



WATER CONSERVATION AND WATER IMPROVEMENT GRANT AWARDS 2026-2027

Project Code	Organization	Project Title	\$ Awarded
1	City of Penticton	Investigating PFAS Across the Okanagan Region	\$ 30,000.00
2	Okanagan Nation Alliance	Water Quality Assurance during the Construction of Okanagan River Restoration in Okanagan Falls	\$ 27,500.00
3	B.C. Wildlife Federation	10,000 Wetlands Initiative: Restoring Hydrologic Function at Coteay Creek	\$ 18,500.00
4	Okanagan Indian Band	Equesis Creek – groundwater connectivity assessment for source water protection – Phase 2	\$ 30,000.00
5	District of Summerland	Source water investigation at the Trout Creek Perpetual Slide - Phase 2	\$ 25,000.00
6	City of Kelowna	Okanagan Algae Monitoring Network – Phycocyanin Probe for Scada	\$ 25,000.00
7	Okanagan Nation Alliance	Post-wildfire changes in snowpack dynamics and their impacts on summer low flows in the McDougall Creek Watershed	\$ 30,000.00
8	Univeristy of British Columbia	Removal of Microplastics and Heavy Metals Using a Novel Reactive Barrier Technology	\$ 20,000.00
9	Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society	A Community Lens on Wetland Restoration	\$ 20,000.00
10	Kelowna Yacht Club	Okanagan Lake Marine Spill Risk Reduction Program	\$ 5,000.00
11	Vaseux Water User Community	Vaseux Creek Sustainable Agricultural Groundwater Plan	\$ 30,000.00
12	Westbank First Nation	IR#9 Water System Capacity, Monitoring, and Demand Management Initiative	\$ 25,000.00
13	Westbank First Nation	WFN Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping Update	\$ 20,000.00
14	City of Kelowna	Piloting Climate Resilient Okanagan Green Infrastructure standards	\$ 10,000.00
15	City of Kelowna	Okanagan Hydrometeorological Information Network – Review and Expansion	\$ 30,000.00
16	Osoyoos Lake Water Quaity Society	Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Monitoring	\$ 9,000.00
17	RDNO	Sncematqtn Agricultural Park Hog's Gulch – Infill and mortality replacement planting	\$ 5,000.00
18	Town of Oliver	Educational Public FireSmart Xeriscape Gardens	\$ 10,000.00
19	RDCO	Leak Detection Program	\$ 10,000.00
			\$ 380,000.00

Project Title:	Investigating PFAS (Forever Chemicals) Across the Okanagan Region
Organization:	City of Penticton
Project Summary:	This project undertakes a coordinated, region-wide assessment of PFAS in surface water and wastewater across the Okanagan. Through consistent sampling and analysis using EPA Method 1633 (Analysis of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in Aqueous, Solid, Biosolids, and Tissue Samples by LC-MS/MS) aligned protocols, the study will identify key sources, quantify PFAS loading, and examine how concentrations change through the watershed. The work will also assess how future population growth may influence PFAS levels over time. The findings are intended to support informed source-control decisions by local governments and utilities, alongside targeted public education to help reduce PFAS inputs at the community level.

Project Title:	Water Quality Assurance during the Construction of Okanagan River Restoration in Okanagan Falls
Organization:	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Project Summary:	This project supports Phase 3 of the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative by providing on-site environmental monitoring and targeted protection for native freshwater mussels during construction. As approximately 46,000 m ² of river habitat is restored between Skaha and Vaseux Lakes, the project will ensure turbidity and other water-quality parameters remain within established guidelines and that mussels are identified, salvaged, and relocated where necessary. This work allows large-scale channel and habitat restoration to proceed while minimizing short-term impacts on water quality and sensitive species, ensuring the long-term ecological benefits of ORRI are achieved without unintended harm during construction.

Project Title:	10,000 Wetlands Initiative: Restoring Hydrologic Function at Coteay Creek
Organization:	B.C. Wildlife Federation
Project Summary:	This project carries out Phase 2 of low-tech, process-based restoration on Coteay Creek, building on earlier work to restore natural stream and floodplain function. The project will install up to 30 beaver-dam analogues and post-assisted log structures, extending restoration over roughly two kilometres and reconnecting approximately 50,000 m ² of stream and floodplain habitat. These interventions are designed to slow flows, retain sediment, increase water storage, and improve summer baseflows in a headwater tributary of the Okanagan River. Ongoing monitoring will guide adaptive management, and a hands-on training workshop will transfer

	practical restoration skills to local practitioners, supporting longer-term watershed resilience under changing climate conditions.
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Project Title:	Equesis Creek – groundwater connectivity assessment for source water protection – Phase 2
Organization:	Okanagan Indian Band
Project Summary:	This project advances the second phase of a Syilx-guided investigation into how groundwater, surface water, and wetlands interact in the Equesis Creek watershed. Using hydrometric monitoring, isotopic analysis, and wetland-function assessment, the work will clarify the respective roles of Pinaus Dam operations, groundwater inputs, and natural wetland storage in sustaining environmental flows, moderating water temperatures, and protecting source water. The results will directly inform flow management, drought resilience, and long-term water stewardship decisions for Equesis Creek, with relevance to other Okanagan watersheds facing similar pressures.

Project Title:	Source water investigation at the Trout Creek Perpetual Slide - Phase 2
Organization:	District of Summerland
Project Summary:	This project advances Phase 2 of a detailed source-water investigation at the Perpetual Slide, a long-standing landslide that contributes chronic sediment to Trout Creek. Building on earlier work, the project will further identify the groundwater sources driving slide movement and quantify sediment delivery using environmental tracers, refined TSS–NTU relationships, and drone-based LiDAR analysis. By improving estimates of sediment volume and timing, the work will clarify how slide activity affects downstream water quality and aquatic habitat in Trout Creek and Okanagan Lake. The results will support targeted, evidence-based mitigation options aimed at reducing sediment loading and protecting an important drinking-water source and tributary to Okanagan Lake.

Project Title:	Okanagan Algae Monitoring Network – Phycocyanin Probe for Scada
Organization:	City of Kelowna
Project Summary:	This project installs a SCADA-integrated phycocyanin and chlorophyll-a monitoring sonde at the City of Kelowna’s Poplar Point intake to provide continuous, real-time tracking of cyanobacterial conditions. Data from the sonde will be validated against weekly taxonomic laboratory analyses to confirm reliability and refine alert thresholds. By providing early warning of

	harmful algal blooms at a critical drinking-water intake, the project strengthens operational decision-making and risk management. The pilot is designed to serve as a proof-of-concept for a scalable, basin-wide HAB monitoring network that could be adopted by other Okanagan water suppliers.
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Project Title:	Post-wildfire changes in snowpack dynamics and their impacts on summer low flows in the McDougall Creek Watershed
Organization:	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Project Summary:	This project strengthens understanding of post-wildfire hydrology in McDougall Creek by installing a new high-elevation meteorological station with snow measurements and continuing hydrometric and isotope sampling. Together, these data will be used to quantify how snow accumulation and melting contribute to low summer flows following recent wildfire disturbance. The analysis will be compiled in a technical report that links observed changes in runoff timing and volume to watershed conditions. Findings will inform local water-supply and restoration planning, while also providing practical recommendations for expanding and coordinating the Okanagan hydrometeorological monitoring network.

Project Title:	Removal of Microplastics and Heavy Metals Using a Novel Reactive Barrier Technology
Organization:	University of British Columbia
Project Summary:	This project undertakes a laboratory-scale pilot of a permeable reactive barrier material to evaluate its potential for removing micro- and nano plastics and dissolved metals from water. Using a polymer-coated magnetic activated biochar-zeolite medium, the work will assess removal efficiency, adsorption and breakthrough behavior, and the feasibility of regenerating the material for reuse. OBWB funding will support preparation of the reactive media, analytical testing, and a portion of graduate-level research time. The results will provide early-stage performance data to determine whether this approach warrants further development or field-scale testing as a future water-quality treatment option.

Project Title:	A Community Lens on Wetland Restoration
Organization:	Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society
Project Summary:	This project focuses on restoring three well-known urban wetlands in Kelowna: Carney Pond, Thomson Marsh, and Knox Mountain; through targeted native planting and invasive species control. By improving wetland vegetation structure and function, the work will enhance water storage,

	filtration, and overall resilience to drought and extreme weather. Community photopoint monitoring will document changes over time, while interpretive signage will help connect residents and visitors to the role these wetlands play in protecting water quality. Together, the restoration and outreach components are intended to deliver tangible ecological improvements while building long-term public understanding and stewardship of urban wetlands.
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Project Title:	Okanagan Lake Marine Spill Risk Reduction Program
Organization:	Kelowna Yacht Club
Project Summary:	This project delivers a one-day, scenario-based spill response training for marine operators on Okanagan Lake, scheduled for May 20, 2026. The course will bring together 20–25 participants from marinas, fuel docks, rental fleets, and yacht clubs for classroom instruction and hands-on exercises, including containment boom deployment and response drills. Participants will receive standardized templates and emergency response planning tools, and the project will establish a basin-wide contact network to improve coordination during incidents. By strengthening preparedness and reducing response times, the project aims to lower the risk and severity of fuel and hydrocarbon releases in a shared drinking-water and recreation resource.

Project Title:	Vaseux Creek Sustainable Agricultural Groundwater Plan
Organization:	Vaseux Water User Community
Project Summary:	This project completes a long-planned transition away from an inefficient 2.5-km surface-water diversion on Vaseux Creek. All VWUC users will shift to modern groundwater-based irrigation from Aquifer 255, allowing the diversion ditch to be permanently decommissioned and the corridor restored. The result is an immediate and measurable increase in instream flows in Vaseux Creek (particularly during critical low-flow periods) while also providing farmers with a more reliable and efficient water supply. The project delivers lasting ecological benefits for salmonid habitat alongside improved agricultural water security.

Project Title:	IR#9 Water System Capacity, Monitoring, and Demand Management Initiative
Organization:	Westbank First Nation
Project Summary:	This project develops a comprehensive Water Master Plan for Westbank First Nation IR#9 to support reliable, long-term water service under continued growth and climate pressure. The work will assess existing

	<p>infrastructure, model system capacity and hydraulic performance, evaluate demand management options, and identify monitoring and operational upgrades. A risk and climate resilience analysis will inform a staged capital plan to reduce peak demands and address system constraints. Together, these elements will provide a clear, decision-ready framework to guide infrastructure investment and water stewardship, aligned with basin-wide planning objectives and Sylix principles.</p>
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Project Title:	WFN Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping Update
Organization:	Westbank First Nation
Project Summary:	<p>This project updates Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping across Westbank First Nation lands and waters to provide a current, reliable foundation for land-use and water-management decisions. The work includes field verification of riparian and foreshore conditions, integration of Sylix knowledge, and preparation of RISC-compliant GIS layers and a supporting technical report. By standardizing and sharing the updated datasets with regional partners, the project strengthens development review, source-water protection, and coordinated watershed planning across the valley, while supporting more consistent protection of sensitive aquatic and riparian areas.</p>
Project Title:	Piloting Climate Resilient Okanagan Green Infrastructure standards
Organization:	City of Kelowna
Project Summary:	<p>This project pilots and monitors climate-resilient bioswale and landscape retrofit designs at two high-use public sites—Boyce Gyro Beach and the Ethel Bikeway. Through redesigned planting, soil treatments, and drainage features, the work will test low-irrigation, low-maintenance approaches that improve stormwater infiltration, reduce runoff, and remain compatible with Fire Smart principles. Monitoring and site signage will document performance and share lessons learned with the public. The intent is to develop practical planting and design standards that the City of Kelowna can apply more broadly, and that can be adapted by other communities across the Okanagan facing similar water-use and climate-resilience challenges.</p>

Project Title:	Okanagan Hydrometeorological Information Network – Review and Expansion
Organization:	City of Kelowna
Project Summary:	<p>This project undertakes a basin-wide review of weather and snow monitoring across the Okanagan to clarify what data are available, where key gaps exist, and how the network could be strengthened most efficiently. The work will inventory existing stations, assess data quality and QA/QC</p>

	practices, review emerging datasets, and engage data users to understand operational needs. Based on this analysis, the project will recommend targeted, cost-effective improvements to monitoring coverage and coordination. The outcome is a clear, evidence-based foundation for developing an integrated Okanagan Hydrometeorological Information Network to better support water-supply planning, flood forecasting, drought response, and climate adaptation.
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Project Title:	Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Monitoring
Organization:	Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society
Project Summary:	This project replaces end-of-life field equipment with a new YSI Pro-Quatro multiparameter handheld and sonde, allowing Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society volunteers to continue long-standing bi-weekly monitoring of key water-quality parameters, including temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, and water clarity. Maintaining this consistent dataset is important for tracking seasonal and long-term changes in lake conditions. Data collected will continue to be shared with provincial agencies and made publicly available, supporting local awareness, regional assessments, and evidence-based water-quality management in Osoyoos Lake.

Project Title:	Sncematqtn Agricultural Park Hog's Gulch – Infill and mortality replacement planting
Organization:	RDNO
Project Summary:	This project completes Phase 2 of restoration at Hog's Gulch by addressing plant mortality and filling gaps along the approximately 160-metre reach restored in earlier work. Native riparian plant material will be installed to reinforce vegetation cover, improve bank stability, and support long-term habitat function. OBWB funding will primarily be used to purchase plants, with volunteers carrying out planting and follow-up monitoring. Limited signage and education components will help explain the restoration effort and encourage continued community stewardship, ensuring the benefits of the initial restoration are maintained over time.

Project Title:	Educational Public FireSmart Xeriscape Gardens
Organization:	Town of Oliver
Project Summary:	This project establishes two highly visible FireSmart xeriscape demonstration gardens at Centennial Park and the Oliver Firehall to showcase drought-tolerant, low-flammability native planting. By replacing high-water-use landscaping with resilient, low-maintenance alternatives, the sites will demonstrate practical approaches to reducing outdoor water

	demand while increasing wildfire resilience. Interpretive signage and public programming—including Farmers’ Market outreach and guided tours or workshops—will connect residents to the water-saving and safety benefits of FireSmart landscaping. Together, the demonstration sites and outreach activities are intended to encourage broader adoption of water-efficient, wildfire-resilient practices across the community.
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Project Title:	Leak Detection Program
Organization:	RDCO
Project Summary:	This project contracts approximately seven days of specialized leak detection across the Westshore Estates and Killiney Beach water systems, which are aging, complex, and characterized by multiple pressure zones and historically low metered-to-pumped ratios. The work will identify confirmed system leaks so the Regional District of Central Okanagan can target its 2026 capital repair funding where it will have the greatest impact. By moving directly from detection to repair, the project supports near-term reductions in non-revenue water, improves system efficiency, and strengthens water supply reliability without delaying action through extended study or monitoring.