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## March Water Board Report

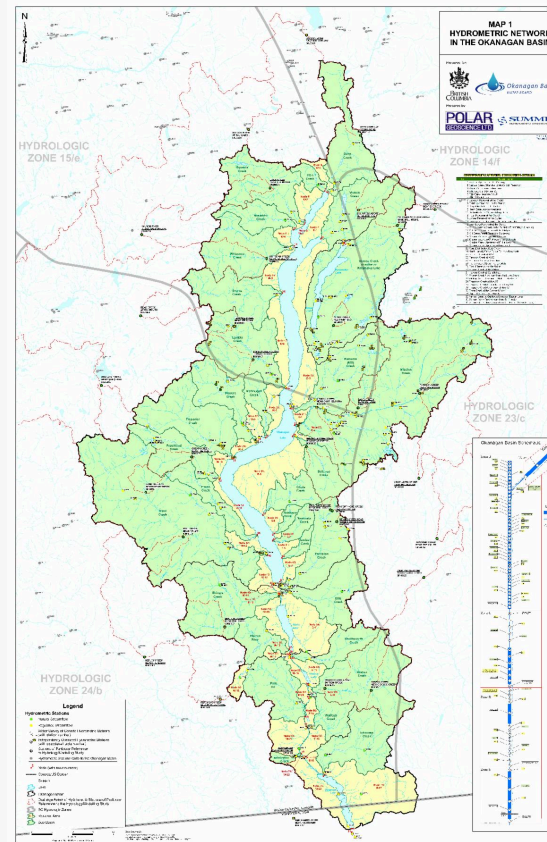
Highlights from the March 3, 2026 meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board, held online.

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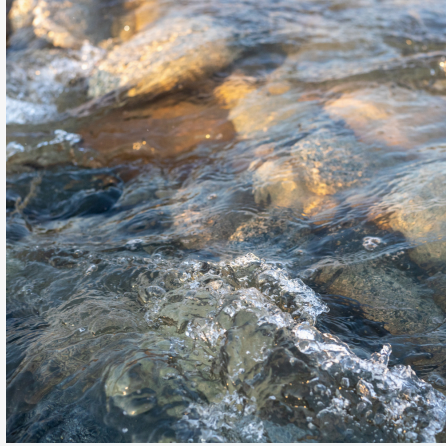
**Hydrometric Monitoring Data Highlighted as Key Tool for Provincial Water Decisions:**

James Telford, Senior Water Authorizations Specialist with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, spoke to the Board about the critical role hydrometric monitoring plays in provincial decision-making. These real-time measurements of water flowing through rivers and creeks help provincial staff prepare for drought and guide difficult water management decisions, including the potential enforcement of water restrictions.

The topic proved timely. Later in the meeting, OBWB's Water Science Specialist Sandra Schira reported that the region is heading into another drought year. All three Okanagan snowpack stations are currently measuring low, between 62% and 88% of normal, while the Brenda Mines station has recorded its lowest snowpack level since monitoring began in 1992. Without significant spring precipitation, many local creeks and water supplies could face pressure this summer.



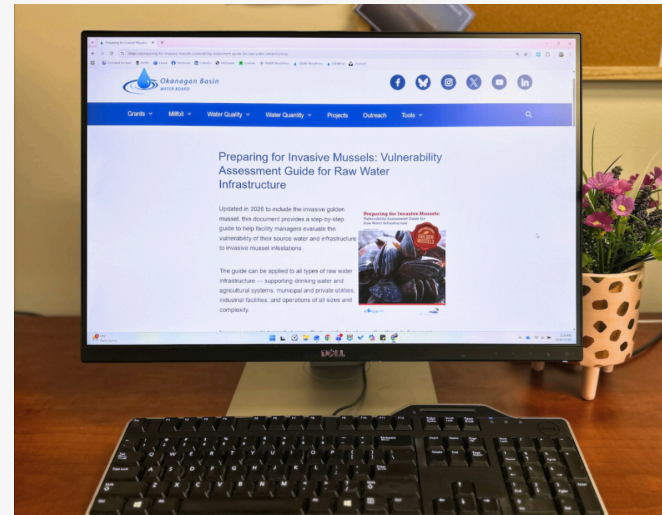
Mr. Telford also thanked the OBWB for its leadership in strengthening the region's hydrometric monitoring network. For many years, the OBWB has partnered with the Okanagan Nation Alliance and the Water Survey of Canada to install and maintain monitoring stations across the basin, providing data that supports drought and flood



preparedness, water management decisions, and infrastructure planning.

## Updated OBWB Guide Helps Water System Operators Assess Risk from Invasive Mussels, Including Emerging Golden Mussel Threat:

A newly updated OBWB guide is helping water system operators better understand and prepare for the growing threat posed by invasive mussels. The latest version expands its risk assessment framework to include golden mussels—a recently-discovered invasive species that could threaten water systems previously thought to be at low risk.



OBWB Chief Operating Officer James Littlely reported on the release of the updated *Preparing for Invasive Mussels: Vulnerability Assessment Guide for Raw Water Infrastructure*, which now includes information about the threat posed by golden mussels. Recently detected in California, golden mussels are moving northward and raising new concerns for water managers.

Facility managers who previously used the first edition of the guide are encouraged to reassess their raw water systems using the updated framework.

The step-by-step risk assessment tool can be applied to a wide range of systems—from municipal drinking water and agricultural irrigation to industrial facilities—helping operators of both large and small systems better understand their vulnerabilities and plan appropriate protections.

## Find the New Mussel Vulnerability Guide for Raw Water Infrastructure - online

[Click Here](#)

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### Record Demand for OBWB Water Grants Highlights Region's Commitment to Water:

The Board heard that the OBWB's Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program has received the largest number of applications in its history, reflecting strong regional interest in water stewardship. The 2026–27 intake attracted 34 proposals requesting a combined \$882,000 in funding and proposing to leverage more than \$5.25 million in water-related work across the Okanagan.



Projects submitted span a wide range of initiatives, including habitat restoration, drought planning, water conservation, and public education. The WCQI Grant Program has \$350,000 available each year, with successful applicants receiving between \$3,000 and \$30,000. The program recognizes the importance of

enabling projects that enhance water quality and conserve water in the Okanagan Valley, encouraging a collaborative approach to water issues.

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### UBCO Capstone Project Develops Underwater Camera Tool to Support Invasive Milfoil Management:

OBWB Directors received an update on several OBWB-supported capstone projects, including a new underwater camera tool developed in partnership with UBC Okanagan. A UBCO engineering team have designed a mounting bracket for an underwater HD camera that can be used during milfoil treatment operations. The camera will help staff identify underwater hazards and better target treatment zones. The system may also help distinguish between native aquatic plants and invasive Eurasian watermilfoil, supporting more precise and lower-impact management of the invasive species in Okanagan lakes.

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## Upcoming Events


### Seedy Sunday

 Come visit OBWB's booth and learn all about Make Water Work, water management and our programs in the Okanagan.

 Sunday, March 8, 2026






 Kelowna – Parkinson Rec Centre

 1800, Parkinson Way







 \$2 admission, children under 12 free. Learn more about Seedy Sunday:

[Kelowna Seedy Sunday on Facebook](#)

### First Things First Okanagan World Water Day






-  OBWB presentation
-  Monday, March 16, 2026
-  6:30 pm
-  Penticton – Okanagan College
-  583 Duncan Ave W

### OBWB World Water Day

-  “All Too Clear” documentary showing, followed by expert panel discussion on invasive mussels
-  Sunday, March 22, 2026
-  2:00 pm – 5:00 pm
-  Kelowna – UBCO Commons Classroom
-  3287 University Way
-  Free to attend, registration required:






[OBWB World Water Day Film - Register Here](#)

### Syilx Water & Climate Forum

-  “A pathway forward for water, land, and future generations.”
-  Monday, March 23 – Tuesday, Mar. 24, 2026
-  Kelowna – Delta Grand Resort
-  1310 Water St
-  Learn more about the Syilx Water & Climate Forum:

[Syilx Water & Climate Forum](#)

### New Date for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the OBWB Water Management Program

-  Celebrate 20 years of the Water Management Program
-  Friday, Sept. 11, 2026
-  Kelowna – Manteo at Elderado Resort
-  3762 Lakeshore Rd
-  More information coming soon.

## Environmental Flows Conference 2026

💧 Co-hosted by the Okanagan Basin Water Board, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, and Canadian Water Resources Association. A national gathering for water science, policy, and practice.

📅 Wednesday, Oct. 7 – Friday, Oct. 9, 2026

📍 Kelowna – Coast Capri Hotel

🎯 1171 Harvey Ave

📄 Early bird registration opening soon.

Want to support our goal to educate residents on water in the Okanagan? Follow us on social media, like and share our content, and leave us a comment – your engagement helps us reach more people.



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[Go to OBWB.ca](https://www.obwb.ca)

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