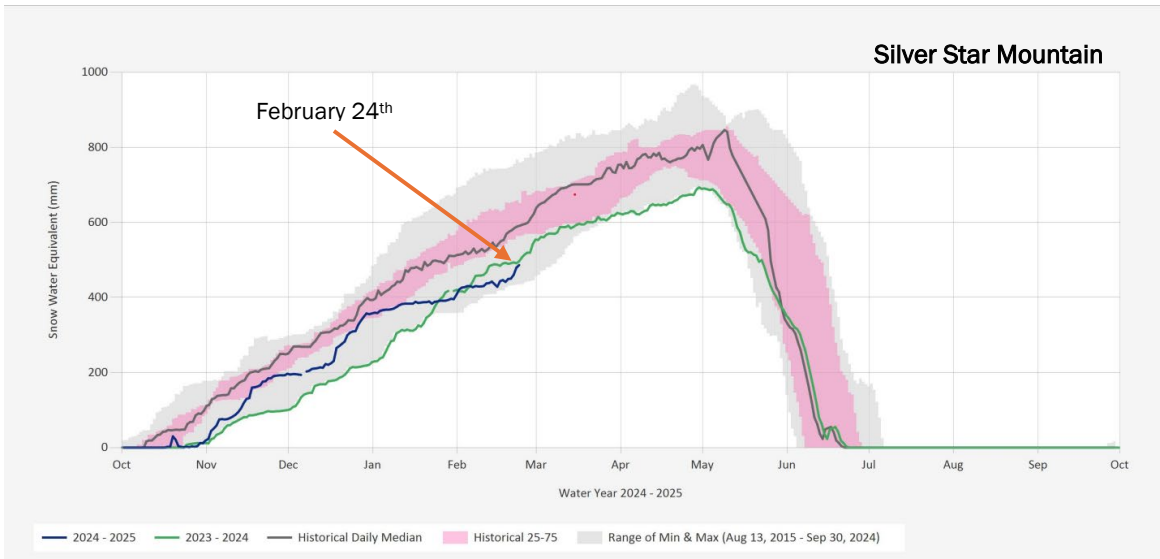


Figure 4 Weekly Snowpack Accumulation Across the Okanagan as of February 24. Data from the Province of B.C.

Cool Temperatures in the Okanagan

Temperatures across the Okanagan were cool throughout early February, with the week of the 10-16th averaging -11.8°C in Kelowna, -11.5°C in Vernon, and -8.5°C in Penticton. These were among the coldest temperatures seen in the last 30 years for that week. As of February 23, temperatures had started warming again but the weekly temperature was still in the very cold range.

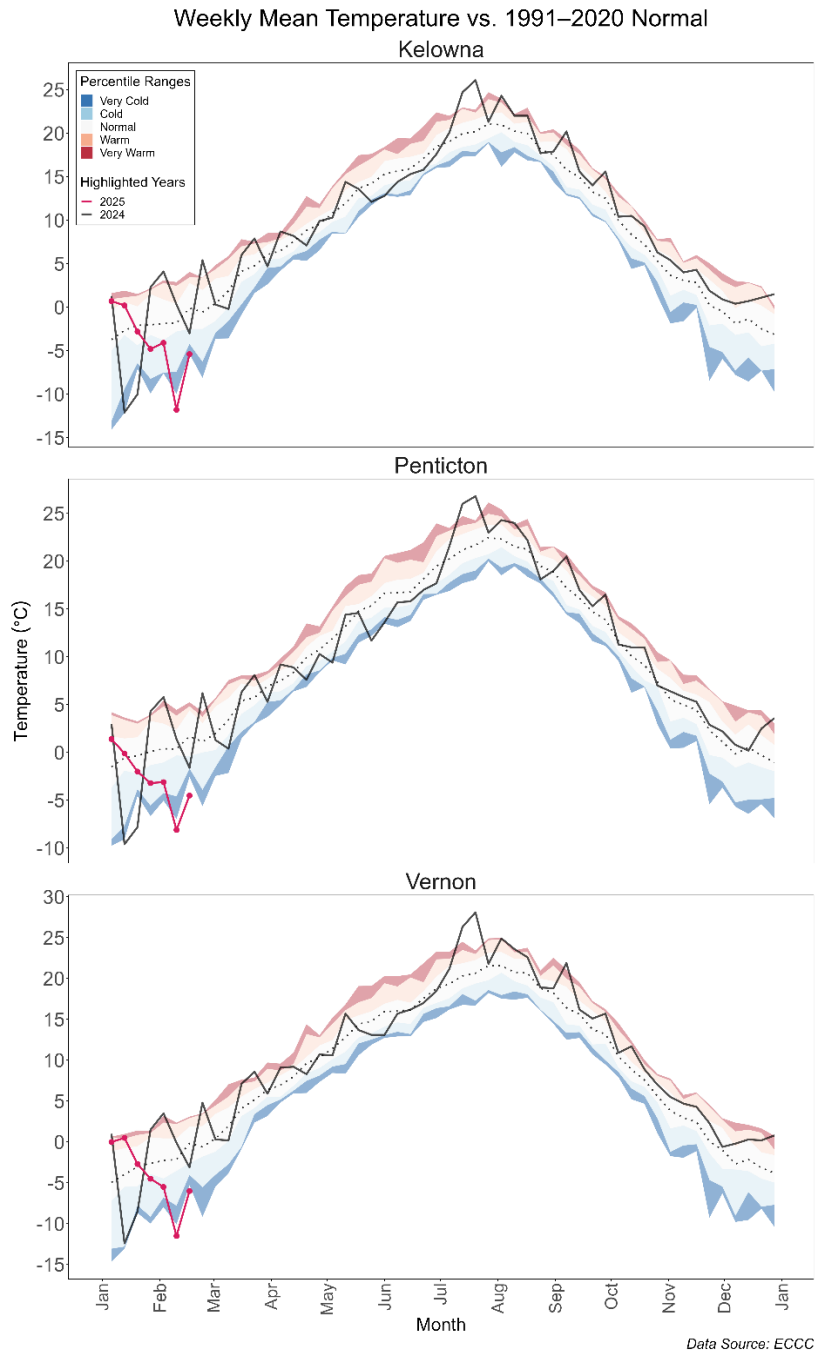


Figure 5 Weekly Average Temperature Across the Okanagan as of February 23 compared to 2024 and 1991 to 2020 range. Data retrieved from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Okanagan Lake Levels are Normal

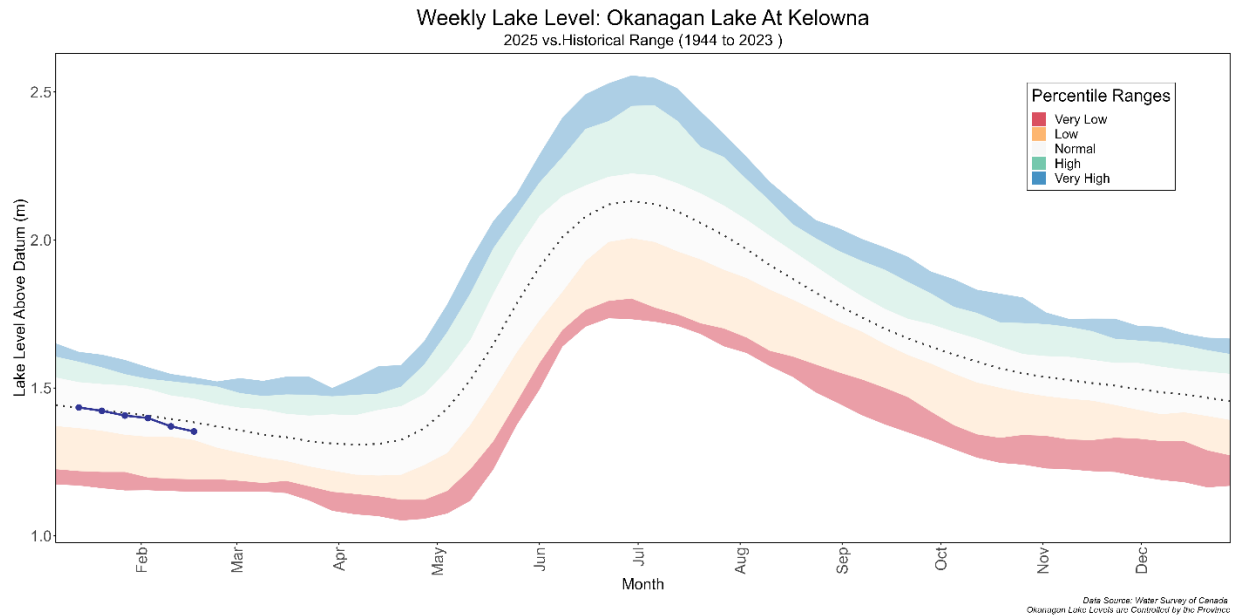


Figure 6 Weekly lake levels for Okanagan Lake at Kelowna compared to the 1944 – 2023 range. Data is retrieved from the Water Survey of Canada.

As of February 24, Okanagan Lake levels were below the mean but within the normal range (Figure 5), managed by the operator of the Okanagan Dam in Penticton.

Forecast

As of January 31, the ECCC Seasonal Forecast⁴ projected cool conditions for the next 3 months. The ECCC shows slightly wet conditions for projected precipitation in the Okanagan region. Seasonal forecasting is highly challenging, so disagreement between models or variations from projections is not uncommon.

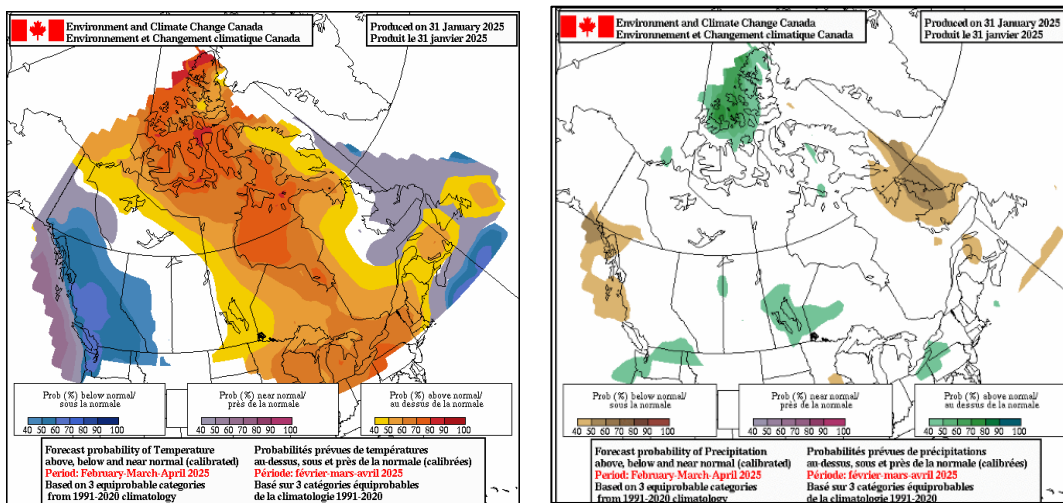


Figure 7 Three-Month Seasonal Temperature Forecast from ECCC (Feb-April).

⁴ ECCC 3-Month Seasonal Forecast: https://weather.gc.ca/saisons/prob_e.html

NOAA Update

Over the last month, OBWB staff have been monitoring the changes occurring at the U.S. *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration* (NOAA). NOAA is a world leader in weather forecasting and climate sciences whose data has long been the gold standard internationally. However, since the presidential inauguration in January, the Government of the United States has made rapid and significant changes to many of its agencies including NOAA. Changes included significant funding and staffing cuts, and policy changes. Due to the rapid and unstructured nature of the changes the extent and implications are not yet clear. However, themes of the changes include a shift away from research and reducing communication and cooperation with international partners. Furthermore, changes to webpages have seemed to de-emphasise previous language around climate change and make public data harder to access. Staff will continue to monitor changes and provide updates as necessary. ⁵⁶⁷⁸

⁵ The Guardian (04.02.2025) Scientists brace 'for the worst' as Trump purges climate mentions from websites
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/04/trump-climate-change-federal-websites>

⁶ The Guardian (05.02.2025)

Doge staffers enter NOAA headquarters and incite reports of cuts and threats

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/04/doge-noaa-headquarters>

⁷ New York Times (10.02.2025) How Could the Weather Service Change Under Trump?

https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/08/weather/national-weather-service-cuts-trump.html?unlocked_article_code=1.vk4.hg4Q.HjSkx_4bE9ve&smid=url-share

⁸ CBC (18.02.2025) Scientists at U.S. weather forecasting agency ordered to get clearance before talking to Canadian counterparts

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/trump-american-scientists-international-engagements-1.7461238>

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
 From: Carolina Restrepo, Office and Grants Manager
 Date: February 26, 2025
 Subject: **Office and Grants Manager Report**

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| Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting March 4, 2025 Agenda No: 6.6 |
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Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program:

The call for applications for the 2025/2026 WCQI Grant Program closed Friday, February 21 at 4:00 p.m. The program provides funds to Okanagan local governments, improvement districts, Okanagan First Nations communities, and non-profit organizations for projects that conserve and protect water, based on the recognition that we are all part of: “One Valley, One Water.” During the month of March, staff at the OBWB will review and make recommendations for funding the proposals received, based on the scoring criteria established and approved by the Board. The staff recommendations will be sent for approval to the Board of Directors for the meeting on April 1, 2025. The total funding available for this year is \$350,000. Awarded projects will be announced on April 2, 2025. Here is some “at a glance” information about the proposals received this year:



WCQI 2025-2026 applications by Category:



Source Protection

6



Restoration

5



Groundwater

3



Education

2



Water-Quality

2



System Improvement

1



Metering

1

February 7, 2025

Honourable Randene Neill
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
PO Box 9012 Stn Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8M 9L6

via email: WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Urgent Funding for Invasive Mussel Prevention and the Clean, Drain, Dry Program

Dear Minister Neill,

I am writing in support of the Okanagan Basin Water Board's (OBWB) recent request for enhanced funding and policy measures to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive aquatic species in British Columbia. As the MLA for Boundary-Similkameen, I share the concerns raised in their letter and the need for immediate action to safeguard our water systems, economies, and ecosystems.

During our recent conversation, I emphasized the critical importance of adequately funding the Clean, Drain, Dry program to ensure British Columbia remains free of all invasive species with specific concern around mussels and whirling disease. The economic and environmental consequences of failing to invest in prevention are simply too great to ignore. I sincerely hope that your upcoming budget reflects a strong commitment to supporting this essential program and reinforcing BC's Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP).

The OBWB has outlined a clear and necessary course of action, including:

- **Restoring IMDP funding to at least \$5.5 million** to counteract the reduction in inspections over recent years.
- **Implementing mandatory inspections for all watercraft entering BC** to close current gaps in enforcement.
- **Seeking federal engagement** to secure additional resources for prevention, rather than just detection.
- **Aligning efforts with Alberta and other western provinces** to create a coordinated "Western Canada Invasive Mussel-Free Zone."
- **Establishing stronger penalties** for non-compliance to ensure effective deterrence.



Donegal Wilson MLA Boundary- Similkameen

Opposition Critic for Water, Lands, Natural Resource Stewardship, & Wildlife

Constituency Office

712 5th Street
Keremeos, B.C. V0X 1N3
E: Donegal.Wilson.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Legislative Office

Room 028A, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4
T: (250) 498-5122

The OBWB has demonstrated significant public and stakeholder support for these measures, and as your colleague in the Legislature, I strongly encourage your ministry to prioritize this issue in the upcoming budget. The Clean, Drain, Dry program is an essential frontline defense that protects British Columbia's freshwater systems, and its continued success depends on stable, adequate funding and enforcement.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to your response and to continued collaboration on protecting our province's water resources.

Sincerely,



Donegal Wilson

MLA Boundary-Similkameen

Opposition Critic for Water, Lands, Natural Resource Stewardship, and Wildlife

cc.

Blair Ireland, Chair - Okanagan Basin Water Board



Donegal Wilson MLA Boundary- Similkameen

Opposition Critic for Water, Lands, Natural Resource Stewardship, & Wildlife

Constituency Office

712 5th Street

Keremeos, B.C. V0X 1N3

E: Donegal.Wilson.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Legislative Office

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Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

T: (250) 498-5122



HEALTH OFFICERS COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dr. Mark Lysyshyn
Chair

February 6th, 2025

ATTN: Minister Randene Neill
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Government of BC
WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca

To the Honourable Minister Neill,

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. Please accept this letter on behalf of the Health Officers Council of British Columbia (HOCBC). We are writing to you to bring attention to the urgent need to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, particularly invasive mussels, which if established would have detrimental effects on public health in British Columbia (BC).

Invasive mussels would negatively impact the infrastructure of drinking water systems in BC's lakes and could degrade recreational waters and beaches. Invasive mussels, if introduced to BC, could be very difficult to eradicate. Out of province watercraft are the main vector for the introduction of invasive mussels.

The Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) has been underfunded and understaffed for years, despite being critical to protecting BC's economy and freshwater ecosystems. Without this program, invasive mussels could cause significant damage to ecosystems, fisheries, and drinking water systems, potentially costing the province hundreds of millions annually and having direct and indirect health impacts.

The Health Officers Council of British Columbia represents public health physicians in BC as well as others who are practicing or closely allied with Public Health, physicians in training, and other individuals managing or working in Public Health. Currently, HOCBC has over 130 physician members. HOCBC has recently passed a resolution regarding the threat of invasive mussels in BC.

HOCBC recommends the following urgent actions:

1. The Provincial Government require that all watercraft entering the province be inspected prior to launching in BC Waters.
2. The Provincial Government allocate permanent, stable funding to provide sufficient inspection and decontamination resources, working with local governments and other partners, to enforce required inspections.
3. The Provincial Government establish a formal framework with neighbouring provinces and states on a regional strategy to require mandatory surveillance and control of invasive mussels.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark Lysyshyn
Chair, Health Officer's Council of British Columbia

CC: Minister Josie Osborne, BC Minister of Health
Dr. Silvina Mema, Incoming Chair, Health Officer's Council of British Columbia



DISTRICT OF COLDSTREAM

9901 KALAMALKA ROAD, COLDSTREAM, BC V1B 1L6

Phone 250-545-5304 Fax 250-545-4733

Email: info@coldstream.ca Website: www.coldstream.ca

"Rural Living At Its Best"

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

February 18, 2025

File: 410-01

Honourable Randene Neill
B.C. Minister of Water, Land and Resource
Stewardship

Via email: WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Neill,

Re: Funding and Inter-provincial cooperation to prevent invasive mussels

The District of Coldstream Council at their February 10, 2025 meeting passed the following resolution:

THAT Council direct Administration to send a letter to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship in support of the Okanagan Basin Water Board' request for funding and inter-provincial cooperation to prevent invasive mussels.

Coldstream, BC is a community on the shores of Kalamalka Lake, where an infestation of invasive mussels would have a devastating effect on our infrastructure and shoreline/beaches. Many communities in the Okanagan Valley, spearheaded by the Okanagan Basin Water Board have been fighting against an accidental introduction of invasive mussels into the numerous lakes and waterways that are integral to our valley for several years and we must emphasize the importance, now more than ever, of continuing to fight against the invasion of zebra, quagga and golden mussels, especially now that these mussels have been detected closer to our community, in the state of Idaho.

Should invasive mussels reach BC waters, it may cost the Province millions annually to manage the negative impacts. This infestation will be nearly impossible to eradicate once established in our waterways and will have detrimental impacts to our ecosystems, infrastructure and economies. Damage to sensitive freshwater ecosystems, obstructed water intake channels and spoiled beaches would be devastating. Economically, spending more on mussel defense annually to delay infestation makes sense.

The District of Coldstream Council echoes the following calls to action from the Okanagan Basin Water Board:

- increase funding to the BC Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) which has been underfunded and understaffed for years;
- make inspections mandatory for all watercraft entering BC;
- call on the federal government for resources to support IMDP;
- create a "Western Canada Invasive Mussel-Free zone" including BC, Alberta and potentially Saskatchewan;

- align penalties across provinces for non-compliance; and
- create clear policy to limit chemical use as a “rapid response” for responding to new mussel detections.

Without this program, invasive mussels would cause significant damage to ecosystems, fisheries, and drinking water systems, costing the province hundreds of millions annually. Invasive mussels would dramatically change Kalamalka Lake by coating every surface in sharp mussel shells, rather like barnacles in the ocean.

We respectfully request your consideration. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me at rhoyte@coldstream.ca.

Sincerely,



Mayor Ruth Hoyte
District of Coldstream

Cc: Coldstream Council
Okanagan Basin Water Board



LAKE COUNTRY

Life. The Okanagan Way.

Municipal Hall

Mayor's Office

10150 Bottom Wood Lake Road

Lake Country, BC V4V 2M1

Tel: 250-766-6670

mayorandcouncil@lakecountry.bc.ca

February 19, 2025

Honourable Randene Neill
B.C. Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
PO Box 9012 Stn Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8M 9L6
WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Support for Okanagan Basin Water Board's Call for Action to Strengthening the B.C. Invasive Mussel Defence Program

Dear Minister Neill,

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. As a key water provider in the Okanagan Valley, the District of Lake Country (DLC) appreciates your leadership on critical water issues and look forward to working together to protect B.C.'s freshwater resources.

We are writing in strong support of the Okanagan Basin Water Board's (OBWB) call for urgent action for fully funded mandatory inspections for all watercraft entering B.C. under the Wildlife Act. The DLC has a critical responsibility to safeguard the quality and sustainability of our drinking water sources, which include Oyama, Beaver, Kalamalka – Wood Basin, and Okanagan Lakes. These water systems are vital for consumption, irrigation, fire protection, recreation, and local fisheries. Our deep-water intakes and upland reservoirs supply drinking water to homes, businesses, and agriculture, supporting both daily needs and economic vitality. The spread of aquatic invasive species poses a significant threat to these essential resources.

We urge the Province to implement mandatory inspections for all watercraft to protect these watersheds from invasive species like mussels, which pose a serious threat to water quality, local ecosystems, and public health. As water providers, we are obligated under the Drinking Water Protection Act to ensure the safety and quality of drinking water from its source to the tap. Preventing the spread of invasive species is a crucial part of fulfilling this responsibility. By adopting the OBWB's recommendations, we can better protect our waters, local economy, and recreational activities for future generations.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We look forward to your leadership in ensuring the ongoing health and safety of our water systems.

Kind regards,

Blair Ireland, Mayor
ireland@lakecountry.bc.ca

LAKE COUNTRY

Jordan Knox, President
Michael Magnusson, Executive Director
Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce

February 18, 2024

To: The Honourable Randene Neill
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
PO Box 9012 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8M 9L6
Email: WLRs.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Strengthening B.C.'s Invasive Mussel Defence Program – A Critical Investment in Economic and Environmental Sustainability

Dear Minister Neill,

On behalf of the Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to urge the provincial government to take immediate action to strengthen the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP) and implement mandatory inspections for all watercraft entering British Columbia. This issue is of critical importance to our business community, the tourism industry, and the overall economic health of the Okanagan region.

As you are aware, invasive mussels pose a severe threat to B.C.'s freshwater ecosystems, infrastructure, and key economic sectors. Without adequate prevention measures, an infestation could result in devastating financial consequences, including:

- **Infrastructure Damage:** Mussels clog pipes and water intake systems, increasing maintenance costs for municipal water supplies, hydroelectric dams, and agricultural irrigation. Estimates suggest an infestation could cost B.C. hundreds of millions of dollars annually in damages and lost productivity.
- **Tourism & Recreation Impacts:** Okanagan Lake and other waterways attract thousands of visitors each year, contributing significantly to local businesses, hotels, and restaurants. If invasive mussels take hold, the impact on water quality, beach closures, and declining recreational opportunities could result in severe economic losses for businesses reliant on tourism.
- **Agriculture & Wine Industry Risks:** The Okanagan's agriculture sector, including our world-renowned wineries, depends on clean and sustainable water sources. Mussel infestations can disrupt irrigation systems, increase water treatment costs, and reduce the availability of high-quality water essential for production.
- **Property Value Decline:** Lakeside communities thrive on their pristine natural environment. If mussels spread, property values could plummet, directly affecting local economies and tax revenues.

Urgent Actions Required:

1. Immediate Funding for the IMDP – \$5.5 Million Investment

The IMDP has been underfunded for years, and its effectiveness has been compromised by budget reductions and staffing shortages. The number of watercraft inspections has declined by 60% since 2019, despite an increasing threat from neighboring jurisdictions like Idaho. We urge the provincial government to allocate at least \$5.5 million to the IMDP in 2025 to restore and expand inspections.

2. Mandatory Inspections for All Watercraft Entering B.C.

Unlike Alberta, which is introducing mandatory watercraft inspections in 2026, B.C. currently only inspects boats that pass an open station, leaving significant gaps in coverage. We recommend amending the Wildlife Act and Water Sustainability Act to require mandatory inspections for all incoming watercraft.

3. Federal Support for Prevention, Not Just Detection

Federal funding has been largely focused on mussel detection rather than prevention. As we have seen in Lake Winnipeg and are witnessing in Idaho's Snake River, once mussels are detected, the infestation and damage is irreversible. We urge you to advocate for federal funding that prioritizes early prevention and border screening programs, as well as a moratorium on out-of-country watercraft given that the copper-based chemical treatments in Idaho's Snake River were unsuccessful in eliminating quagga mussels but did kill between 6 and 7 tons of fish, including 48 white sturgeon.

4. A Western Canada Invasive Mussel-Free Zone

The province should collaborate with Alberta and Saskatchewan to establish a regional invasive mussel prevention strategy, including shared policies, inspection stations, and penalties. Aligning with Alberta's AIS Task Force recommendations will create a more effective defense against mussel contamination across Western Canada.

5. Aligning Penalties to Deter Non-Compliance

Currently, B.C.'s fines for non-compliance with inspection programs are far lower than Alberta's. We recommend increasing penalties to at least match Alberta's \$4,200 fine for failing to stop at an inspection station and implementing higher fines for larger, high-risk watercraft.

6. Clear Policy to Limit Chemical Use in "Rapid Response" Strategies

While some jurisdictions propose chemical treatments as a last resort for invasive mussels like in the Snake River, history shows that these measures are often ineffective, costly, and harmful to other aquatic species, including salmon populations. The best strategy remains prevention through mandatory inspections and proactive funding.

Public and Business Community Support

This issue is not just an environmental concern—it is an economic imperative. In March 2024, the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) convened a multi-stakeholder working group of over 100 representatives, including local governments, First Nations, marinas, tourism associations, and chambers of commerce. The overwhelming consensus was that B.C. must take stronger action now to protect our waters, economy, and way of life.

As the voice of the Penticton business community, we strongly encourage your government to prioritize these investments in the upcoming budget and include mandatory watercraft inspections in the Wildlife Act Review. The cost of inaction is far too great, and we stand ready to support efforts to ensure B.C. remains free from invasive mussels.

Thank you for your time and leadership on this critical issue. We look forward to your response and to seeing B.C. take decisive action to protect our waters and economy.

Sincerely,



Jordan Knox,
President



Michael Magnusson,
Executive Director

Cc: The Honourable Tamara Davidson, Minister of Environment and Parks
The Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture and Food
The Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure
The Honourable Diana Gibson, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation
The Honourable Spencer Chandra Herbert, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport
Amelia Boulton, Member of the Legislative Assembly Penticton-Summerland
Julius Bloomfield, Mayor of Penticton
ȷilmixʷm (Chief) Greg Gabriel, snpink'tn (Penticton) Indian Band
Richard Cannings, Member of Parliament South Okanagan - West Kootenay



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

December 9, 2024

The Honourable Randene Neill
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Via Email: WLRS.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Neill,

On behalf of Kelowna's residents and Council, congratulations on your appointment as British Columbia's Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. With the start of a new term and legislative session, we look forward to the opportunities for continued dialogue and collaboration.

Kelowna, interior BC's largest urban centre and fastest-growing community, has over 167,000 residents and welcomes more than two million visitors annually. Collaboration with all government levels is essential to support this growth and build a thriving, healthy, well-connected and safe community. As your Government seeks to bring a focus on engagement and driving results for rural, northern and interior regions of BC, we encourage you to consider how these regions are being reflected in the priorities, mandates and budgets of this Parliament. Kelowna is committed to continuing to be a collaborative partner and working together with other levels of government to bring value to our residents. The City has a proven track record of delivering results on key projects that benefit the local community and align with provincial priorities.

We were encouraged to see commitments in the NDP platform to develop a made-in-BC strategy to defend biodiversity and to protect and restore watersheds and waterways. Our Council, in collaboration with regional partners like the Okanagan Basin Water Board, is dedicated to preserving the health of Okanagan Lake. By working together to implement proactive measures against invasive mussels, we have an opportunity to safeguard our region's ecosystems and vital water resources.

I am planning to be in Victoria from February 18 to 20, 2025 and would welcome an opportunity to meet and connect with you at that time to explore opportunities for collaboration and to advance our shared priorities.



City Hall | 1435 Water Street, Kelowna BC V1Y 1J4
TEL 250-469-8980 | FAX 250-862-3399
mayorandcouncil@kelowna.ca
kelowna.ca

Our Intergovernmental Relations Manager, Axelle Bazett (abazett@kelowna.ca) will be reaching out to your office to arrange an opportunity.

We also hope you will visit us in Kelowna during the year, please accept a standing open invitation to our community. Congratulations once again and we look forward to working together with you and your Cabinet colleagues to best serve our residents in Kelowna for a stronger BC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tom Dyas', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Tom Dyas
MAYOR

TOURISM
REVELSTOKE.

February 19, 2025

RE: Funding and inter-provincial cooperation to prevent invasive mussels

Dear Minister Neill,

On behalf of Tourism Revelstoke, I am writing to express our full support for the Okanagan Basin Water Board's (OBWB) letter copied below regarding the urgent need for increased funding and inter-provincial cooperation to prevent the spread of invasive mussels.

As a region that heavily relies on our freshwater resources for tourism, recreation, and local economies, the threat of invasive mussels is a pressing concern for us. Revelstoke's natural beauty and outdoor offerings, particularly our pristine lakes and rivers, are key attractions for visitors from across the world. The protection of these water bodies is essential to maintaining both our local ecosystems and the economic health of our tourism industry.

We support the call for additional funding for the Invasive Mussel Defence Program (IMDP), mandatory watercraft inspections, and the creation of a coordinated "Western Canada Invasive Mussel-Free Zone." Ensuring the protection of our waters from invasive species is vital for the sustainability of tourism in our community and throughout the province.

We encourage your government to prioritize this issue and take immediate action to safeguard B.C.'s freshwater ecosystems.

Sincerely,



Taniell Hamilton
Destination & Sustainability Manager

TOURISM REVELSTOKE

EMAIL: sustainability@seerevelstoke.com

CELL: 604.935.7727

WEBSITE: SeeRevelstoke.com | DestinationRevelstoke.com

Honourable Randene Neill
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
PO Box 9012 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8M 9L6

February 6, 2025

RE: Funding and inter-provincial cooperation to prevent invasive mussels

Dear Minister Neill,

On behalf of the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA), please find our letter of support for funding and inter-provincial cooperation to prevent invasive mussels.

Due to the depth and size of Okanagan Lake, if invasive mussels are introduced eradication would be impossible and would significantly alter water quality and recreational activities for the Cities of Penticton, Summerland, Naramata, Kelowna, West Kelowna and Vernon. Provincial studies have indicated the economic impact of a mussel outbreak in the Okanagan Lake watershed ranges from \$64 to \$127 million annually.

We ask that all levels of government work together to provide resources for the actions outlined below.

1. Immediate Funding for IMDP – \$5.5 million

Since the program's launch in 2015, IMDP funding has not kept pace with inflation. Between 2019-2023, the budget was reduced by 25% (when accounting for inflation), leading to a 60% drop in watercraft inspections. With invasive mussels now detected in neighboring Idaho, we urge you to allocate at least \$5.5 million to the IMDP in 2025 to restore inspections and enhance prevention efforts.

2. Mandatory Inspections for All Watercraft

Currently, only boats passing an open IMDP station are required to be inspected, leaving many watercraft uninspected. We propose making inspections mandatory for all watercraft entering B.C., which could be implemented through public-private partnerships with marinas. This would help fund the program, reduce enforcement costs, and encourage responsible boating culture. Legislation to support this could include:

- Wildlife Act (RSBC 1996, c. 488) – Governs the protection of ecosystems and invasive species.
- Invasive Species Regulation (under the Wildlife Act) – Addresses the control of invasive species.
- Water Sustainability Act (SBC 2014, c. 15) – Protects water resources and could include regulations for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention.
- Public Health Act (RSBC 2008, c. 28) – Addresses public health risks related to AIS.
- Drinking Water Protection Act (SBC 2001, c. 9) – Could regulate inspections near vulnerable drinking water sources.

3. Federal Action

We urge you to call on the federal government for resources to support IMDP. Federal funding has been limited to detection, not prevention. As we've seen in Lake Winnipeg and other regions, once invasive species are detected, it's already too late. The federal government must prioritize prevention to halt the spread of invasive mussels before they enter B.C.

4. Western Canada Invasive Mussel-Free Zone

We recommend creating a "Western Canada Invasive Mussel-Free Zone," including B.C., Alberta, and potentially Saskatchewan. This would enable consistent inspections, common policies, and penalties across provincial borders. Alberta's recently created AIS Task Force – chaired by MLA Grant Hunter, released a recommendations report in December 2024 which outlines specific actions and timelines for implementing a watercraft sticker program and mandatory inspections for all watercraft entering Alberta from the east and south. We recommend B.C. create a similar, politically led task force to work with Alberta to align and coordinate efforts.

5. Align Penalties Across Provinces

We urge B.C. to match Alberta's high fines for non-compliance. The larger watercraft that pose the highest risk of transporting invasive mussels should be subject to higher fines. Alberta's fines, such as \$4,200 for failing to stop at an inspection station, set an important precedent for effective deterrence.

6. Create Clear Policy to Limit Chemical Use as a "Rapid Response"

Many jurisdictions including B.C. and Alberta are calling for the registration of additional chemical options for responding to new mussel detections. While it is important to have tools available, case after case shows these chemicals fail to eradicate mussels, cost millions to use, damage the ecosystem and kill other non-target species including salmonids and other fish. Rapid response chemicals should never be used as a PR cover for inadequate and underfunded prevention efforts. provincial invasive mussel programs, including direct federal funding to watercraft inspection programs. Federal funding for invasive mussels has largely been limited to detection, rather than prevention. As we know from Lake Winnipeg and countless other lakes, once a detection occurs, it is already too late. The federal government must do more to prevent, not just monitor, the spread of invasive mussels.

Thank you for your support of the tourism industry in the Thompson Okanagan region by supporting funding and inter-provincial cooperation at the political level for invasive mussel prevention.

Sincerely,

Ellen Walker-Matthews

[Ellen Walker-Matthews \(Feb 7, 2025 15:18 PST\)](#)

Ellen Walker-Matthews
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)



February 7, 2025

Okanagan Basin Water Board
c/o James Littley, Deputy Administrator
1450 KLO Road
Kelowna, BC, V1W 3Z4

DELIVERED BY EMAIL: james.littley@obwb.ca

Dear James Littley:

**Re: Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grants Program Terms of Reference
"1.0 Ha Policy" — Accessory Dwellings**

I am writing in relation to your letter of September 12, 2024, wherein you advised of the inclusion of a new Section 4.8.5 in the OBWB SFA Grants Program Terms of Reference in order to provide an exemption allowing new parcels to be created by subdivision less than 1.0 ha in area to be connected to an existing private sewer utility.

You advised that this change was the result of concerns raised by local government staff "about the effect this update will have on existing areas treated by private systems."

As you will recall, in its previous letter to the OBWB of May 16, 2024, the Regional District raised similar concerns, requesting that references to "sewer systems provided as a service by a municipality or regional district" under the (then) proposed Section 4.6.2 of the ToR be replaced with a more general reference to "community sewers".

While the Regional District is appreciative of the new exclusion for subdivisions represented by Section 4.8.5 and the clarity this provides in relation to the requirements of Section 4.6.1 of the ToR, we remain concerned that similar clarity was not provided in relation to Section 4.6.2.

This concern specifically relates to the requirement that accessory dwellings be prohibited from being developed on parcels less than 1.0 "not connected to sewer systems provided as a service by a ... regional district."

Accordingly, and in response, the Regional District Board, at its meeting of February 6, 2025, resolved the following:

THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board be requested to clarify Section 4.6.2 of its Sewerage Facilities Assistance Grants Terms of Reference 2024, and the requirement that a bylaw be in place prohibiting the development of accessory dwellings on properties less than 1.0 hectare in area that are not connected to a sewer system operated by the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen.

The Regional District is hopeful that Section 4.8.5 was intended to apply equally to subdivisions as well as the development of accessory dwellings and looks forward to your clarification of this matter.



Should you have any questions regarding this request, or wish to discuss further, I can be reached at 250-490-4101 or by email at cgarrish@rdos.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CG', is positioned above the typed name.

Christopher Garrish MA, MSS, MCIP, RPP
Senior Manager of Planning Services