



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: March 4, 2025

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www.obwb.ca

OBWB Directors

Blair Ireland - Chair,
Regional District of Central
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Doug Holmes - Vice-Chair,
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Similkameen

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Rick Fairbairn, Regional
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trict of North Okanagan

Wayne Carson, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Charlie Hodge, Regional
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Subrina Monteith - Alt., Re-
gional District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff,
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Similkameen

Tim Lezard, Okanagan Nation
Alliance

Bob Hrasko, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Jeremy Fyke, Water
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be Tuesday, April 1,
2025, at the RDNO offices at
9848 Aberdeen Road, Cold-
stream, B.C.**

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Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

OBWB gains broad support for invasive mussel prevention efforts: The OBWB has received significant support for its updated calls to action regarding invasive mussels, sent to the Okanagan Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group in February. Letters of support were submitted by several organizations and individuals in the Okanagan and other regions. This widespread backing reinforces the urgency of preventing invasive mussels from entering Okanagan waterways.

Okanagan Water Stewardship Council begins new term: The Okanagan Water Stewardship Council (OWSC), the technical advisory committee to the OBWB, begins its 19th year this April. The OBWB reappointed 32 member organizations, including agricultural producers, all levels of government, and water professionals from various disciplines. With all current members continuing, the Council remains a strong and consistent voice on key water issues in the Okanagan.

Directors hear about the Okanagan's low snowpack: At the March 4, 2025 Board meeting, OBWB Directors were informed of concerning low snowpack levels in the region. As per the February 12, 2025 Provincial Snow Supply Bulletin, the Okanagan's snowpack was measured at 84 per cent of normal, marking the lowest February 1 level since 2017. This situation raises concerns about potential water supply challenges in the upcoming season.

Twenty grant applications for WCQI: The OBWB received 20 grant applications, requesting a total of \$554,654, for the 2025/2026 Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program. With \$350,000 in funding available, OBWB staff will review proposals throughout March, with recommendations sent to the Board of Directors for approval on April 1, 2025. Awarded projects will be announced April 2, 2025. This year's 20 WCQI proposed projects, which all support local water conservation and protection, are valued at more than \$6.7 million.

OBWB takes a stand against aquatic pesticides and herbicides: The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) maintains its long-standing opposition to aquatic herbicides and pesticides in Okanagan Lakes, in place since the 1970s. After months of discussion and staff reports, OBWB Directors passed a motion to adopt an official Statement Against the Application of Chemical Pesticides and Herbicides in Okanagan Waters:

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

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca