

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Agenda



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

DATE: Tuesday, July 7, 2026

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: Regional District of North Okanagan, 9848
Aberdeen Rd., Coldstream, B.C., V1B 2K9.

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 siw̓lk̓ water which flows through the valley and connects us all.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommendation:

THAT the agenda of the meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 7, 2026, be approved.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2026, held at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, 101 Martin St. Penticton, B.C. V2A 5J9.

Recommendation:

THAT the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2026 held at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, Penticton, be approved.

P. 3

5. BOARD CHAIR REMARKS

6. DELEGATION

- 6.1 Okanagan Watershed Security: Yesterday's Infrastructure, Today's Data, and Tomorrow's Climate presented by Rod MacLean, P.Eng. Department Manager - Utility Services, City of Kelowna.

7. STAFF REPORTS

- 7.1 Executive Director Report P. 8

Recommendation:

THAT the Executive Director Report, dated June 26, 2026, be received.

- 7.2 Chief Operating Officer Report P. 10

Recommendation:

THAT the OBWB send a letter to appropriate provincial ministries requesting that the province undertake a comprehensive review and modernization of the Sewerage System Regulations.

and

THAT the Chief Operating Officer Report, dated June 26, 2026, be received.

- 7.3 Water Stewardship Director Report P. 12

Recommendation:

THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, June 26, 2026, be received.

7.4 Communication Manager Report P. 14

Recommendation:

THAT the Communications Manager's Report, June 26, 2026, be received.

7.5 Water Science Specialist Report P. 22

Recommendation:

THAT the Water Science Specialist's report dated June 26, 2026, be received.

8. **NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

9. **CORRESPONDENCE**

10. **NEXT MEETING**

10.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held Friday, Sept. 11, 2026 at 9 a.m. at the Manteo at Eldorado Resort, 3762 Lakeshore Rd., in Kelowna, B.C. This will be an abbreviated meeting ahead of the Water Management Program's 20th anniversary celebration starting directly after.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Recommendation:

THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of July 7, 2026 be adjourned at ____.

* **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 TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2026 AT THE OFFICES OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN
SIMILKAMEEN

PRESENT

Chair Blair Ireland	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Vice Chair Doug Holmes	Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Brian Guy	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director Kevin Kraft	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Director Ron Cannan	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Alt-Director Adrienne Fedrigo	Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Sheena Spencer	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C
Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance

REGRETS

Director Subrina Monteith	Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
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STAFF

Melissa Tesche	Executive Director
James Littley	Chief Operating Officer
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Carolina Restrepo Tamayo	Office and Grants Manager
Carmen Weld	Communications Manager
Sandra Schira	Water Science Specialist
Amanda Burnett	Communications Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Ireland called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

- 1.1. He 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. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

No late items.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

“ THAT the agenda of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2026 be approved. ”

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board held May 5, 2026,

held at the Manteo at Eldorado Resort, Kelowna.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on May 5, 2026, held at the Manteo at Eldorado Resort, be approved."

CARRIED

5. **BOARD CHAIR REMARKS**

No remarks.

6. **DELEGATION/PRESENTATION**

6.1 Mission Creek, groundwater and data: where does it get us? Presented by Dr. Chani Welch, Hydrologist at Okanagan Nation Alliance.

Directors received a presentation from Dr. Chani Welch, Hydrologist with the Okanagan Nation Alliance on the critical connection between Mission Creek, groundwater, and long-term water sustainability.

The presentation emphasized the vital but hidden role groundwater plays in the Okanagan Basin in maintaining streamflow, supporting fish habitat, and sustaining water supply, especially during extended dry periods. ONA research and monitoring underway, in partnership with OBWB, is helping build a more complete understanding of these interconnected systems to inform future water management decisions in a changing climate.

Dr. Welch noted the system is complex, with interactions between surface water, groundwater, and tributaries varying along the length of the creek – areas of both gain and loss. Dr. Welch highlighted the need for improved groundwater data and expanded monitoring to better inform water management.

Using Vaseux Creek as an example, she demonstrated how long-term data and improved understanding of groundwater–surface water interactions supported management actions. The presentation highlighted the importance of long-term data, addressing groundwater data gaps, and integrating multiple data types to support future watershed planning.

The board thanked Dr. Welch for her presentation.

7. **STAFF REPORTS**

7.1 Executive Director Report – Melissa Tesche

Ms. Tesche reported on ongoing drought conditions, noting low precipitation and that the province has issued its first drought call of 2026, with the Okanagan beginning at Drought Level 5. She also noted that the province will be piloting a water scarcity index, but that there had not been any details on the pilot released yet. Ms. Tesche also noted that she was continuing her presentations at local governments up and down the valley.

"THAT the Executive Director's Report, dated May 31, 2026, be received."

CARRIED

7.2 Chief Operating Officer Report - James Littlely

Mr. Littlely provided an update on the milfoil harvesting program, noting expanded access this season thanks to the amphibious harvester, including work planned this year at Duck Lake and ongoing activity in the Okanagan lakes as part of the regular invasive milfoil removal schedule.

The new amphibious harvester that was added to the Invasive Milfoil Control fleet in 2025 will allow the program to access areas like Duck Lake that were previously out of reach.

The work will be especially timely with the BC Summer Games set to take place in the community, including the Towed Water Sports event taking place in Duck Lake.

He advised that staff continue to receive reports of aquatic plants that are not invasive milfoil and emphasized the importance of public awareness, as the Invasive Milfoil Control Program is not permitted to remove native aquatic vegetation.

Mr. Littley also highlighted his recent participation in national discussions on water security funding and updates on invasive mussel prevention work.

“THAT the Chief Operating Officer’s Report, dated May 25, 2026, be received.”
CARRIED

7.3 Water Stewardship Director Report – Dr. Nelson Jatel

Dr. Jatel provided a summary of the recent joint OBWB–Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC) meeting, noting its value for information sharing and collaboration.

Discussion focused on how to communicate current water conditions, including unprecedented data trends, in a way that supports conservation while avoiding confusing messaging. Directors also discussed learning from approaches used in other jurisdictions facing drought.

Dr. Jatel highlighted ongoing work related to stream temperature data, noting that existing systems retain a limited historical record and improvements are being made to better capture and use long-term data.

“THAT the Water Stewardship Director’s Report, dated May 25, 2026, be received.”
CARRIED.

7.4 Office and Grants Manager Report – Carolina Restrepo Tamayo

The board was provided with two project notifications: the City of Vernon’s Okanagan Landing Sewer Project and the Township of Spallumcheen’s North Okanagan Wastewater Recovery Project, both recommended for approval.

“THAT the Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) grant for the City of Vernon’s 2026 Okanagan Landing Sewer Project be approved in principle, as outlined.”
CARRIED

“THAT the Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) grant for the Township of Spallumcheen North Okanagan Wastewater Recovery Project be approved in principle, as outlined.”
CARRIED

“THAT the Office and Grants Manager Report, dated May 26, 2026, be received.”
CARRIED.

7.5 Communication Manager Report – Carmen Weld

Ms. Weld reported on communications activities, including the milfoil harvester naming contest and the May 20 launch of the 2026 Make Water Work campaign in Osoyoos, noting strong engagement across the region.

She also highlighted ongoing initiatives, including an Indigenous youth contest to design a logo for the Environmental Flows Conference and a pilot Don’t Move a Mussel boat ramp stencil project, with initial installations planned at public boat launches in West Kelowna and Peachland.

"THAT the Communication Manager Report, dated May 26, be received."
CARRIED.

7.6 Water Science Specialist Report – Sandra Schira

Ms. Schira reported on ongoing dry and hot conditions, noting continued precipitation deficits despite recent rainfall and the persistence of a multi-year drought across the region.

She advised that freshet has largely ended and was low this year, resulting in low streamflows and continued drought concerns across the basin.

"THAT the Water Science Specialist's Report, dated May 25, be received."
CARRIED.

8. NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No new business.

9. IN-CAMERA

The Board entered an in-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(a) and 90(2)(b) of the Community Charter) at 11:51 p.m.

"THAT the Okanagan Basin Water Board enter into an in-camera session."
CARRIED.

The board exited the in-camera session at 12:04 p.m.

10. DELEGATION (STARTING AT 12:30 P.M.)

- 10.1 Mario Piroddi, CISA, CPA, CA, Partner, BDO, presenting on the OBWB's 2026 Audited Financial Statements
 - 10.1.1 OBWB 2026 Management Letter
 - 10.1.2 OBWB 2026 Representation Letter
 - 10.1.3 OBWB Draft 2026 Financial Statements
 - 10.1.4 OBWB Audit Final Report to the Board

The Board received and approved its annual audited financial statements for fiscal year 2026, with the external auditor issuing a clean opinion and confirming no significant deficiencies. The results reflect OBWB's continued commitment to transparent financial management in delivering programs and services across the Okanagan. Staff thanked the financial team at RDCO for their excellent work on OBWB financial administration.

"THAT the Board Adopt the OBWB's 2026 Audited Financial Statements as presented."
CARRIED.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondences.

12. NEXT MEETING

- 12.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 10 a.m. at the Regional District of North Okanagan, located at 9848 Aberdeen Road, Coldstream, B.C., V1B 2K9.

***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.

13. ADJOURNMENT

“THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of June 2, 2026 be adjourned at 12:58 p.m.”

CARRIED

Blair Ireland, OBWB Chairperson

Melissa Tesche, OBWB Executive Director



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Melissa Tesche, Executive Director
Date: June 30, 2026
Subject: Executive Director's Report

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting July 7, 2026 Agenda No: 7.1

Drought and Water Scarcity Conditions Continue 2026

The Okanagan continues to experience significant water scarcity as the region experiences its fourth consecutive year of drought. Although some areas of the basin have received rainfall, long-term precipitation deficits remain. Water restrictions remain in place across much of the valley, with some communities implementing substantial restrictions to preserve essential water supplies through the summer.

In response to conversations with several water utilities, the OBWB will be reinstating the water provider meetings that had been previously coordinated by Kellie Garcia. The goal is to build an Okanagan Water Supplier Community of Practice, creating a forum where water suppliers can connect, share information, and stay informed throughout the coming months.

Effective communication will remain one of the most important tools available to water managers throughout the 2026 drought season. Public understanding of drought, water scarcity, and local water restrictions directly influences conservation behaviour. Individual water suppliers remain responsible for communicating restrictions within their own systems. The OBWB, through its public communications, has a role to play in providing regional context and translating technical information into accessible public messaging. To avoid confusing or conflicting messaging, OBWB will continue to refer people to their local water providers to understand their local water restrictions and drought stages.

2027-28 Budget Preparations Begin

Staff have begun working on the budget for 2027-28. OBWB is required to have our budget submitted to the partnering regional districts by December 15. With the timing of the local elections this fall, it will be necessary to have our budget approved before the elections. We will bring a draft of the budget for the Board's consideration to the September Board meeting.

Upcoming OBWB Meetings

The Board will not have a meeting in August. The next OBWB Board Meeting will be Sep 11, 2026, 9a.m., at the Manteo Resort in Kelowna. The short meeting will be followed by the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Water Management Program.



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: James Littley, Chief Operating Officer
Date: June 25, 2026
Subject: COO's Report

Okanagan Basin Water Board
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Milfoil harvesting ongoing in Okanagan Lakes

In late June we completed a major hull repair to the amphibious harvester (Hippo) and spent the end of June testing it in Okanagan Lake near our Vernon Shop. On July 2, 2026 we plan to launch Hippo into Duck (Ellison) Lake to harvest the areas used for the BC Summer Games, and in front of the residential areas in the north end of that lake.

The new harvester will start work in Okanagan Lake also at the beginning of July. Its "official" launch and name unveiling will happen at Paddlewheel Park in Vernon, immediately following our July 7, 2026 Board meeting.

Harvesting season generally runs from July to the beginning of September. This summer, we have received a few calls already about early milfoil growth in Duck Lake and the East side of Wood Lake. We prioritize public beaches and public areas before responding to requests for treatment near private areas, but these calls show an ongoing trend in early season requests for milfoil control, likely due to longer summers with lakes warming earlier, prompting faster, earlier milfoil growth. We are exploring operational options to respond to these changes in future years.

Invasive quagga mussel shell discovered on shore of reservoir in central Oregon

On June 23, 2026 we received information that a single dead quagga mussel shell was found above the water line at a reservoir in Central Oregon on June 6, 2026. While the discovery did trigger an emergency response, subsequent surveys and eDNA testing of the water has so far given no indication of a new infestation. The reservoir is a tributary to the lowest reaches of the Columbia, south of Portland. In late July, I will attend the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region Summit in Edmonton, where I anticipate a thorough update, and will provide any additional information to the board as it becomes available.

OBWB looks at developing best practices guide for septic and considers calling on province to update sewerage system regulations

Following board discussion and technical analysis from the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council about the current Sewerage Service Regulations (SSR), staff are looking at pathways to develop a “best practices guide” for septic policy implemented at the local level that could be incorporated into Liquid Waste Management Plans. This could include a review of modern technologies, risks from cumulative effects, and options to improve life-cycle operations and maintenance requirements for onsite systems.

As staff seek additional technical analysis, we recommend that the Board consider sending a letter to the responsible ministries at the Province of B.C., requesting that they undertake a comprehensive review and modernization of the Sewerage System Regulations (SSR).

Recommendation:

“THAT the OBWB send a letter to appropriate provincial ministries requesting that the province undertake a comprehensive review and modernization of the Sewerage System Regulations.”



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Nelson Jatel, Water Stewardship Director
Date: June 26, 2026
Subject: **Water Stewardship Director's Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting July 7, 2026 Agenda No: 7.3

OBWB and Okanagan science reach a national audience at the CWRA conference, June 15-19, in Winnipeg

I attended the Canadian Water Resources Association's 2026 National Conference, "Honouring the Spirit of Water," held June 15 to 19, 2026 in Winnipeg on Treaty 1 territory. I gave two presentations.

The first presentation showed how social network analysis can support water governance. Social network analysis maps the working relationships among the many organizations that manage Okanagan water and tracks how those relationships shift over time. It helps us see where coordination is strong and where it is thin, which is useful when we plan partnerships and respond to drought.

The second presentation covered our operational stream-temperature monitoring and forecasting work, which gives early warning of conditions that stress fish during drought.

While in Winnipeg I also met with Mark Fisher, President of the Canada Water Agency, the federal freshwater agency now headquartered there. We discussed several Okanagan water projects and where they might align with the Agency's priorities and funding programs.

The conference was also a strong platform to promote our upcoming joint Environmental Flows 2026 conference ([EF2026.ca](https://www.ef2026.ca)), which OBWB is co-hosting with the Okanagan Nation Alliance and CWRA in Kelowna this October. We had a full poster display at the registration desk for the duration of the event, which built awareness, encouraged attendance, and supported our sponsorship and fundraising efforts.

Together, the presentations, the meeting with the Canada Water Agency, and our EF2026 presence raised the profile of Okanagan work nationally and strengthened relationships that will help advance our strategic direction.

The Council's final spring meeting put data-driven drought decisions front and centre

The Okanagan Water Stewardship Council held its final meeting before the summer break on June 11, 2026 at the Coast Capri Hotel. Dr. Jeremy Fyke (Environment and Climate Change Canada) chaired in Dr. Sheena Spencer's absence.

Our guest presenter was Rod MacLean of the City of Kelowna, who spoke on using science and data to guide water restriction decisions during weather extremes. He showed how Kelowna built a single hydrometric database by combining streamflow, reservoir, snowpack, weather, and metering data into a single system. Two findings stood out. For the first time, Okanagan Lake sits below the 342-metre level that existing operating plans assume it will always refill above, because inflows were unusually low rather than high. And McCullough Reservoir, a major Kelowna supply, has plateaued at about 70 to 72 percent, leaving roughly 4,500 to 5,000 megalitres less water than expected. His message matched ours: credible local data is what lets managers and elected officials justify hard decisions like water restrictions.

The roundtable returned repeatedly to two themes: 1) how to best communicate with farmers in the face of restrictions, as with early warning many can adjust irrigation and crop plans, and 2) the need for public messaging to do more than simply announcing restrictions but also helping people reach real reduction targets.

The next Council meeting is Sept. 10, 2026, followed by celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the OBWB Water Management Program (September 11).



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Carmen Weld, Communications Manager
Date: June 26, 2026
Subject: Communications Report

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
July 7, 2026
Agenda No: 7.4

Harvesty McHarvestface? Just kidding! Winning name to be revealed following this meeting

The Board chose the winning name at the June 2, 2026 Board meeting and the two winners of the competition were notified.

The winning name will be revealed at a launch event after today's Board meeting. Both winners have been invited to the event. They've won a ride on the harvester, a gift basket of local curated goodies and bragging rights! If they are unable to attend, we will arrange to get the gift basket to them and reschedule the ride.

Join us July 7 at 1 p.m. at the Paddlewheel Park boat lunch in Vernon, B.C. The naming contest for our custom-built 2025 Aquarius HM620 was closed on Friday, May 22, 2026, with a total of 344 submissions.

Don't Move a Mussel pilot stencils installed

The OBWB's Don't Move a Mussel program has installed new DMM boat ramp stencils in Peachland and West Kelowna.

The idea was initiated by Lisa Scott, Executive Director of Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASSIS).

Prevention is the only defense we have against invasive mussels and once they're established in these lakes, there's no realistic way to remove them. That's why education is such a key piece of our work.



These pilot Don't Move a Mussel stencils put a friendly but firm reminder right where it counts – the moment before launch. It only takes one contaminated watercraft to change an ecosystem forever, so we're grateful to the City of West Kelowna and District of Peachland for partnering with us to get this message where boaters will see it.

That's also why we continue to advocate for mandatory inspections and tougher restrictions on watercraft entering B.C.

Lisa Scott noted that presenting this initiative to mayor and council in both Peachland and West Kelowna was rewarding, as they were enthusiastic and just as eager as we are to see the results. Now that the stencils are in place, OASSIS will engage with pedestrians and boaters to determine the effectiveness of this new messaging as part of their contract with OBWB.



Don't Move a Mussel launches co-branded digital campaign with Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association

We've worked alongside the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) this season for a new co-branded digital campaign focused on sustainable tourism. The TOTA 7 Generations Pledge was created to articulate guidelines for realizing sustainable tourism in the Thompson Okanagan region and inspired the campaign, along with Don't Move a Mussel messaging. Our hope is that TOTA's audience will help us reach a bigger market of those visiting the Okanagan who may be travelling from infested regions and pose our biggest threat. The digital campaign will be shared with local tourism organizations and shared online this season.

Make Water Work 2026 campaign videos in the edit stage

We're actively working on updated Make Water Work campaign videos featuring new faces and updated messaging. Stay tuned for these to show up on social media this summer!



Indigenous Youth Contest closing soon, would love to see more entries!

OBWB, alongside the Okanagan Nation Alliance and the Canadian Water Resources Association, launched a contest last month inviting Indigenous youth artists to submit original artwork for the official logo of the Environmental Flows 2026 Conference.

We're hoping the submissions will visually express what it means for siwłk water to flow freely and what is lost when it cannot. Included in the winning prize is two amazing coaching sessions with Syilx artist and graphic designer Evelyn Alec (the lead artistic advisor).

The contest closes July 9 and we'd love to see some more submissions: [Call for Indigenous Youth Artists:](#)

[Design the Logo for Environmental Flows 2026](#)

Key communications since last report

- June 26, 2026: [Invasive Mussel Working Group News & Updates](#)
- June 5, 2026: [June Board Report](#)
- May 29, 2026: [Call for Indigenous Youth Artists: Design the Logo for Environmental Flows 2026](#)
- Drought Bulletins 2026:
 - Issue 2 - May 28, 2026: [Okanagan Starts Season at Highest Drought Level: Check local restrictions and conserve water now](#)
 - Issue 3 – June 11, 2026: [Water Scarcity Persists Despite Temporary Rainfall Relief](#)
- Key presentations/events;
 - May 30, 2026: James Littlely presented at the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society
 - June 9-11, 2026: Carmen Weld and Amanda Burnett attended LGMA Communications Forum and LGMA Tradeshow
 - June 15-19, 2026: Nelson Jatel attended the CWRA 2026 National Conference – Honouring the Spirit of Water
 - Executive Director Melissa Tesche's Strategic Direction Presentations to Council/Board's completed so far:
 - May 12, 2026: City of West Kelowna
 - May 19, 2026: City of Penticton
 - May 19, 2026: City of Armstrong

- May 19, 2026: District of Lake Country
 - May 20, 2026: Regional District of North Okanagan
 - May 25, 2026: City of Vernon
 - May 26, 2026: Town of Osoyoos
 - May 26, 2026: District of Summerland
 - May 26, 2026: District of Peachland
 - June 1, 2026: Township of Spallumcheen
 - June 4, 2026: Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
 - June 8, 2026: Town of Oliver
 - June 22, 2026: District of Coldstream
 - June 25, 2026: Regional District of Central Okanagan
- Key social media posts with the most engagement since the last report include:
 - June 23, 2026: [Important news from Oregon - A single dead adult quagga mussel was found.](#)
 - June 18, 2026: [Artist Evelyn Alec invites Indigenous youth to put their vision into the new logo for the Environmental Flows 2026](#)
 - June 12, 2026: [New paint, who dis?! 🤔👂](#)
 - June 11, 2026: [Despite recent rainfall, water scarcity is still a serious concern across the Okanagan.](#)



Media Tracking

Please find monthly media tracking below, listing articles from May 25, 2026 to June 29, 2026, in reverse chronological order.

Date	Source	Headline	Link
June 28, 2026	Castanet	From Parliament Hill to the South Okanagan: Tom Siddon dies at 84	https://www.castanetkamloops.net/news/Penticton/622170/From-Parliament-Hill-to-the-South-Okanagan-Tom-Siddon-dies-at-84
June 27, 2026	Castanet	Okanagan Dam Fish Passage in Penticton given international recognition	https://www.castanet.net/news/Penticton/621974/Okanagan-Dam-Fish-Passage-in-Penticton-given-international-recognition
June 26, 2026	GlobalBC	As drought deepens, Okanagan leaders unite to protect water supply	http://globalnews.ca/news/11941030/drought-okanagan-

			leaders-unite-protect-water-supply/
June 24, 2026	The Penticton Herald and Kelowna Courier	Water crisis requires leadership Letters to the Editor: June 24, 2026	https://www.pentictonherald.ca/opinion/article_f1e03bb2-a2a6-4568-8d4c-76d5d545b10f.html and print
June 23, 2026	The Peak	Threats to water security trigger emergency declaration by syilx Okanagan Nation	https://the-peak.ca/2026/06/threats-to-water-security-trigger-emergency-declaration-by-syilx-okanagan-nation/
June 17, 2026	Castanet	It's time again to remember to not move a mussel and a larger than life sign is there to help	https://www.castanet.net/news/Peachland/620268/It-s-time-again-to-remember-to-not-move-a-mussel-and-a-larger-than-life-sign-is-there-to-help#620268
June 16, 2026	Castanet	Protect what matters this summer by making water work	https://www.castanet.net/news/Think-Local/619829/Protect-what-matters-this-summer-by-making-water-work
June 12, 2026	Vernon Matters	OBWB warns recent rain hasn't been enough to offset dry conditions	https://vernonmatters.ca/2026/06/12/obwb-warns-recent-rain-hasnt-been-enough-to-offset-dry-conditions/
June 12, 2026	Castanet	Vernon, North Okanagan grapple with water restrictions due to historic long-term drought conditions	https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/619264/Vernon-North-Okanagan-grapple-with-water-restrictions-due-to-historic-long-term-drought-conditions#619264
June 11, 2026	60 Black Press Publications	Security needs to be higher financial priority: BC Watershed Security Coalition	https://lakecountrycalendar.com/2026/06/11/security-needs-to-be-higher-financial-priority-bc-watershed-security-coalition/
June 6, 2026	Castanet	Tapped out: Okanagan faces water shortages on farms and in cities	https://www.castanet.net/news/Kelowna/618210/Tapped-out-Okanagan-faces-water-shortages-on-farms-and-in-cities#618210
June 6, 2026	InfoNews	North Okanagan orchards at risk amid drought, water restrictions	https://infonews.ca/inwine/news/8496/north-okanagan-orchards-at-risk-amid-drought-water-restrictions/

June 6, 2026	The Penticton Herald and Kelowna Courier	Young Indigenous art wanted Small Dilworth park closed to September	Print Edition
June 3, 2026	Eight Black Press Publications	May rainfall brings some drought relief to the Okanagan	https://westknews.com/2026/06/03/may-rainfall-brings-some-drought-relief-to-the-okanagan/
June 3, 2026	Castanet	How to effectively support pollinators in the Okanagan	https://www.castanet.net/news/Gardening-with-nature/617663/How-to-effectively-support-pollinators-in-the-Okanagan
June 1, 2026	Eight Black Press Publications	Okanagan water briefs: Multi-year drought concerns extended into this summer	https://vernonmorningstar.com/2026/06/01/okanagan-water-briefs-multi-year-drought-concerns-extended-into-this-summer/
June 1, 2026	Eight Black Press Publications	Young Indigenous artist sought for Okanagan water conference logo	https://kelownacapnews.com/2026/06/01/young-indigenous-artist-sought-for-okanagan-water-conference-logo/
May 31, 2026	The Times Chronicle	Water quality society tests out new monitoring equipment	https://www.timeschronicle.ca/water-quality-society-tests-out-new-monitoring-equipment/
May 30, 2026	The Times Chronicle	Invasive species work honoured in annual awards	https://www.timeschronicle.ca/invasive-species-work-honoured-in-annual-awards/
May 29, 2026	KelownaNow	Okanagan maxed out at Level 5 drought, drier than anywhere else in BC	https://www.kelownanow.com/watercooler/news/news/Okanagan/Okanagan_maxed_out_at_Level_5_drought_drier_than_anywhere_else_in_BC
May 29, 2026	The Penticton Herald	Water board boss goes over the challenges	https://www.pentictonherald.ca/news/article_d060ce31-d4a6-4019-bf33-0c33809f1981.html
May 29, 2026	Castanet	Maximum drought rating in the Okanagan announced ahead of summer	https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/616846/Maximum-drought-rating-in-the-Okanagan-announced-ahead-of-summer
May 29, 2026	Castanet	Okanagan Basin Water Board triggers maximum Level 5	https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/616846/Okanagan-Basin-Water-Board-triggers-maximum-Level-5-drought-

		drought rating ahead of summer	rating-ahead-of-summer#616846
May 28, 2026	Eight Black Press Publications	Okanagan hit with highest possible drought level	https://kelownacapnews.com/2026/05/28/okanagan-hit-with-highest-possible-drought-level/
May 28, 2026	Vernon Matters	OBWB urges water conservation with severe drought rating	https://vernonmatters.ca/2026/05/28/obwb-urges-water-conservation-with-severe-drought-rating/
May 28, 2026	Vernon Matters	Vernon wants hydrometric gauges along BX Creek	https://vernonmatters.ca/2026/05/28/vernon-wants-hydrometric-gauges-along-bx-creek/
May 27, 2026	CJLR-FM	syilx Okanagan Nation declares watershed emergency: 'We're in a crisis right now'	https://www.mbcradio.com/2026/05/syilx-okanagan-nation-declares-watershed-emergency-were-in-a-crisis-right-now
May 26, 2026	Eight Black Press Publications	'Off-the-charts dry': Water board warns of dire conditions in the Okanagan	https://vernonmorningstar.com/2026/05/26/off-the-charts-dry-water-board-warns-of-dire-conditions-in-the-okanagan/
May 26, 2026	Castanet	Hot rods and drag racing rolling into Osoyoos this weekend	https://www.castanet.net/editon/news-story-616190-87-.htm#616190
May 26, 2026	Castanet	Okanagan Basin Water Board outlines drought, algae, and invasive mussel threats to Vernon	https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/616207/Okanagan-Basin-Water-Board-outlines-drought-algae-and-invasive-mussel-threats-to-Vernon#616207
May 25, 2026	Vernon Matters	New plan to help guide water advocacy for next five years	https://vernonmatters.ca/2026/05/25/new-plan-to-help-guide-water-advocacy-for-next-five-years/
May 25, 2026	NEW YORK NOW	Historic Drought in Summerland Threatens Salmon	https://newyorknow24.com/historic-drought-in-summerland-threatens-salmon/#respond

The Stats: May 25, 2026 – June 25, 2026

<i>Total individual articles mentioning OBWB work, projects etc. (includes multiple listings of the same article)</i>	<i>Total Estimated Views*</i>	<i>Total Reach*</i>
153	67,034	63M

***Total Estimated Views** is pulled from our media monitoring service Meltwater. According to Meltwater, Estimated Views is a metric that approximates the number of times an average article from a publication has been viewed. This is accomplished by dividing a publication's monthly page views by the number of articles it published in a given month.

***Total Reach** is pulled from our media monitoring service Meltwater. It's important to note that in Meltwater, "reach" is inflated as it represents the potential number of unique visitors who could have seen a specific article or piece of content. It's calculated based on the monthly unique visitors to the source publication, not the number of times the content was displayed. This metric helps organizations understand the potential audience size and reach of their content across various platforms.



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Sandra Schira, Water Science Specialist
Date: June 29, 2026
Subject: **Weather Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
July 7, 2026
Agenda No: 7.5

Summary

Conditions remain dry across the valley with precipitation falling well below the thirty-year norm in June. The lack of freshet following the record-breaking early snowmelts, low groundwater and low streamflow means drought conditions remain elevated. Several communities have already implemented watering restrictions; a full list is available at makewaterwork.ca.

It is critical that residents and visitors understand and follow the restrictions provided by your local provider, as conditions will vary across the valley and between communities due to differences in water sources.

Temperature

Temperatures in June were mostly warmer than normal (Figure 1). So far, the number of extremely hot days has not been above normal this year, so elevated weekly temperatures are the result of a constant warm pattern. As discussed in the seasonal forecast section, temperatures are projected to increase significantly as we enter summer due to a very likely El Niño.

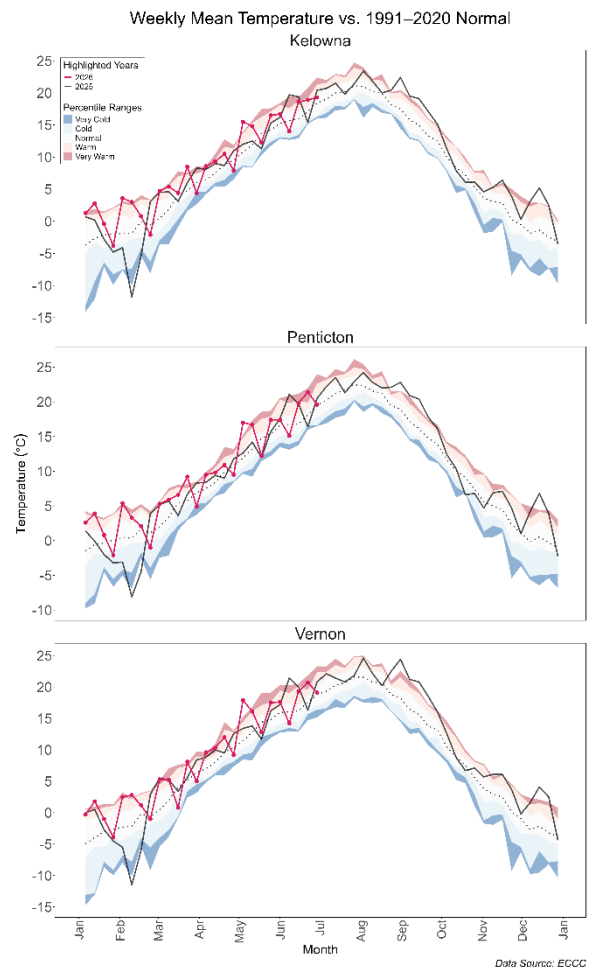
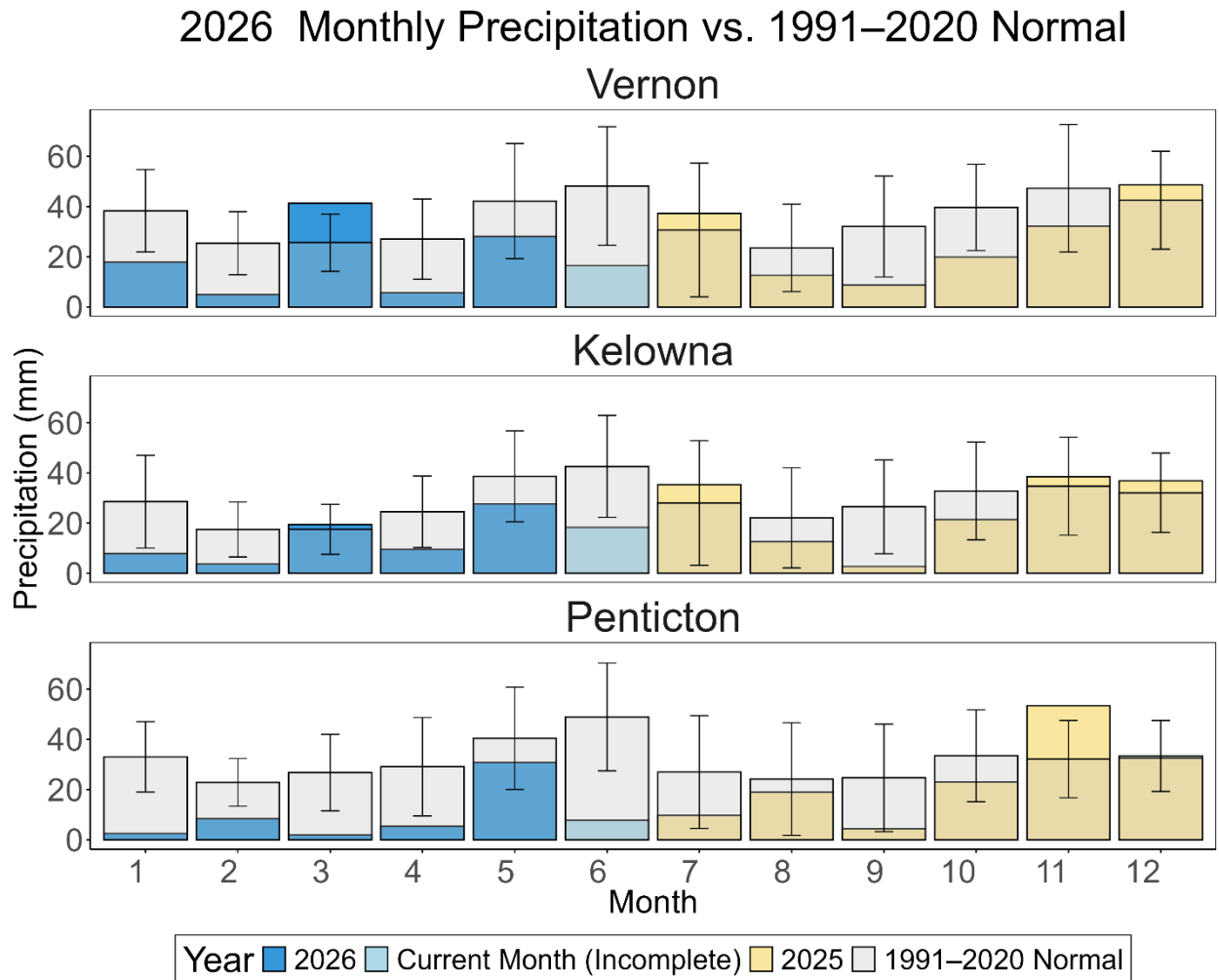


Figure 1: Weekly average temperature across the Okanagan as of June 29, 2026, shown relative to 1991-2020 range. Data retrieved from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Precipitation

Conditions remain very dry. Precipitation in June was well below the 1991-2020 average across the valley (Figure 2), and the long-term precipitation deficits remain (Figure 3). This long-term precipitation deficit is important because it is influential for long-term storage and groundwater conditions (discussed below). All cities are below half of the total precipitation they should have accumulated this year, and in the case of Penticton, well below half.



Data Source: ECCC

Figure 2: Monthly precipitation in the Okanagan as of June 29, 2026, compared to 1991 to 2020 range. Data retrieved from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Seasonal Forecast

Seasonal forecasts indicate that July through September are very likely to be warmer than normal (Figure 3). The long-term forecast for precipitation is slightly more likely. Warm dry conditions are likely to continue into the early summer, as the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)¹ indicates a high likelihood of El Niño conditions this summer. 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.

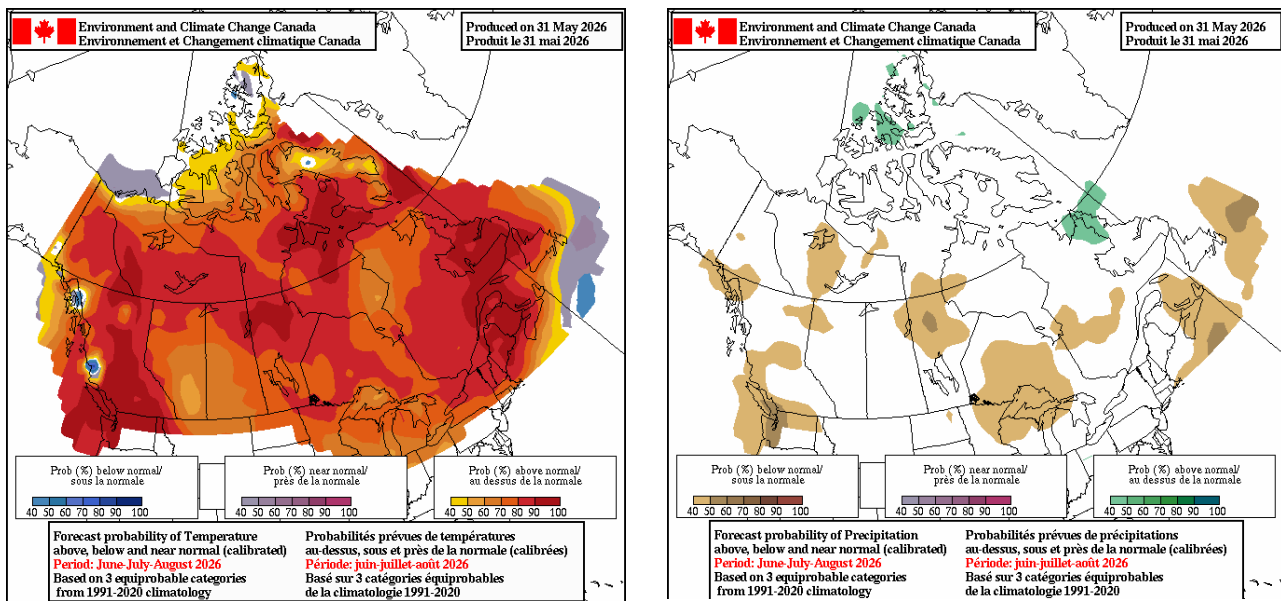


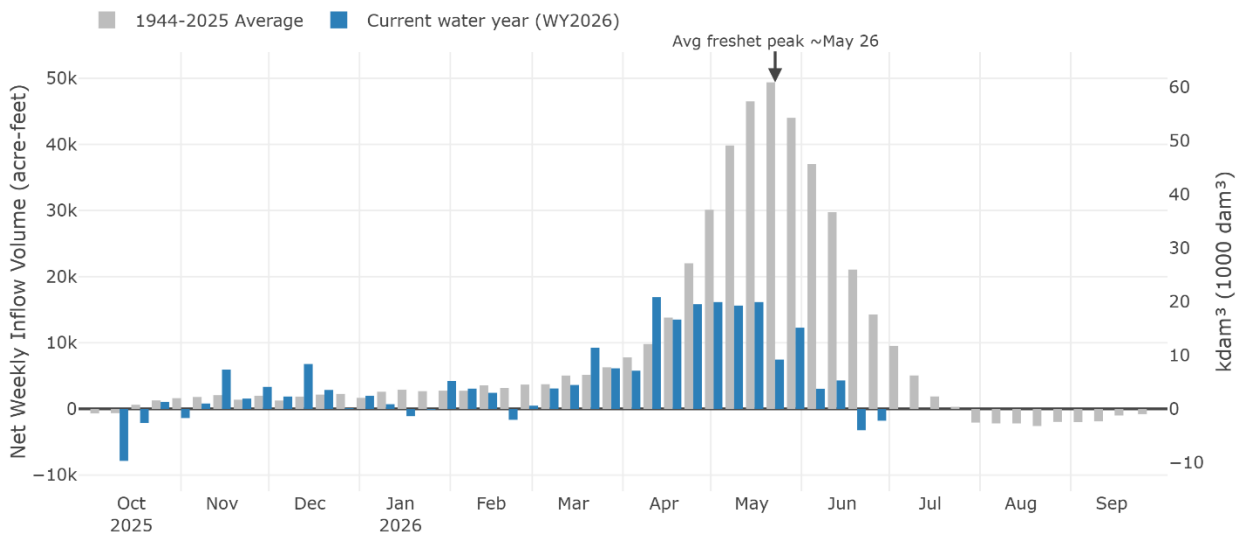
Figure 3: Three-Month Seasonal Forecast from ECCC (July - Aug, 2026).

Hydrology

After the low to extremely low freshets this spring, streams across the valley are in their summer low flow phase. As of June 29, 2026, many creeks are flowing well below normal for this time of year, with some streams low enough to be of concern for fish. Stream temperatures are already quite warm, which may impact fish and could lead to water quality concerns.

Weekly net inflows to Okanagan Lake are *well below* what has been typically observed (Figure 4).

Lake levels in Okanagan Lake and Kalamalka Lake, both of which are managed systems, are extremely low for this time of year (Figures 5 and 6).



Source: okanaganwatersupply.com · 2026-06-30

Figure 4: Weekly Net inflows in acre-feet to Okanagan Lake in 2026 vs the 1944-2025 average. Data from Water Survey of Canada stations 08NM083 (Okanagan Lake at Kelowna) and 08NM050 (Okanagan River at Penticton).

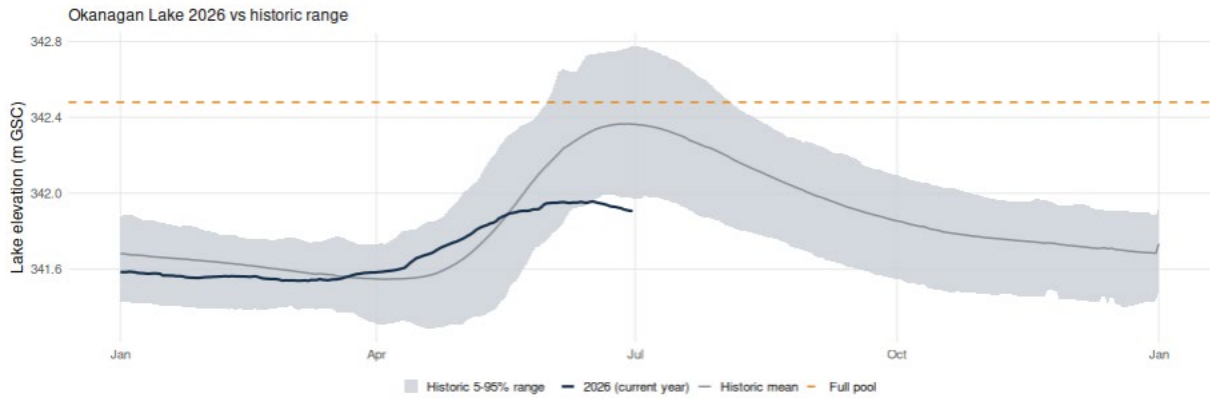


Figure 5: Lake levels for Okanagan Lake at Kelowna as of June 29, 2026, compared to the historic range (5th-95th percentile). Data from the Water Survey of Canada.

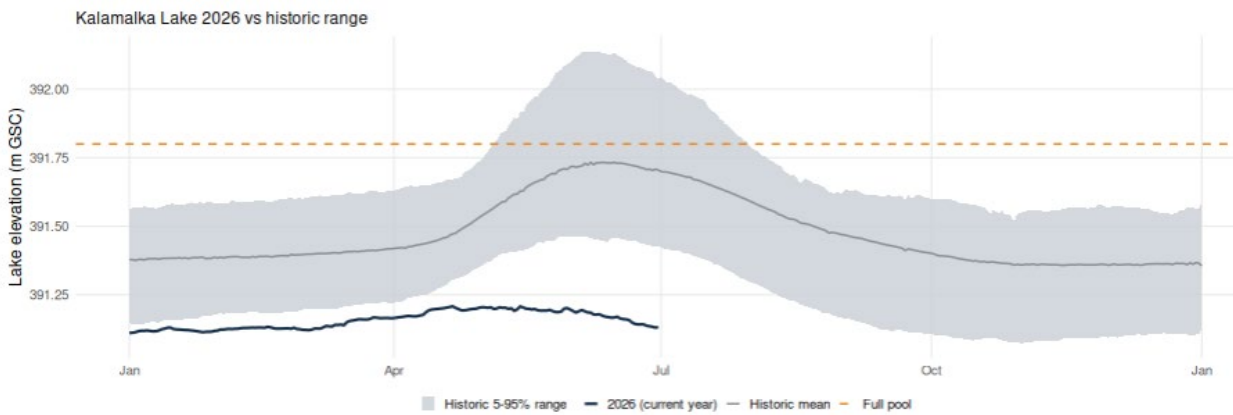


Figure 6: Lake levels for Okanagan Lake at Kelowna as of June 29, 2026, compared to the historic range (5th-95th percentile). Data from the Water Survey of Canada.

Groundwater

Although groundwater conditions and characteristics are aquifer-dependent and site-specific across the valley, many wells are showing a trend of the effects of the multi-year drought (Table 1). A significant number of wells are at record lows for this time of year. Additionally, looking at multi-year trends, long-term declines in groundwater levels are observable across the valley. Groundwater typically – but not always – shows a delayed signal compared to surface processes; therefore, as with lake levels, the decline in groundwater levels reflects the long-term water stress the region is under.

Regional Summary			
Wells by Percentile Class			
Description	Percentile	2026	2025
High	100	0	0
Much Above Normal	90 - 100	0	1
Above Normal	75 - 90	0	1
Normal	25 - 75	7	23
Below Normal	10 - 25	8	6
Much Below Normal	0 - 10	4	9
Low	0	16	7
Across All Classes		35	47

Table 1: Groundwater observation well data as of June 24, 2026, Data from Groundwater Update provided by WLRS at Thompson Okanagan Regional Technical Drought Working Group meeting.

Takeaways

Drought conditions remain across the valley. The spring saw extremely low freshets and the multi-year precipitation deficit is now clearly manifesting in lake levels and groundwater. Water scarcity will be a real challenge this year. It is critical that communities be aware of conditions and manage water to ensure there is enough to balance the needs of ecosystems, farming, fish, firefighting, and communities – managing not just for this point in time, but for the rest of the season.