

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Agenda



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

DATE: Tuesday, November 5, 2024

TIME: 10:00 p.m. – 2 p.m.

PLACE: ONLINE

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

1.1 Acknowledgement of First Nations Traditional Territory

We acknowledge that we are holding this meeting on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

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 October 1, 2024 held at RDOS, Penticton Page 2

5. **STAFF REPORTS**

5.1 Executive Director Report Page 7
5.2 Deputy Administrator Report Page 10
5.3 Water Stewardship Director Report Page 15
5.4 Water Science Specialist Report Page 17
5.5 Communications Coordinator Report Page 21

6. **NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

6.1 Budget Features Memo – Proposed Budget 2025-26 Page 22
6.1.1 2025-2026 Provisional Assessment and Segmented Budget Page 24
6.1.2 August 2024 Reserves Memo – for Information Page 26
6.2 Director Remuneration Policy Page 27
6.3 2025 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program Memo Page 30

7. **CORRESPONDENCE**

7.1 Letter from Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Director General, Biodiversity Management to OBWB, re: invasive mussels Page 32

8. **IN-CAMERA**

8.1 In-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(c) of the Community Charter)

9. **NEXT MEETING**

9.1 The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be Tuesday, December 3, at 10:00 a.m., online

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 OCTOBER 1, 2024, AT RDOS
101 Martin St. Penticton, B.C.**

PRESENT

Chair Blair Ireland	Regional District Central Okanagan
Vice Chair Doug Holmes	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Sue McKortoff	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Victor Cumming	Regional District North Okanagan
Director Wayne Carson	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Bob Fleming	Regional District North Okanagan
Alt-Director Adrienne Fedrigo	Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen
Director Tim Lezard	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Director Bob Hrasko	Water Supply Association of B.C.
Director Jeremy Fyke	Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC)

REGRETS

Director Charlie Hodge	Regional District Central Okanagan
Director Rick Fairbairn	Regional District North Okanagan

STAFF

James Littley	Interim Executive Director
Nelson Jatel	Water Stewardship Director
Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo	Office and Grants Manager
Amanda Burnett	Communications Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Ireland called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

He respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation.

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 October 1, 2024 be approved."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of September 6, 2024, held at the Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna, B.C.

"THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board on September 6, 2024, held at the Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna, B.C., be approved."

CARRIED

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1 Interim Executive Director Report – James Littlely

Mr. Littlely presented a proposed Water Board meeting schedule for 2025.

“THAT the OBWB adopts the 2025 meeting schedule as presented”
CARRIED

Mr. Littlely spoke to the Board about his work on the 2026 Budget, providing a brief summary of some increases. Mr. Littlely also discussed board remuneration best practices published by the Union of B.C. Municipalities, and that he was reviewing OBWB Director Remuneration Policy as part of budget planning.

Mr. Littlely gave a brief update on the hiring process for the new Communications Manager. He also informed the board about his upcoming attendance at the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC) on Thursday, Oct. 3rd, and spoke about the upcoming public meeting, hosted by the IOLBC on the same day, where the IOLBC will hear questions and comments from the public about lake level management and the IOLBC’s activities.

Mr. Littlely also updated the board on the milfoil control program, and that a Request for Proposals for a new milfoil harvester was in process. Because of the need to order the harvester to be delivered during summer 2025, a contract would need to be signed in October.

“THAT the OBWB authorize the new Interim Executive Director to sign a contract for the purchase of a new milfoil harvesting machine for up to a maximum of \$385,000 plus tax.”
CARRIED

In a continued update to the Milfoil Program, Mr. Littlely spoke about the new 5-year rototilling permit for the milfoil program, which is expected soon thanks to productive discussions with provincial staff. This permit provides guidelines for adding treatment areas, while considering environmental protections and First Nations engagement, enabling a more scientific, precise approach to targeting milfoil removal.

The Board asked questions about milfoil removal in specific areas in the Okanagan, and it was noted that some areas are heavily affected with milfoil that have previously not received treatment, specifically in the North Okanagan. Board Directors enquired about requests for milfoil removal from specific areas and were informed that local government requests for milfoil control are prioritized under current OBWB policy. It was also noted that historically, areas adjacent to first nations land and reserves have not been prioritized, and that part of the process of referrals going forward will be to ask what band priorities are for milfoil treatment. It was noted that there is potentially the worst milfoil density in the Okanagan in the North arm of Okanagan Lake, near Okanagan Indian Band land.

“THAT the Board directs staff to craft a statement from the Board, stating that the OBWB would like to initiate working more collaboratively to address milfoil removal in areas prioritized by Indian Bands, with a specific letter to the OKIB to address the milfoil density issue in the North Okanagan.”

CARRIED

Mr. Littlely continued with an update on invasive mussels and that OBWB received interest from Alberta MLA Grant Hunter, head of the Alberta Invasive Mussel Task Force for a meeting to discuss

interprovincial cooperation on invasive mussels. Mr. Littley responded to MLA Hunter's office requesting that the meeting be delayed until after the outcome of the B.C. election.

Additionally, Mr. Littley will be presenting to the Health Officer's Council in White Rock in October, about water quality and public health issues related to invasive mussels. Recent findings of quagga mussels in the Snake River, Idaho, demonstrate the near impossible challenge of eradicating these invasive species, and highlight the urgency for the OBWB's call to actions such as mandatory inspections, a temporary interprovincial boat ban, and establishing an invasive mussel-free zone in collaboration with Alberta and Saskatchewan.

"THAT the Interim Executive Director's Report, dated October 1, 2024, be received."
CARRIED

5.2 Water Stewardship Director Report – Dr. Nelson Jatel

Dr. Jatel presented to the Board about the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council's (WSC) meeting on September 12, 2024, which featured expert discussions on blue-green algae's impact on water, progress updates from four committees, including the Policy Committee's water infrastructure paper and drought report, and the launch of a climate dashboard. Key issues such as water management's economic effects, herbicide impacts, invasive mussel prevention, and environmental updates were addressed. The Council, alongside ONA Fishery Department, is focusing on real-time hydrometric data for stream management, with several Okanagan streams being critically low in September.

The next WSC meeting is on October 10th.

Dr. Fyke, Chair of the Water Stewardship Council, spoke in-depth about the work of the WSC's Policy Committee, highlighting their report on the review of the 2023 provincial drought response, which compares and contrasts drought responses in the Okanagan to other regions in B.C. This report is a good example of the ability of the WSC's ability to provide thorough water science reports to continue to support the work of the OBWB.

Dr. Jatel continued his presentation to the Board, discussing, the work of the new postdoctoral fellow, who will be focusing on key issues affecting irrigated land in the Okanagan, specifically connections between ground water and surface water.

"THAT the Water Stewardship Director's Report, dated October 1, 2024, be received."
CARRIED.

5.3 Water Science Specialist Report – Presented by Dr. Nelson Jatel on behalf of Sandra Schira

Ms. Schira continues to attend weekly provincial drought meetings. She created graphs illustrating the Okanagan's drought levels over time, highlighting the impact on our region's water flow. After severe drought conditions in 2023, the Okanagan started at drought level 2 in May due to low snowpack. Although the level increased to 3 and high summer temperatures threatened to worsen conditions, periodic rain in spring and summer helped alleviate the initial dryness. Streamflow varied throughout the summer, affecting fish spawning and ecosystem health, but cooler temperatures at the end of the season should reduce strain. Water stewardship and improved drought communication remain priorities for OBWB staff.

"THAT the Water Science Specialist Report, dated October 1, 2024, be received."
CARRIED.

5.3 Office and Grants Manager Report – Carolina Restrepo-Tamayo

Ms. Restrepo provided the board with a mid-term update on the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) grants for the 2024 – 2025 cycle. Grant applicants are required to submit their mid-term reports by October 31st.

The Board also received an update on the Sewer Grant Program. In June 2024, the board updated the sewer grants program to include more funding for community systems and to support rural areas in managing wastewater to protect groundwater and community health. This included new grants for developing Liquid Waste Management Plans (LWMPs), with eligibility starting in 2025. On August 22nd, the first LWMP grant notification was received from the District of Lake Country for their plan, which involves drafting reports, community engagement, and an Environmental Impact Study. This notification allows planning for future grant payments, with the District's projected annual grant at \$17,333.33 for three years based on the \$325,000 project cost. Final numbers are determined when the project is complete, and the final grant amount is brought back to the board for approval at that time.

“THAT the Board approve in principle the Lake Country LWMP project as described above, and that staff include the projected amount in the 2026 SFA program budget.”
CARRIED.

“THAT the Office and Grants Manager Report, dated October 1, 2024, be received.”
CARRIED.

6. DIRECTOR ROUNDTABLE

Board directors took the opportunity to discuss their recent attendance at the UBCM Convention in Vancouver. Directors highlighted their discussions with provincial ministers about invasive mussel detecting K9s, water treatment facility funding, and the connection between forest management and watershed management.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter from the staff of Alberta MLA Grant Hunter, regarding inter-provincial cooperation in preventing invasive zebra / quagga mussels was received.

“THAT correspondence to the OBWB, dated October 1, 2024, be received.”
CARRIED.

8. IN-CAMERA

7.1 In-camera session (under sec. 90(1)(m) and 90(1)(c) of the Community Charter) at 11:32 a.m.

The board exited the in-camera session at 11:50 a.m. to adjourn the meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board will be held virtually on Tuesday, November 5th.

10. ADJOURNMENT

"THAT there being no further business, the regular meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board of October 1, 2024 be adjourned at 11:50 a.m."
CARRIED

Certified Correct:		
Chair		Interim Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears
Date: October 30, 2024
Subject: **Executive Director Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting November 5, 2024 Agenda No: 5.1

Communications Manager

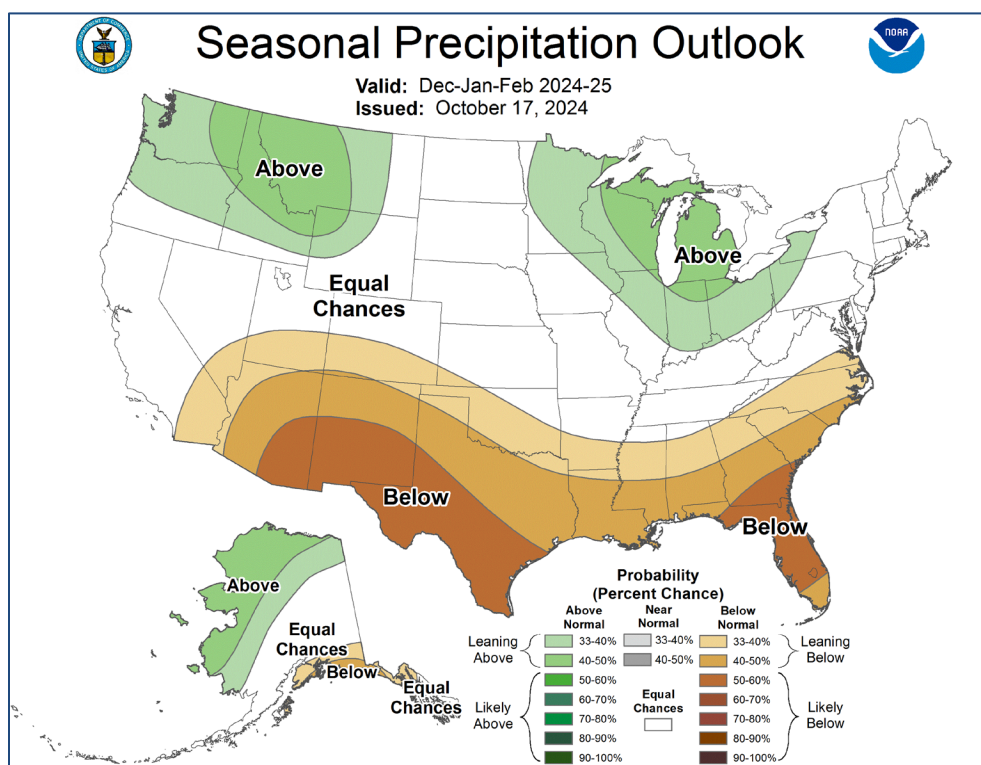
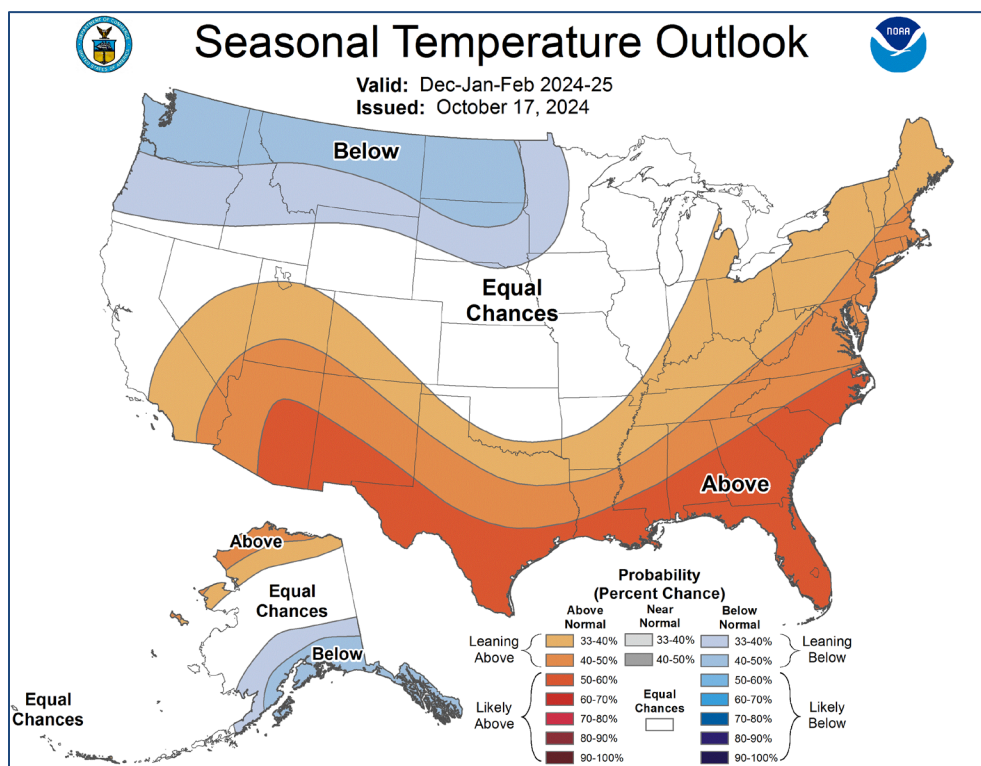
During a month-long job posting, we received more than 65 applications for the Communications Manager position. We are in the process of setting up interviews, and planning for onboarding the new person. Depending on the successful candidate's start date, we expect to be able to introduce them to the board at the December or February meeting.

Okanagan Similkameen Leadership Table Signing Event

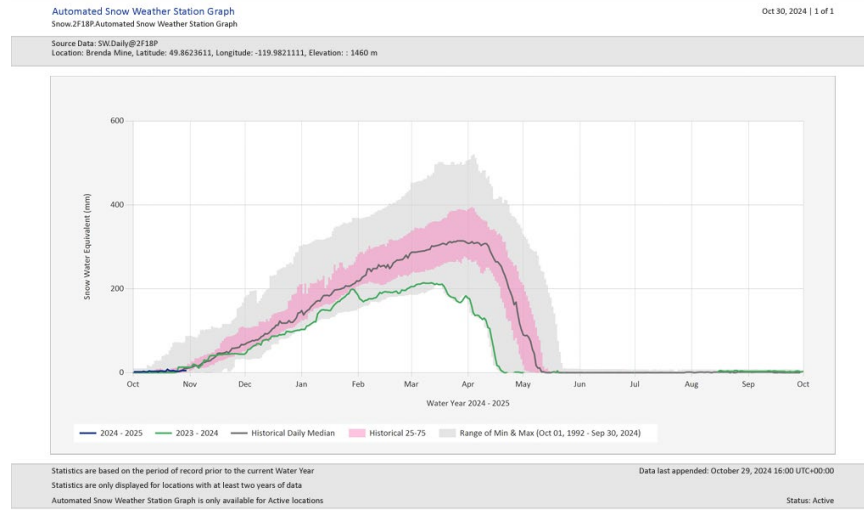
The Syilx Nation and Local Governments are holding an event to sign a new memorandum of agreement on the historic Okanagan Similkameen Leadership Table on November 15 in Penticton. OBWB staff have been invited to attend as guests to witness the signing. The agreement is focused on bringing syilx and local government leaders together around protecting and restoring water at a watershed level. OBWB will have a key role in developing and implementing many of projects identified in the MOA.

Weather Report

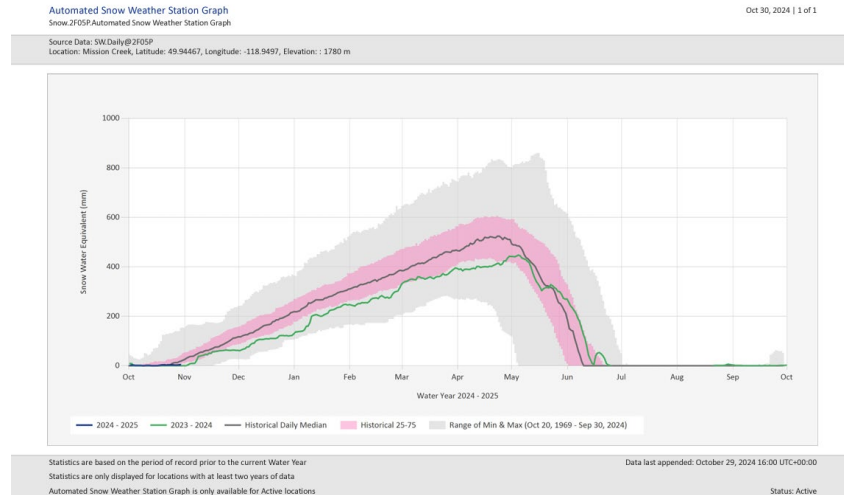
The Okanagan is still technically in drought conditions (Level 2, or "very dry"). That being said, La Nina conditions are forecast for this winter, portending a good ski season. For seasonal forecasts, I often use the US projections, because they are put out more frequently and we are so near to the border. The following weather maps from NOAA are for December 2024 through February 2025. The snow pillow charts show that there has been minimal accumulation to date.



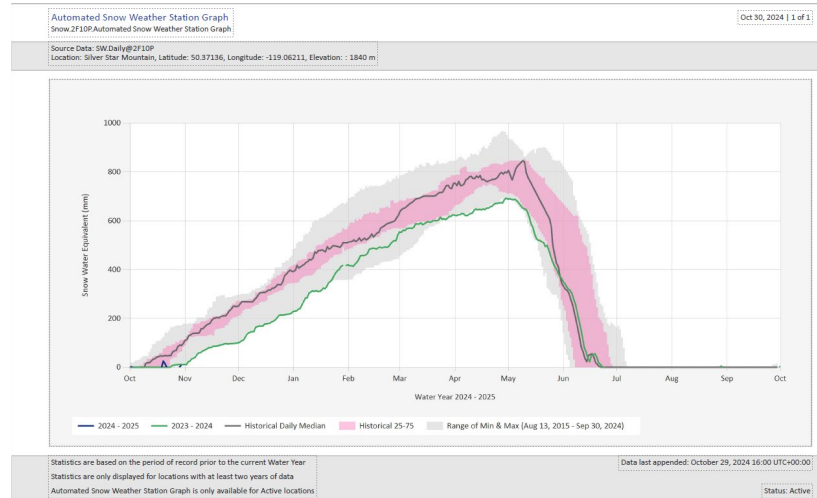
Brenda Mines snow pillow: 1460 m elevation



Mission Creek Snow Pillow: 1780 m elevation



Silver Star snow pillow: 1840 m elevation



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: James Littley
Date: October 30, 2024
Subject: Deputy Administrator's Report

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
November 5, 2024
Agenda No: 5.2

International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control Annual Meeting

In October I attended the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC) Annual Meeting in Osoyoos and Oroville. The video of the public meeting is available on the IOLBC website, and included presentations on Osoyoos Lake levels, drought declarations, ice jams that interfere with operations, and an ongoing feasibility study for changing the Board of Control into a Watershed Board.

Intent of a Watershed Board:

The presentation of the Watershed Board feasibility project can be viewed in the meeting video starting at the 45-minute mark. As outlined in the presentation, where a Board of Control is concerned with water quantity, a Watershed Board takes a more holistic approach, includes local and Indigenous membership, and has a broader mandate with more projects. Here is a summary of differences taken from the presentation:

What's the Difference?	
Control Board	Watershed Board
Duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring water Quantity 	Duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring water quantity, water quality, and aquatic ecosystem health issues
Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the public Decide appropriate water levels Issue drought declarations, removals 	Activities: Wide-ranging, can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan use of water resources Share data and research Coordinate conservation efforts Water quality reporting Aquatic ecosystem health projects
Membership: equal number of members appointed by U.S. & Canada. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical experts Sometimes members of the public 	Membership: equal number of members appointed by U.S. & Canada. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical experts Members of the public Indigenous participation

Invasive Mussels Update

Idaho Quagga Mussels

Following the September re-discovery of quagga mussels in the Snake River near Twin Falls, Idaho, the state has applied a second 2-week treatment of copper chelate to that section of river. Although last year's treatment did not eradicate the mussels, it did reduce the population. Idaho is in unknown territory for chemical treatments in a flowing river, so it may be that repeat treatments and increased monitoring could

be successful over multiple years. It is still possible that mussels spread downstream prior to their discovery in 2023, and that future monitoring will identify other infestations in the Snake, or even in the Columbia.

Health Officers' Council

On October 22, I was invited to present to the B.C. Health Officers' Council in White Rock. The session looked at the effects of invasive species on public health and determinants of public health. My presentation focussed on invasive mussels, risks to regions of B.C. based on water chemistry, and the threats to public drinking water, recreation and the economy. I have also been invited to present at a future meeting of the B.C. Centre for Disease Control.

Following the invasive species session, the Health Officer's Council passed the following resolution that I have been permitted to share:

Moved: Dr. Silvina Mema ***Seconded:*** Dr. David McVea

Whereas: Invasive mussels will impact the infrastructure of drinking water systems in British Columbia's lakes; and

Whereas: Invasive mussels will degrade recreational waters and beaches in British Columbia; and

Whereas: Invasive mussels if introduced to British Columbia will be nearly impossible to eradicate; and

Whereas: Out of province watercraft are the main vector for the introduction of invasive mussels.

Therefore be it resolved that HOC be of the position that:

The Provincial Government require that all watercraft entering the province be inspected prior to launching in BC Waters.

and be it further resolved that:

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.

and be it further resolved that:

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.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada Invasive Mussel Risk Assessment – A Critique

In February 2024, DFO released a "National Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Risk Assessment for Zebra and Quagga Mussels," based on modelling several risk factors. The report includes several acknowledged caveats and limitations which make it inaccurate as a useable risk assessment report and increases the chances that a region or water body will be mis-identified as low risk for infestation. Some issues with this report are:

- uses a calcium threshold of 30mg/litre when several case studies and research have shown mussels can survive and reproduce in waters with calcium as low as 12mg/litre.
- Uses air temperature as a proxy for water temperature.

- Uses a ~1 km² modelling resolution rather than waterbody-by-waterbody chemistry sampling.
- Uses proximity to existing infestations as a measure of risk when we know that mussels continue to spread. Because this modelling was done in 2022, it did not include recent infestations in the Snake River or in Clear Lake Manitoba.

Many of these limitations are pointed out in the report itself, which acknowledges that the assessment only represents risk for “about five to ten years.” (p. 3)

The report also states:

“Ecological Risk values are not absolute, and areas of Low Risk do not necessarily indicate that Zebra and Quagga Mussel cannot be introduced, establish, or impact those Canadian ecosystems, but rather indicates that the risk of ecological impacts related to invasion are lower relative to areas that are at higher risk (or already invaded).” (p. 14)

Because the report was released by the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat, it is an authoritative document that may lead to bad management decisions that increase the risk of spreading invasive mussels. I will be working with partners to consider a more thorough critic of this DFO Risk Assessment and provide feedback to DFO based on that review.

Correspondence from DFO

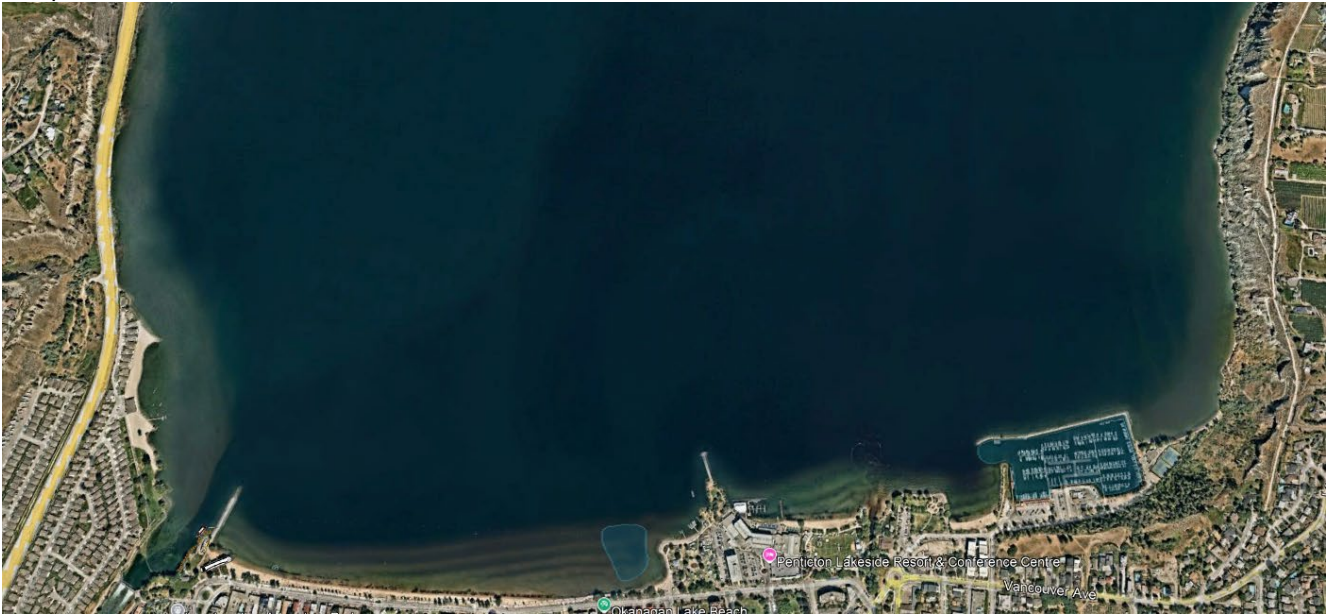
On September 18, OBWB received a response from DFO, exactly one year after a letter OBWB sent on October 18, 2023. The response outlines actions DFO has taken over the last number of years across western Canada regarding Aquatic Invasive Species. DFO’s response indicates that they “support BC’s invasive mussel management by providing scientific advice,” and then provides a link to the 2022 Risk Assessment which I report about in this memo. The letter is attached in correspondence. While I work with partners to review the Risk Assessment, we will also review the information in the DFO letter and provide recommendations to the board at an upcoming meeting.

Milfoil Program Update

New harvester purchased: Following a full procurement process, in October we signed a contract for the purchase of a new milfoil harvester with Aquarius Systems in Wisconsin for \$277,000 USD. The new harvester has a larger cutting head and larger storage capacity than our existing 1978 harvesters and will also be built with a height-adjustable operating platform to accommodate travelling under the bridge in Osoyoos Lake. The machine is scheduled to be delivered next summer, so we will likely split the harvesting season between the old and new equipment. In addition to the new Hippo (Berky) amphibious harvester, we are still combining parts from the two 1978 harvesters to keep two machines operating.

New permit update: As I reported last month, we have received a new 5-year rototilling permit under a new environmental ruleset. During the meeting I will give a brief verbal description of the following map images which show the old system versus the new system. Any new areas are still subject to First Nations referrals.

Old permit:



New permit:



New underwater camera for operations improvement: Finally, we have acquired and are testing a new high-definition underwater camera to help differentiate between different plant species, and to identify and avoid hazards in the water. The first few images attached are taken from a phone of the tablet screen, so the quality does not look as good as what the operator can see on the water. However, even from these transferred images, we can clearly identify different plant species at the lake bottom in late October. Our intention is to test the camera on one machine this winter and summer, and if it benefits operations and helps us avoid hazards, we would introduce them to our fleet.



Image of native pondweed on Okanagan Lake bottom, Vernon Arm. Oct 28, 2024.



Image of invasive milfoil on Okanagan Lake bottom, Vernon Arm. Oct 28, 2024.

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Nelson R. Jatel
Date: October 28, 2024
Subject: **Water Stewardship Director's Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting November 5, 2024 Agenda No: 5.3

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (a technical advisory body to the OBWB)

October 10th Council Meeting

At the October 10th OWSC meeting, Dr. Joel Trubilowicz from the ECCC National Hydrological Service delivered a keynote on managing flood hazards amidst climate change uncertainties as part of the Flood Hazard Identification and Mitigation Program (FHIMP). He highlighted the "deep uncertainty" inherent in climate change, which requires adaptive approaches to flood risk management. Dr. Trubilowicz presented a five-step protocol for managing flood hazards. It starts with identifying the leading causes of floods and using existing data and local knowledge. He stressed the importance of creating simple models to guide climate and hydrology data analysis. The recommendations aim to balance safety from potential overbuilding with the cost-effectiveness of detailed climate assessments. He pointed out that changes in flood patterns, like rain-on-snow events, might present greater risks than just higher flood levels. FHIMP seeks to include this perspective in the National Flood Mapping Guidelines.

Updates from Council Committees included the **Policy** Committee's progress on the Okanagan Water Infrastructure Discussion Paper and completion of a drought report, as well as the **Supply and Demand** Committee's proposal development for water demand modelling. The **Building Ethical Space for Water Stewardship** Committee is advancing a literature review and guide, while the **Water Quality & Health** Committee continued its focus on water health issues, particularly the impact of blue-green algae.

The Council also discussed foundational questions to shape water supply and demand studies, focusing on management practices, water sourcing, and use. They explored how precision irrigation and soil management could enhance water availability during heat events, suggesting adaptive strategies for improving water resilience. The group also examined the mainstem model's ability to analyze diverse water sources beyond Okanagan Lake, encouraging the exploration of alternative sources for long-term security. Additionally, they highlighted the importance of understanding actual water use, the impacts of tourism, and the need for improved data collection to refine demand insights. These key questions will guide the model toward a holistic approach to sustainable water management in the Okanagan.

November Council Meeting

The next OWSC meeting is scheduled for November 14th, featuring guest speaker **Stephen Morrison**, who will present on *Co-management: Engagement Isn't Enough*. Stephen brings a wealth of experience as a geologist, with 17 years in the Federal Government and over 18 years as an environmental consultant. His extensive background includes work on Yukon mining projects and wildlife licensing for federal agencies, providing valuable insights into collaborative management approaches. Stephen's talk will explore the need for more profound co-management practices, moving beyond engagement to foster more effective partnerships in environmental stewardship. Board members are always welcome and encouraged to attend.

Resources on Blue-Green Algae (Cyanobacteria)

Following last month's Board discussions on the impact of blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) on water quality, several valuable resources are available for Board members. The OBWB website hosts a collection of materials designed to help understand and address the risks associated with cyanobacteria blooms. The information can be accessed directly at [OBWB's Blue-Green Algae page](#), which provides comprehensive insights into algae monitoring, identification, and response.

The Province of BC also provides essential resources, including Interior Health's guidelines on [Public Beach Monitoring](#), detailing procedures for beach water testing and safety protocols. This resource emphasizes the risks associated with algae blooms, such as toxin exposure during recreational activities. Beach operators are encouraged to monitor water quality, post advisories as necessary, and maintain a beach safety plan to respond swiftly to changes in water quality.

For more in-depth guidance on cyanobacteria management, the [Decision Protocols for Cyanobacterial Toxins in B.C. Drinking Water and Recreational Water](#) is available. This document, created by the Health Protection Branch in August 2018, outlines strategies for local governments, health authorities, and water system operators to assess and mitigate the risks posed by cyanobacteria blooms in water bodies used for recreation and drinking. The protocol aids in establishing standards for sampling, assessing blooms (see page 8 for a *Cyanobacteria Toxins in Drinking Water 'Decision Tree'*), and issuing public advisories, thereby offering a structured approach to protect public health.

By using these resources, Board members and local governments can better understand and respond to the challenges of cyanobacteria in Okanagan lakes, ensuring safe recreational and drinking water standards for the community.

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Sandra Schira
Date: November 5, 2024
Subject: **Water Science Specialist Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
November 5, 2024
Agenda No: 5.4

Drought Bulletin Review

OBWB staff are reviewing the drought bulletin, which is one of our primary communications tools during drought. The bulletins are intended for water suppliers and local governments to inform them of increases in the drought level. The bulletins are also sent to a local media distribution list. OBWB drought bulletins are based on the drought levels set by the province, which is done during weekly technical advisory meetings, attended by OBWB staff and many of our partners like ONA. These meetings include local experts in hydrometrics, fisheries, agriculture, provincial staff, local government and utility representatives, and others from the Okanagan and Thompson Nicola Regions. Attendees discuss and set the drought levels for different regions and subbasins based primarily on stream flows and precipitation, but also taking into account other indicators as discussed in the *British Columbia Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan* (2023). Drought levels are meant to reflect current on-the-ground conditions for a region/subbasin and are not directly related to response measures. The province has recommendations for what water suppliers and communities do at each level but highlights that local responses will differ since on-the-ground conditions differ across the region. Drought levels are not the same as water restriction levels, which are set locally based on local water supplies.

Level	Impacts	General Response Measures
0	There is sufficient water to meet socio-economic and ecosystem needs	Preparedness
1	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are rare	Conservation
2	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are unlikely	Conservation Local water restrictions where appropriate
3	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are possible	Conservation Local water restrictions likely
4	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are likely	Conservation and local water restrictions Regulatory action possible
5	Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are almost certain	Conservation and local water restrictions Regulatory action likely Possible emergency response

Figure 1 Provincial Drought Levels

This review is being conducted in response to feedback from board directors that there is some confusion around provincial drought levels and that the current bulletin is not as clear as it could be. Staff have designed a new template for the bulletin that we hope addresses some of the issues. In particular, the new bulletin is intended to provide information on what each drought level means and what the province recommends local governments and water suppliers do or consider at each drought level.


The new proposed format is below and comprises a one-page template for each of the drought levels, which would require minimal updating to provide context for why the drought level has increased. All information about the levels is taken directly from the *British Columbia Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan* (2023). The rest of the bulletin consists of recommendations taken directly from the province and a list of resources on drought. We have also provided a copy of the current two-page drought bulletin format for reference.

Staff is seeking feedback on the new format to see if it addresses some of the concerns. Staff will also reach out to our distribution list to see if the format and frequency of drought communications could be improved.

Proposed Single Page Format:

Example for Drought Level 2. Each Level has its Own Template

OKANAGAN DROUGHT BULLETIN #2024-1
July 25, 2024



Non-Drought	Dry	Very Dry	Severely Dry	Extremely Dry	Exceptionally Dry
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Regional Drought Level Increased by Province to Dry
Adverse impacts to socio-economic or ecosystem values are rare.

General Response Actions: Conservation Actions
Water users should target a reduction in water use and begin preparations under the precautionary assumption that stream-flow conditions may deteriorate further.

How We Got Here:
The heatwave has continued through July with air temperatures consistently between 35C and 40C and no significant precipitation. As a result, stream flows across the Okanagan have continued to drop — in some cases quite rapidly — and water temperatures have continued to increase. Although flows remain better in some streams with control structures (e.g. a dam), some unregulated streams are extremely low.

The Province Recommends Utilities:

- Begin conservation actions where appropriate.
- Emphasize water stewardship.
- Encourage voluntary conservation through education, communication, and planning.
- Investigate unauthorized water use.

Water Supplies Vary Across the Valley

If you get water through a utility:
Check with your water supplier or go to [MakeWaterWork.ca](https://www.okwaterwise.ca) to see what restrictions apply to you.

If you are a water license holder on a stream or well:
Adhere to conservation measures communicated by the Province of B.C.

Resources

Regional drought levels are set by the province and can be viewed at the [BC Drought Information Portal](https://www.bccr.drought.ca). Also find provincial drought resources for [agriculture](#), [communities](#), [water licence holders](#), and [residence](#).

View our drought resources at [ORWB.ca/drought](https://www.okwaterwise.ca/drought)
Learn about your water at [OkWaterWise.ca](https://www.okwaterwise.ca)

Outdoor watering tips available at [MakeWaterWork.ca](https://www.makewaterwork.ca)

Wildfire mitigation and preparedness resources available at [Fire Smart BC](https://www.fire-smart-bc.ca).

Water Restrictions Spotlight*
August 7th 2024

Greater Vernon Water	Stage 1
Kelowna	Stage 1
Penticton	Stage 1
Penticton Indian Band	Stage 2

*This table is not comprehensive and only provides examples for some areas

Key Elements

Single page colour-coded to drought level.

Language focused on the level of dryness in the region, not the drought level number, to avoid confusion with local water restrictions.

Description of what the drought level means.

Summary of current conditions that led to the drought level.


Summary of what the province recommends water providers and local governments do at the current drought level.

Where a customer should go based on where they get their water (i.e. utility or province).


Examples of current water restrictions across the valley. The hope is to differentiate drought levels from local water restrictions.

Links to key drought resources.


Front Page



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD




OKANAGAN DROUGHT BULLETIN #2024-1



OKANAGAN
waterwise
One valley. One water.

May 16, 2024



OKANAGAN MOVED TO DROUGHT LEVEL 2

Lingering effects from the 2023 drought, low winter snowpack, low precipitation, and warmer than normal temperatures causing an early freshet, have prompted the Government of B.C. to move the Okanagan to a Level 2 drought rating. While recent localized rains have helped, drought conditions will persist into 2024 unless we have prolonged rain within the next few weeks.

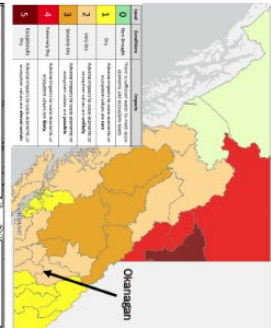
Okanagan water purveyors should closely monitor supplies and customer demand and begin communicating with customers in preparation for continuing drought conditions this summer.

The Okanagan spent more than half of 2023 in drought, starting in June, and this drought is persisting into 2024. The below normal snowpack this winter means, despite some rain in April, the Okanagan hasn't seen significant recovery from last year's drought. In addition to the low snowpack, above normal temperatures have caused an earlier melt. For example, Brenda Mines reported the earliest ever snow-free conditions in its 26 year record. This early melt has led to an early freshet, bringing concerns for late season water supply. Projections are also calling for above normal temperatures and minimal precipitation to continue through to July.

Okanagan drought levels have been set to "Very Dry" (Level 2). At this level, there is emphasis on curtailing unauthorized water use and water suppliers may consider implementing water restrictions.

Local water restrictions (stages) are set using different indicators than provincial drought levels, and water supply conditions vary across the region. Whether a utility moves to a higher restriction stage depends on several factors, including customer demand, infrastructure capacity, and local water supply conditions. That said, everyone should be using water wisely.

Customers of water utilities should comply with all watering restrictions and advice from their supplier. Water licence holders on streams and wells who are not customers of local water utilities should adhere to conservation measures communicated by the Government of B.C.



Provincial drought level map on May 16, 2024
Source: [B.C. Drought Information Portal](#)

Level	Threshold	Implications
1	Very Dry	Water supply conditions are below normal. Water use restrictions are in place.
2	Very Dry	Water supply conditions are below normal. Water use restrictions are in place.
3	Very Dry	Water supply conditions are below normal. Water use restrictions are in place.
4	Very Dry	Water supply conditions are below normal. Water use restrictions are in place.
5	Very Dry	Water supply conditions are below normal. Water use restrictions are in place.

The long-term forecast is for above normal temperatures this summer. Source: [ECDC](#)

Back Page



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD



OKANAGAN
waterwise
One valley. One water.

Implementing effective water conservation strategies now will help mitigate the effects of drought. By working together we can help reduce conflict and support both agriculture and fish, through 2024 and into the future.

WATER FOR FISH

Using water efficiently on our farms and in our yards now, can help keep enough water in the streams and aquifers to support fish spawning later in the year.

The Okanagan basin is the most northern extent accessible to anadromous (returning from the sea to spawn in rivers and streams) salmon in the Columbia River system. Sockeye, Chinook, Steelhead and Coho (in small numbers) use Okanagan tributaries for spawning and rearing. Okanagan streams and lakes are also home to resident Kokanee, Rainbow Trout and Whitefish. These fish species are culturally important to the Sylix Nation, support a vibrant fishery, and are critical for healthy freshwater systems.

The Okanagan Nation Alliance is continuing restoration efforts of these native and vital fish species and local ecosystems. This work includes annual fry releases. This year, ceremonial releases are being held throughout the Okanagan in May. Details are available at <https://sylix.ca/en/news/ry-releases/>.



WATER FOR FOOD PRODUCTION

Agricultural producers are facing a challenging year as they recover from last year's drought and the cold snap in January. The sudden cold weather resulted in significant crop damage. Ensuring these growers have a reliable water supply through this recovery year will be critical.

Agriculture is the number one use of water in the Okanagan. We refer to this as "working water" since it feeds local communities and the economy. Prolonged periods of dry weather can cause crop damage and water shortages for livestock. Good water management by farmers is essential to make sure the valley's limited and stressed water supply lasts throughout the growing season. Agricultural water users are encouraged to visit www.OBWB.ca/ae to find tools and information that can help conserve water and maximize crop yield.

RESIDENTIAL WATER CONSERVATION

The OBWB's Okanagan WaterWise outreach and education program works with water utilities throughout the valley to deliver the "Make Water Work" (MW) campaign, encouraging residential outdoor water conservation from mid-May to mid-October when demand for water is highest. However, as the drought continued through fall and winter, OKWaterWise responded and promoted indoor water conservation efforts.



Now, with spring here and residents anxious to water their yards, preparations are underway to re-launch MW. This year, with concern about drought and the possibility of another intense fire season, the messaging has been reviewed to ensure it meets WaterWise but also FireSmart best practices. The Make Water Work Plant Collection list has been updated to indicate the plants that have been tested and deemed FireSmart. The plant collection is promoted by garden centre partners throughout the Okanagan. The campaign will also be emphasizing past messages that encourage residents to save water for what's most important: food, fish and firefighting.

This year's campaign will include:

- an interactive MakeWaterWork.ca website where residents can find local watering restrictions, tips to make water work better, the Make Water Work Plant Collection, a contest to encourage pledges to conserve with the chance to win WaterWise yard prizes, and more;
- advertising on billboards, TV, radio, digital and social media;
- MW materials for partners to distribute, including gardening gloves; and
- a friendly challenge, encouraging residents to pledge to help their community win the title of "Make Water Work Champions."

Interested in becoming a MW utility or business partner? Email corinne.jackson@obwb.ca or call 250-469-6271.

Previous Format:

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Amanda Burnett
Date: October 28, 2024
Subject: **Communications Coordinator Report**

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
November 5, 2024
Agenda No: 5.5

Make Water Work and Don't Move A Mussel Summer Digital Ad Campaign Wrap Up

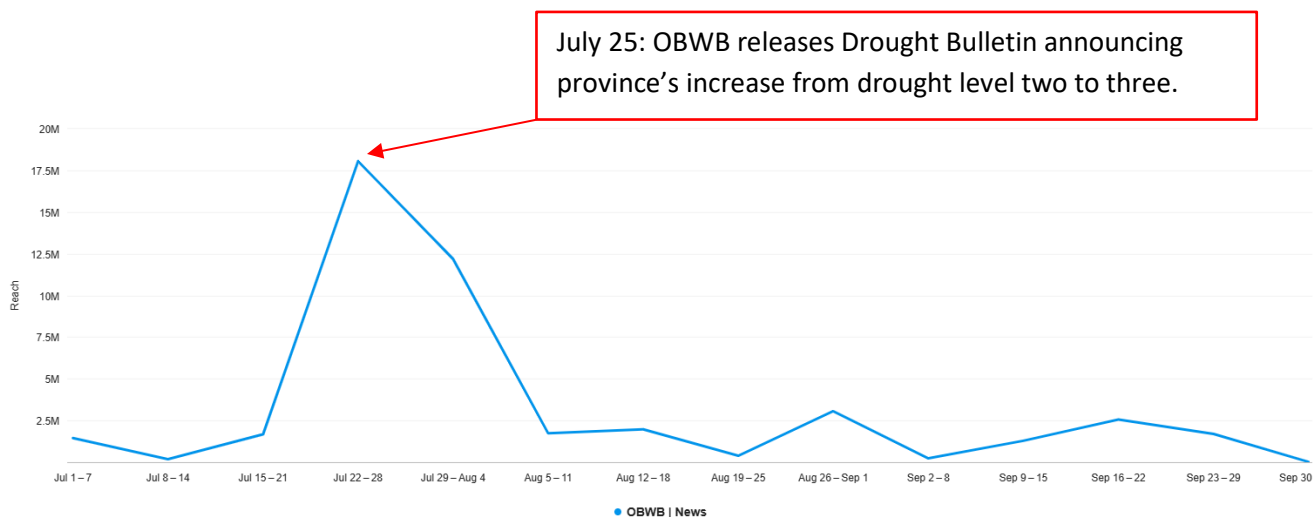
In October we concluded our Make Water Work 2024 Summer Outreach Campaign with the selection of our Make Water Work Pledge winners and subsequent news release on Thursday, October 17th. We also received end of campaign reports for Make Water Work and Don't Move A Mussel, from our external marketing agency.

The "Don't Move A Mussel" 2024 digital ad campaign, which ran across various digital platforms from August 9th to September 11th, was viewed approximately 1.3 million times, and 0.71% of people who saw the ad clicked on it.

The "Make Water Work" digital ad campaign, which ran across various digital platforms from July 11th to September 17th, was viewed approximately 1.43 million times, and 0.48% of people who saw the ad clicked on it.

Q3 Total News Reach Trends July 1st – September 30th, 2024

Meltwater is the tool we use to monitor earned media coverage and public sentiment. In the graph below, we see our Q3 news coverage reach.



MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears, Executive Director
Date: October 30, 2024
Subject: **Budget Features 2025-2026 Memo**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting November 5, 2024 Agenda No: 6.1

The OBWB runs a lean organization, delivering the highest level of service at the greatest value to the community. The following recommendations build on current services and operations. The OBWB's 2025-2026 budget must be adopted on or before the OBWB meeting of December 3, 2024, and the board may adopt the budget as proposed at this November 5, 2024, meeting.

Attachment 6.1.1

- The Regional District Provisional Assessments page shows the total requisitions for each project from each regional district.
- The OBWB Segmented Budget for the year ending March 31, 2026, shows the breakdown between the Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grants, Watermilfoil, and Water Management programs. The grey column "2026 Consolidated Budget" is the proposed budget for the coming year. The blue "2025 Consolidated Budget" is for the current fiscal year, and the lavender "2024 Consolidated Audited Year End" reflects actual expenditures for our programs in the audited year-end for March 31, 2024.

Budget Overview

The 2025-26 budget focuses on priority programs and services. Our most recent audited financial statements (2023-24) are provided in the OBWB annual report posted on the OBWB website.

The draft 2025-26 budget has the following features:

- The overall OBWB requisition is \$4,053,176, up 3.65% from the 2024-25 requisition of \$3,910,386, as a result of necessary increases to our milfoil and sewage facilities grants programs.
- In total, this is equivalent to 2.7 cents/\$1,000 assessment, unchanged from last year's rate.

Sewage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grant Program

The requisition for sewage facilities grants is 0.66 cents/\$1,000 assessment, up from 0.61 cents/\$1,000 last year due to increased interest rates payable on grants and to build the SFA reserve. We are required by legislation to hold a reserve to buffer mid-year changes in grant obligations (such as increased interest rates) that would require a mid-year budget amendment. The requisition ceiling for the SFA program is 21.0 cents/\$1,000 assessments, which means we are only using 3.2% of our funding capacity. With large projects approved in principle for the coming fiscal years, we expect increases in the program after 2026.

Watermilfoil Control Program

The requisition for watermilfoil is 0.84 cents/\$1,000 assessment, up from 0.78 cents/\$1,000 assessment last year. This year's budget covers an extra 6-month FTE to train a new operator in anticipation of the retirement of the milfoil supervisor. The budget also includes a transfer of \$266,000 to the equipment reserve to replace the existing 1978 milfoil harvester. This purchase was split between the 2025 and 2026 fiscal years.

Water Management

The requisition for Water Management is 1.2 cents/\$1,000 assessment, down from 1.3 cents/\$1000 assessment last year. There is a 2.0 cent/\$1,000 ceiling for the program. As in previous years, we anticipate additional matching grants for our projects from senior government agencies and will continue to apply for external funding to enhance project budgets. Ongoing priorities include funding for invasive mussel monitoring and prevention outreach; continuing support for the hydrometric (streamflow monitoring) program; and more funding for water quality projects.

Our Supplementary Letters Patent gives a ceiling of 3.6 cents/\$1,000 assessment for the combined budgets of the Milfoil and Water Management programs, and our current combined budget as proposed is 2.1 cents/\$1,000, which means we are using 58% of our funding capacity room.

Recommended Resolution: THAT the OBWB adopts the 2025-2026 budget as presented.

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
November 5, 2024
Agenda No: 6.1.1

Regional District Provisional Assessment Budget For The Year Ending March 31, 2026

	Central Okanagan	Okanagan Similkameen	North Okanagan	Total
	\$ 93,469,361,475	28,848,371,103	26,621,692,470	148,939,425,048
Percentage Share	62.76%	19.37%	17.87%	100.00%
REQUISITION				
Water Management	1,142,091	352,490	325,194	1,819,775
Water Milfoil	780,894	241,012	222,348	1,244,254
Sewerage Assistance	620,789	191,598	176,761	989,148
Total	\$ 2,543,774	785,100	724,303	4,053,176
<i>Total Prior Year Requisition</i>	<i>\$ 2,454,940</i>	<i>767,608</i>	<i>687,838</i>	<i>3,910,386</i>
	62.78%	19.63%	17.59%	100.00%

OBWB Segmented Budget 2025-2026



Budget for the year ending March 31, 2026

	Water Management	Water Milfoil	Sewerage Assistance	2026 Consolidated Budget	2025 Consolidated Budget	2024 Consolidated Budget	2024 Consolidated Audited Year End
Revenues							
Requisitions	\$ 1,819,775	\$ 1,244,254	\$ 989,148	\$ 4,053,177	\$ 3,910,386	\$ 3,833,982	\$ 3,833,982
Grant income	0	0	0	0	0	0	42,750
Interest income	21,743	682	16,075	38,500	33,845	18,050	210,338
Other Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	306,887
Transfer from reserve	0	0	0	0	50,000	400,000	0
	1,841,518	1,244,936	1,005,223	4,091,677	3,994,231	4,252,032	4,393,957
				3.7%	2.0%	0	
Expenses							
Assistance grants	350,000	0	905,223	1,255,223	1,197,624	1,498,441	1,477,117
Amortization	26,000	60,000	0	86,000	104,000	66,000	79,857
Transfer amortization to tangible capital assets	(26,000)	(60,000)	0	(86,000)	(104,000)	(66,000)	(79,857)
Contract services	619,045	38,000	0	657,045	740,000	758,664	755,180
Director's remuneration and expenses	18,500	18,000	0	36,500	26,500	26,000	17,487
Stewardship council expenses	42,010	0	0	42,010	34,010	20,000	5,589
Equipment costs	2,500	150,000	0	152,500	154,000	124,000	102,324
Insurance	4,778	48,773	0	53,551	53,551	49,000	35,476
Interest charges	400	400	0	800	800	800	237
Office	36,034	20,867	0	56,901	56,700	46,867	59,140
Outreach and publicity	37,000	3,500	0	40,500	40,500	38,500	43,502
Administrative allocation	(50,000)	(50,000)	100,000	-	-	-	-
Professional fees	45,231	43,231	0	88,462	85,750	80,000	85,975
Rental costs	9,620	35,720	0	45,340	44,897	32,960	44,519
Safety	2,500	11,500	0	14,000	14,000	11,500	11,014
Travel, conferences and meetings	52,000	1,200	0	53,200	53,200	41,200	206,287
Utilities, yard supplies and maintenance	0	21,700	0	21,700	21,700	18,200	18,737
Wages and benefits	671,900	608,000	0	1,279,900	1,196,000	1,125,900	1,114,174
Capital Purchase (as per Asset Replacement Plan)	0	0	0	0	0	300,000	
Transfer to equipment reserve	0	294,045	0	294,045	275,000	80,000	417,199
	1,841,518	1,244,935	1,005,223	4,091,677	3,994,231	4,252,032	4,393,957
Net revenues (deficiency) over expenses							
	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Anna Warwick Sears
Date: July 31, 2024
Subject: OBWB Financial Reserves Memo

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting November 5, 2024 Agenda No: 6.1.2

The OBWB has two formal reserve funds. All funds are held in cash accounts, earning interest at prime minus 1.95%, but are liquid and available for use.

Sewerage Facilities Reserve

The Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grants program, established in 1976, provides grants for communities to upgrade wastewater treatment plants and install community sewer, to reduce water pollution. The majority of the grants are established as 20-year payments on interest and principal, based on equivalent Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) interest rates. Interest rates for each 20-year grant are generally updated every 5 or 10 years by the MFA, so the amount the OBWB pays out is subject to year-to-year fluctuations. This reserve is intended to buffer the effects of interest rate changes, and any other unbudgeted changes to grant obligations.

While we budget using best projections for grant retirements and earned interest, the reserve sometimes accumulates and rises in value. Since at least 2007, we have kept the reserve level at approximately \$1 million. Excess amounts in this reserve are used to offset annual tax requisitions. Our most recent year-end reserve balance was \$1,121,736. The grant program terms of reference were reviewed and updated in 2024, increasing the scope of projects eligible for grants. As a result, we expect that there will be greater demand on the program over time, and the board may need to adjust the standard reserve balance to accommodate within-year fluctuations. We will do a more detailed analysis before the next budget cycle (beginning in October), to determine whether this target reserve amount is sufficient.

Milfoil Equipment Reserve

The OBWB's milfoil control program involves the use of heavy equipment to de-root and harvest invasive milfoil from several large Okanagan lakes. The equipment is stored off season and is repaired in a machine shop leased from the Regional District of North Okanagan. Some of our equipment dates to the 1970s and needs periodic overhauls and updates. The equipment reserve is used to purchase parts and new equipment, following our asset replacement plan, as well as occasional unbudgeted expenses to the program (e.g. extra mapping or environmental studies). Our current equipment reserve balance is \$285,436. James Littlely's memo has some discussion of the milfoil reserve, along with recommendations.

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: James Littley
Date: October 29, 2024
Subject: **Director Remuneration Policy**

Okanagan Basin Water Board Regular meeting November 5, 2024 Agenda No: 6.2

In September, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) circulated a guide that was published by UBCM in 2019. Best practices include:

1. Communicate on the nature of elected officials' roles and the purpose of remuneration.
2. Review remuneration at least once per term (local government election terms, not OBWB appointment terms).
3. Review at least one year prior to end of term.
4. Include a policy for annual cost-of-living adjusted to CPI.
5. Immediately implement cost-of-living adjustments.
6. Use at least five comparable local government's remuneration policies.
7. Consider eligible costs and expenses that reflect local conditions and reduce barriers to participation.

Dr. Sears tasked me to conduct a review of director's remuneration using the UBCM Best Practices Guide. Director's remuneration has not had a net change since 2007.

OBWB Director's Role and Remuneration

OBWB directors provide the governance function for all programs and operations of the OBWB. This includes setting strategic direction, approving policy, providing financial oversight, legal liability, and managing the Executive Director. Board directors also represent the interests of their appointing organizations to the OBWB and represent the OBWB to their organizations. Participation as an OBWB director includes attending in-person or virtual monthly meetings, reviewing meeting minutes and agendas, and other meeting preparation as required. In addition to regular meetings, directors often attend news conferences, Okanagan Water Stewardship Council meetings, workshops and other special events on behalf of OBWB. These extra events are not compensated.

Due to the regional nature of the OBWB, in-person meetings move between regional districts and include travel time of up to six hours total. While the mileage expense for vehicle costs is covered on a kilometric rate, travel time has never been remunerated. Since 2019, the board has moved to four online meetings per year, reducing the travel time and associated mileage costs by approximately 40% per year, given 10 meetings total.¹

Board Chair

In addition to the role of a board director, the Chair also speaks on behalf of the OBWB, reviews and signs official correspondence, runs meetings, and participates as a member of the executive team.²

¹ Board role and remuneration recommendations apply to alternate directors when they attend as official alternates.

² The recommended board Chair rate will be paid to the director who performs the function as Chair at a given meeting.

Remuneration

OBWB remuneration is currently based on a single per-meeting payment for regular meetings, plus a reimbursement for mileage. There is no pay for travel time, no pay for special events, and no pay for meeting preparation. The Chair receives a higher per-meeting rate of pay, but no additional pay for attending special events or other functions.

Remuneration Review

The board's remuneration was set in 2007 at \$130/meeting as a non-taxable payment at that time. In 2019, the payment became taxable, so the amount was adjusted to \$148 to offset the net loss of pay to directors. Aside from the 2019 tax adjustment, there has been no change in director's pay since 2007.

Review method 1 – inflation adjustment:

Using a B.C. inflation calculator to adjust for CPI, and accounting for the tax changes, the equivalent gross pay to \$130 in 2007 today is \$206.09.

Review method 2 – Comparison to other local governments:

Due to the unique nature of the OBWB, it is difficult to directly compare pay rates to other local governments. Municipalities and regional districts generally pay base salaries, with many providing additional pay for board meetings, and separate rates for committee and advisory board meetings. Some provide stipends for public hearings, and some pay on a per-day or per-half-day rate. Importantly, most of the comparable local governments followed the same UBCM best practices guide that informed this review.

The numbers reported here are from publicly available bylaws and may have been adjusted for inflation in subsequent years.

RDNO (2019) – While RDNO does not provide per-meeting pay to directors, meeting pay for eligible alternates or appointees who are not compensated monthly is set at \$200/meeting.

RDCO (2018) – RDCO provides annual pay to directors and an additional \$130 per meeting for committee meetings lasting over 4 hours. Committee meetings lasting less than 4 hours are compensated at \$65.00. Alternate directors are compensated for regular board meetings at \$90/meeting.

RDOS (2023) – RDOS also pays monthly remuneration and attendance pay to directors. Pay per meeting is \$201.23 for attendance at board meetings.

RDKB (2020) – In addition to monthly rates, RDKB directors are paid \$92 per meeting.

CSRD (2018) – Directors are paid an annual stipend which includes a calculation for board meeting attendance at \$270. If directors miss a meeting, their pay is reduced by \$270.

Recommended OBWB director meeting remuneration

Using the OBWB inflation-adjusted pay, and the pay for all five regional districts, the average per-meeting pay is \$183.22. However, using only the OBWB inflation-adjusted pay and the three Okanagan Regional Districts, the average is \$184. RDOS and the inflation-adjusted OBWB rates are the most up-to-date, calculated for significant inflation over the last few years. Based on the review, I recommend adjusting OBWB director meeting pay from \$148 to \$190 per meeting, with the Chair pay adjusted from \$205 to \$262, reflecting the same percentage difference in pay between directors and the Chair.

Travel Time Review

The UBCM Best Practices Guide recognizes the difference between reimbursement for travel costs, and compensation for travel time. According to the guide, travel time compensation recognizes “the need for directors in larger regions to spend considerable time to travel to core meetings.” Kilometric rates are meant to reimburse a reasonable amount for fuel, maintenance and general wear and tear on a personal vehicle. Currently, OBWB Directors are reimbursed at a kilometric rate, but not compensated for travel time. In many

cases, directors carpool to save costs for the OBWB, but that does not reduce the uncompensated time spent travelling.

In addition to base remuneration, and reimbursement for travel costs, several of the reviewed regional districts recognize the additional commitment of travel time to attend meetings. This is often built into base remuneration, with rural area directors paid a travel stipend compared to municipal directors. In RDKB, travel time is remunerated based on a block of kilometers travelled; \$54 for 150-250 km, \$65 for 250-350km, and \$81 for more than 350km. CSRD remunerates for travel with a \$0.20/km rate in addition to the regular kilometric reimbursement rate.

OBWB policy for employees is also informative regarding travel time. When travelling from home to various milfoil control work sites, OBWB considers the first and last half-hour of travel to be part of a normal commute to work and is not considered part of claimable work hours. Any travel required over 30 minutes per direction is claimed as work time to ensure fairness to employees who may be commuting several hours in each direction to their changing worksites. The same policy applied to directors would mean that anything over one hour of travel time would be compensated.

Recommended travel time pay for OBWB directors

For virtual meetings, there is no travel time, but OBWB recognizes the value of in-person meetings, and still holds these meetings six times per year. At a minimum, travel time between regional districts is two hours total, and up to six hours return from Osoyoos to RDNO.

Based on the recommended remuneration rate, travel time over 1-hour should be compensated at \$23.75 per half-hour, rounded to the nearest half hour. The travel time rate would apply to all directors including the Chair, and whether the director is driving or a passenger.

Annual Adjustment and 5-year Review

All reviewed regional districts also had policies of annual adjustments based on the B.C. Consumer Price Index (CPI) and policies for periodic review. This is also a best practice recommended by UBCM. I recommend that OBWB adopt a policy to adjust director remuneration, including travel time to the nearest dollar based on the B.C. CPI year-over-year change (November to November) as reported by Statistics Canada, to take effect April 1st.

I also recommend that the OBWB review the director remuneration policy every five years to align best practices and pay rates with comparable local governments.

Recommended Motion: That starting with the 2026 fiscal year (April 1, 2025) OBWB director remuneration be adjusted to \$190 per meeting and Chair remuneration to \$262;

And that director's travel time over 1-hour be remunerated at \$23.75 per half-hour, calculated to the nearest half-hour;

And that director remuneration rates, including travel time be adjusted annually based on the B.C. CPI to the nearest dollar, taking effect on April 1st;

And that OBWB director remuneration policy be reviewed every five years.

MEMORANDUM

To: OBWB Directors
From: Carolina Restrepo Tamayo, Office and Grants Manager
Date: October 28th, 2024

Okanagan Basin Water Board
Regular meeting
November 5, 2024
Agenda No: 6.3

Subject: Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants 2025-2026

Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grants provide between \$3,000 and \$30,000 in funding to local governments, improvement districts, First Nations and non-profits for projects in the Okanagan basin that conserve water or improve water quality. The program has been running since 2006. This year, the call for applications will go out on November 7th, with the application deadline set for Friday, Feb. 21st at 4 p.m. The board is asked to approve the annual theme, grant process and scoring criteria.

Process

The process for awarding grants is:

1. Board approves scoring criteria and annual theme.
2. Applicants receive letters of support from local government based on that government's water-related objectives, community values and other normal considerations.
3. Staff review the applications independently based on board-approved scoring criteria.
4. Staff meet to determine recommendations based on individual assessments; and
5. Recommendations are forwarded to the board. Board discussion and voting on grant awards should occur as any other regular business, with input from all directors. Board may award, not award, or alter funding within project and program limitations.

Scoring Criteria

These weighted criteria are included in the grant program guide:	
20 points	Outcome for water quality or conservation
20	Basin-wide benefit
15	Method appropriate for objectives
15	Budget and timeline
10	Use and promotion of best practices
10	Collaboration
10	Quality of Proposal
100*	
*Up to 10 bonus points can be awarded based on board-approved annual themes	

Annual Theme

Each year, as part of the approved scoring criteria, the board selects an annual theme or themes for staff to prioritize during the application review. This allows the board to identify specific types of projects that should receive bonus points, in addition to meeting the regular criteria of the grant program. Last year's theme, "Drought Resilience," awarded up to 10 bonus points to projects focused on preventing, managing, and/or

mitigating drought or water shortages in the basin.

This year, staff recommend the theme of "**Source Water Protection**," with up to 10 bonus points awarded to projects that enhance community water supply health through source protection and/or studies to promote safer drinking water.

Recommended Resolution: THAT the process and scoring criteria for the grant competition be approved as outlined; AND THAT for the 2025-2026 WCQI grant competition, up to 10 bonus points will be awarded for projects in any category related to Source Water Protection.



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Director General

Directrice générale

Biodiversity Management

Direction de la gestion de la biodiversité

October 17, 2024

Mr. K. James Littlely
Interim Executive Director
Okanagan Basin Water Board
< james.littlely@obwb.ca >

Dear Mr. Littlely:

I am writing in response to correspondence of October 18, 2023, sent to the Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, by your predecessor, Dr. Anna Warwick Sears, regarding the prevention of invasive mussels in British Columbia (BC). I have been asked to respond on the Minister's behalf, and I regret the delay.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) agrees that prevention is the key to addressing the threat of invasive mussels in BC. Effective aquatic invasive species (AIS) management is a shared priority and responsibility across federal, provincial, and territorial governments. DFO works with provinces, territories, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and other federal organizations to enforce the *Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations* and help prevent prohibited species from entering and spreading within Canada.

The Department works closely with the CBSA to implement protocols, training, tools, and procedures related to prohibited invasive species. During September 2023, regional officials from DFO engaged with the CBSA and partners from the Conservation Officer Service of BC's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, as well as that Ministry's Invasive Fauna Unit, regarding positive larvae samples found for quagga mussels in the Snake River near Twin Falls, Idaho. Following this engagement, a communication outlining instructions to follow when encountering high-risk vessels was shared with CBSA frontline operations officials.

DFO works with the CBSA as the first line of defence to refer suspected cases of non-compliance to DFO's fishery officers. Cases are referred on a risk-management approach through questioning to determine further inspection, as per all the legislation the CBSA enforces, including the *Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations*.

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DFO officials meet regularly with their counterparts from the Province of British Columbia to discuss emerging AIS threats and support for freshwater AIS initiatives, including early detection monitoring programs. In May 2023, the Honourable Joyce Murray, then Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, [announced an investment of \\$36.6 million over five years to fight AIS in Canada](#), which includes \$8.75 million for DFO's newly created [Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund](#), and \$3.6 million specifically for DFO's Pacific Region. In 2022-2023, DFO also made a one-time contribution of over \$475,000 through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Province to support BC's invasive mussel defence program (IMDP). On February 14, 2024, [funding of up to \\$540,000 from 2023 to 2025](#) was announced for the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

Further, since 2022, the Department has added two new fishery officer positions in the Pacific Region to collaborate with BC, the Government of Yukon, and the CBSA to prevent the introduction and spread of prohibited species. In 2023–2024, DFO acquired two decontamination trailers in the Pacific Region that will directly support the efforts of the IMDP. Additionally, in [June](#) and [August](#) of 2024, the Department, in collaboration with the Province of Manitoba, conducted two watercraft inspection blitzes on Highway 1 between Ontario and Manitoba to intercept contaminated watercraft travelling overland, including those that may be travelling to BC from infested areas.

DFO supports BC's invasive mussel management by providing scientific advice. The Department, in collaboration with the National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee, is developing national standards for decontamination protocols, based on a review of the effectiveness of [“Clean, Drain, Dry and Decontaminate” treatments and protocols](#), and DFO's 2022 [national risk assessment for zebra and quagga mussels in Canada](#).

[Additional information about this issue](#) can be found on the DFO AIS webpage.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely,



Nicole Bouchard
Director General
Biodiversity Management
Programs Sector

c.c.: Distribution List

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Distribution List

Office of the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., K.C., M.P.

Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions

Office of Mr. Dan Albas, M.P.

Central Okanagan–Similkameen–Nicola

Office of Mr. Mel Arnold, M.P.

North Okanagan–Shuswap

Office of Ms. Tracy Gray, M.P.

Kelowna–Lake Country

Office of Mr. Richard Cannings, M.P.

South Okanagan–West Kootenay

Office of the Honourable Nathan Cullen, M.L.A.

British Columbia’s Minister of Water, Land and
Resource Stewardship

Office of Mr. Dan Ashton, M.L.A.

Penticton

Office of Mr. Norm Letnick, M.L.A.

Kelowna–Lake Country

Office of Ms. Renee Merrifield, M.L.A.

Kelowna–Mission

Office of Mr. Roly Russell, M.L.A.

Boundary–Similkameen

Office of Ms. Harwinder Sandhu, M.L.A.

Vernon–Monashee

Office of Mr. Ben Stewart, M.L.A.

Kelowna West