Okanagan Basin WATER BOARD
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# MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors

From: Sandra Schira

Date: Feb. 20, 2026

**Subject: Water Science Specialist Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
March 3, 2026
Agenda No: 7.6

## Temperature

Weekly temperatures began to drop the week of Feb. 20, 2026, following a notably warm period across the valley (Figure 1). As of mid-February, weekly average temperatures had been above the 1991-2020 average for all but one week.

Warm temperatures can lead to plants not entering winter dormancy, or exiting their winter dormancy early. As seen with the 2024 cold snap, sudden temperature drops after warmer periods can have lasting impacts on plants. The 2024 cold snap was colder, with the coldest weekly average temperature observed being -12.4 C in Vernon.

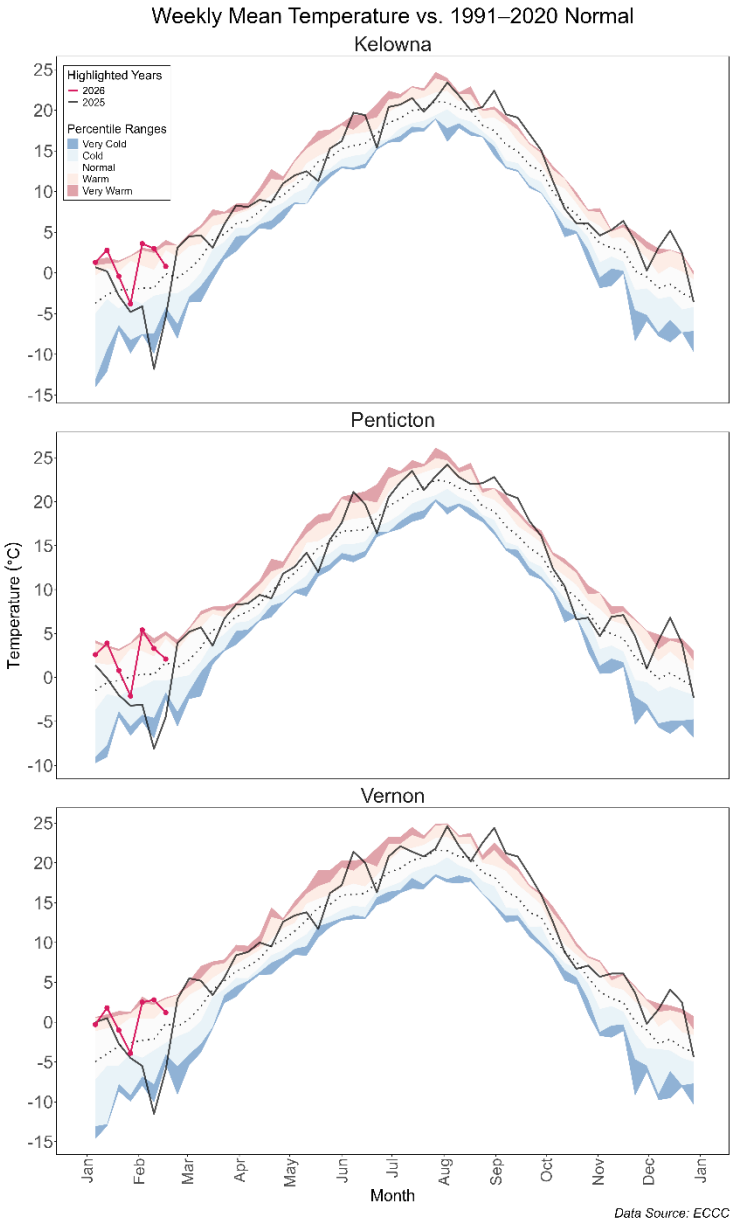


**Figure 1:** Weekly average temperature across the Okanagan as of Feb. 20, 2026. Compared to 1991 to 2020 range. Data retrieved from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

### Precipitation

Monthly total precipitation in the lower valley has been low so far in 2026, with January outside the typical 1991-2020 range (Figure 2). In the upper watershed, snowpack remains low across the valley (Figure 3). The average snowpack level for the Okanagan as of Feb. 17, 2026 was 78% of normal. At the time of writing, Brenda Mines was at 62% of normal, which is the lowest snowpack recorded at that station in mid-February since the station was established in 1992. Mission Creek and Silver Star were also well below average at 70% and 88% of normal, respectively. Typically, by February, around two-thirds of the total snowpack will have accumulated. While it is still too early to know how the freshet will look, low snowpack and warm temperatures increase the chance of an early, quick melt.

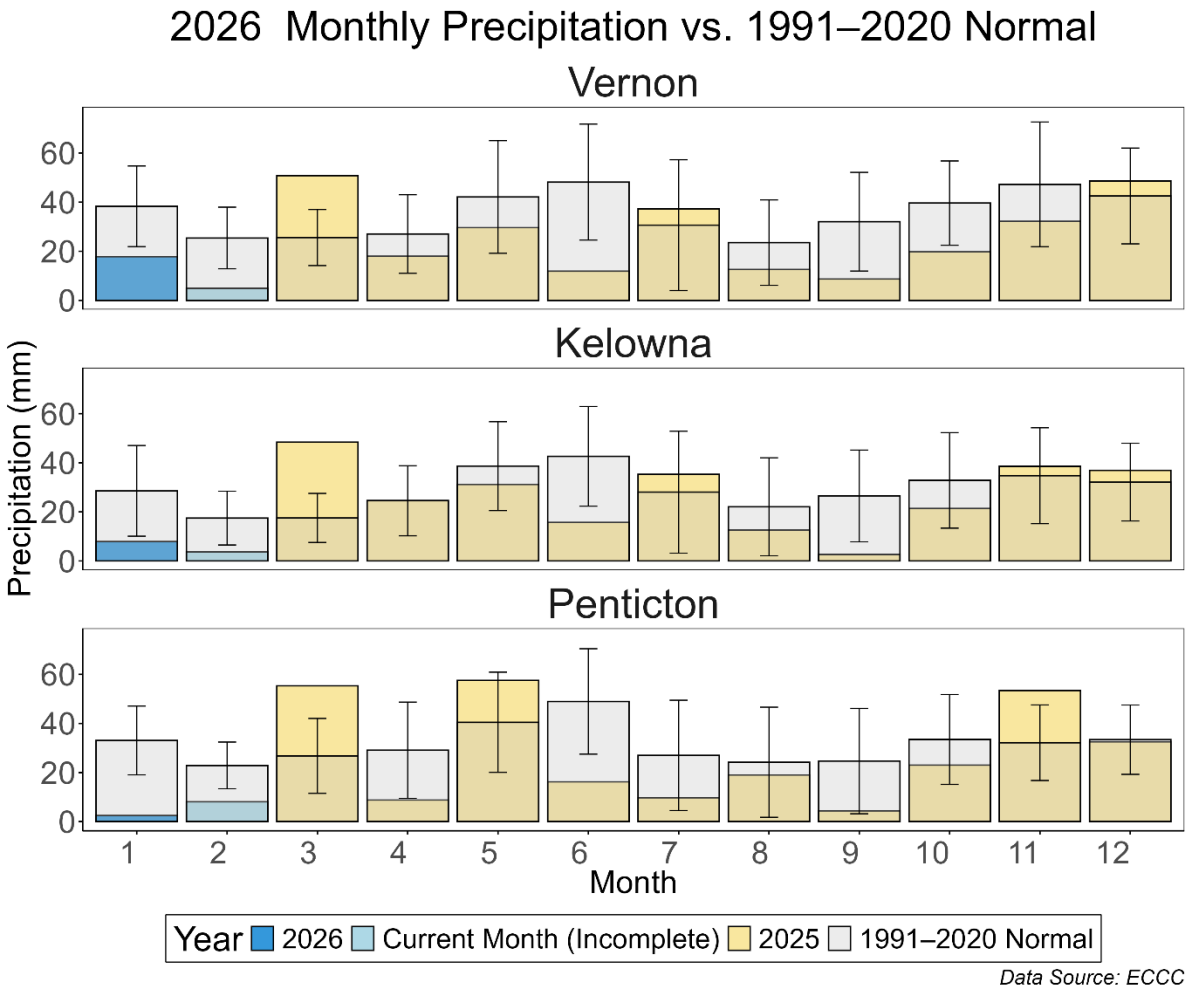


**Figure 2:** Monthly precipitation in the Okanagan as of Feb. 20, 2026 compared to 1991 to 2020 range. Data retrieved from Environment and Climate Change Canada.


***Figure 3:*** Weekly snowpack accumulation across the Okanagan as of Feb. 20, 2026. Data ranges for each station are Brenda: 1992 – present Mines, Mission Creek: 1969 – present, and Silver Star: 2015– present. Data from the Province of B.C.

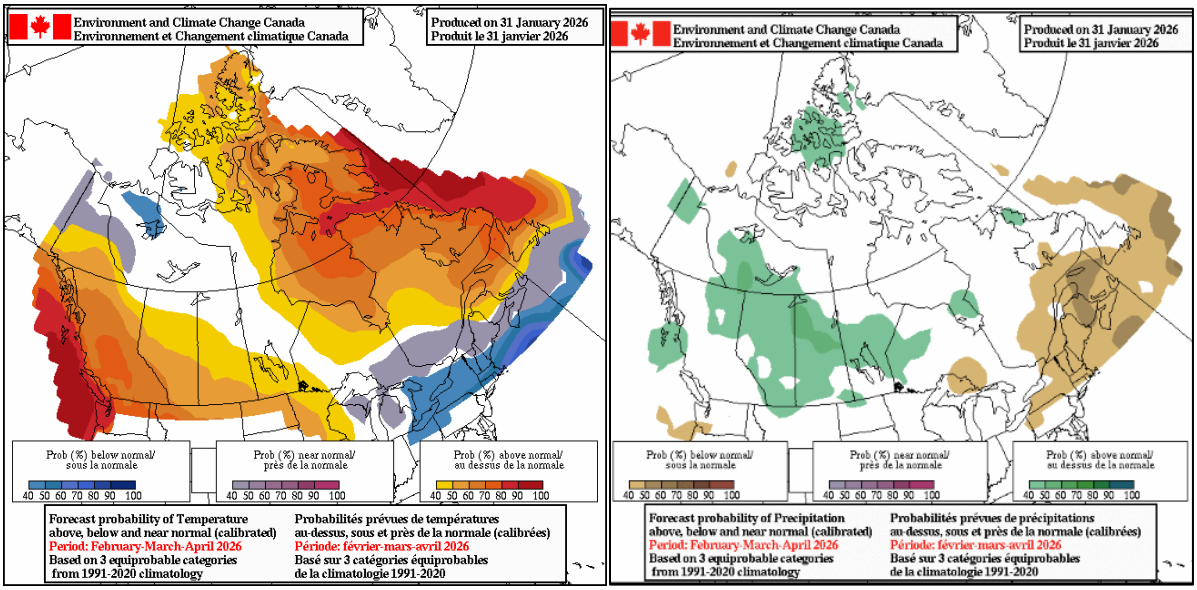


**Figure 4:** *Three-Month Seasonal Forecast from ECCC[1] (Feb-May, 2026).*

## Seasonal Forecast

Seasonal forecasts indicate that February through May have a medium chance of being warmer than normal (Figure 4). However, the long-term forecast for precipitation shows no clear signal in either direction. The Environment and Climate Change Canada[1] long-term seasonal forecast indicates a moderate likelihood of above-normal temperatures in the Okanagan over the next three months. Precipitation also shows a moderate likelihood of wet conditions. Seasonal forecasting is highly challenging, so disagreement between models or variations from projections is not uncommon. The forecasts show the likelihood of above or below normal conditions and do not show by how much those conditions vary. Seasonal forecasts can be used to provide a sense of likely future conditions, but they should not be taken as 100% certain.

## Hydrology

Lake levels for Osoyoos Lake were at a historic low through February (Figure 5). Okanagan Lake levels at Kelowna started off the year slightly low and have remained stable (Figure 6).

Mill Creek, Naramata Creek, and Coldstream Creek continue to flow lower than normal for this time of year. However, most other streams across the Okanagan were flowing around normal values for this time of year. Across the valley, many streams have some form of control structures, so observed stream flows reflect a combination of natural conditions and management decisions.

[1] ECCC Seasonal forecasts. https://climate-scenarios.canada.ca/?page=cansips-prob

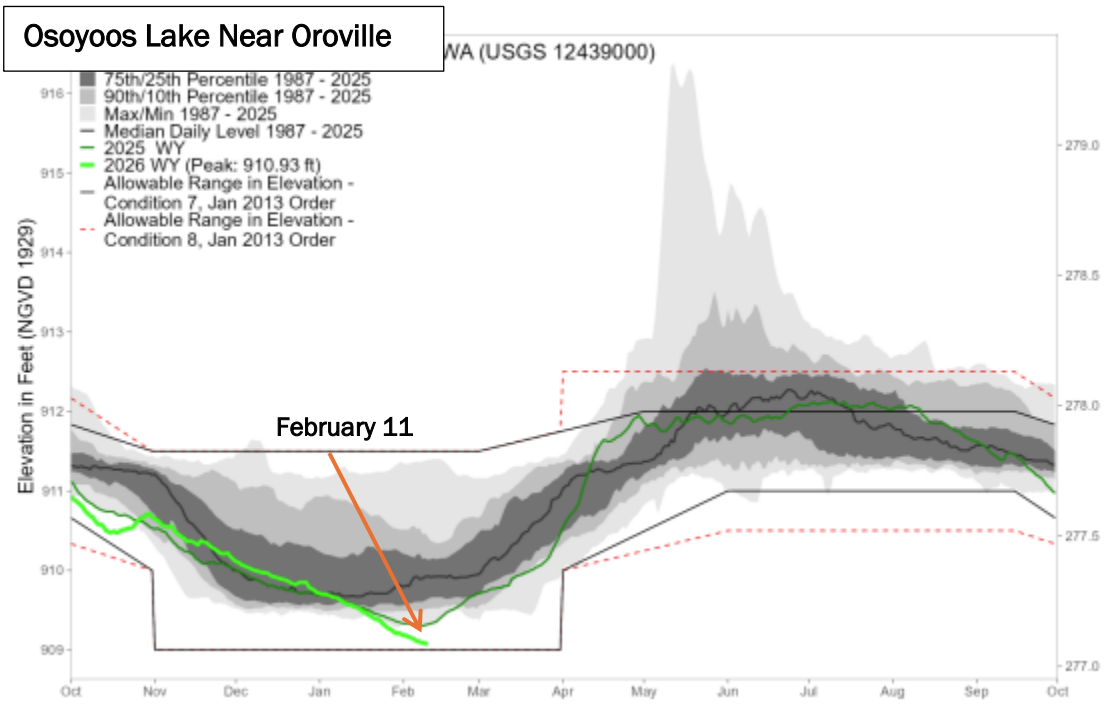


**Figure 5:** *Osoyoos Lake near Oroville level from the USGS as of Feb. 11, 2026.*

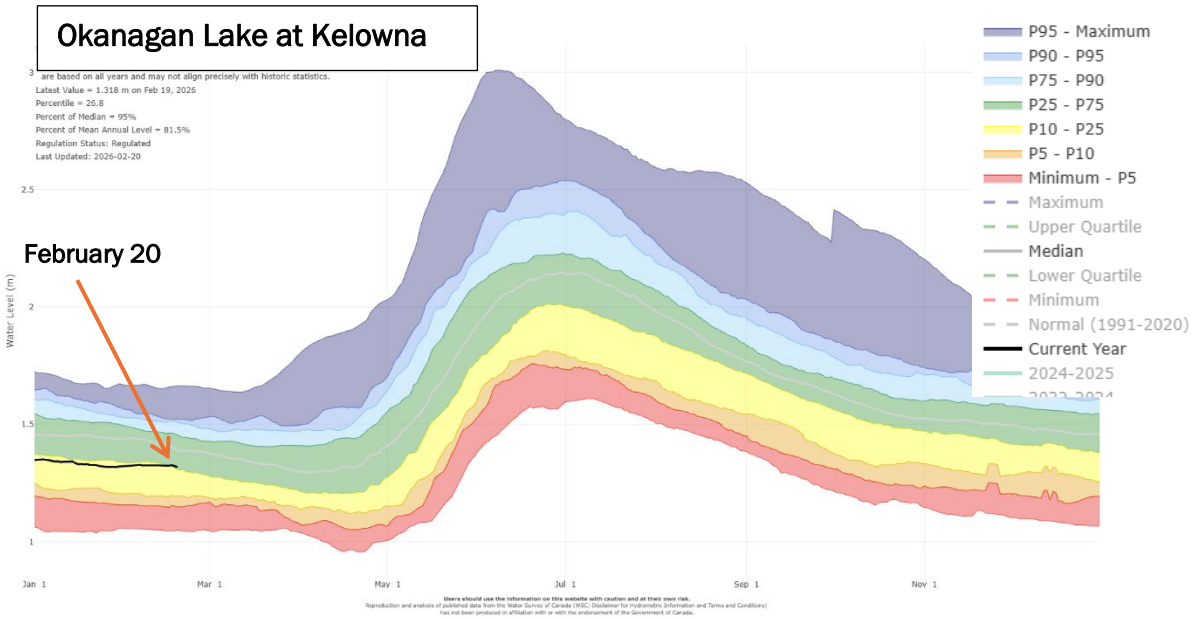


**Figure 6:** Weekly lake levels for Okanagan Lake at Kelowna compared to the 1944 – 2023 range as of Feb. 20, 2026. Data is retrieved from the Water Survey of Canada.