



BOARD REPORT: March 6, 2024

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Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

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**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be Tuesday, April 2,
2024 at the Regional District of
North Okanagan.**

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Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Board receives invasive mussel outreach update: Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS)'s executive director Lisa Scott presented to the board on 2023 invasive mussel outreach efforts. The OBWB provides OASISS funds to extend outreach of its [Don't Move A Mussel](#) (DMM) campaign to water recreationists, retailers, yacht clubs and others. OASISS provided DMM materials to 178 businesses, interacted with about 3,360 people at boat launches, community events and youth camps, and surveyed 1,237 watercraft users. They also collected 131 water samples from five lakes. Test results came back showing no mussels detected.

Directors updated on expanding invasive mussel prevention efforts: The board was updated on plans for the first meeting of the Okanagan-Interior Invasive Mussel Working Group on March 8. Expected attendees include representatives from provincial and local governments, chambers of commerce, tourism, marinas, watershed groups and others. Participants will discuss what more can be done to prevent zebra and quagga mussels from arriving in the B.C. Interior, how to stop their spread should they arrive, and how to prepare for their potential arrival. About 100 people from the Thompson-Okanagan and Columbia-Shuswap regions are registered. The board also received a new map showing mussel vulnerability in the Okanagan based on water chemistry. The new map will help direct resources to at-risk areas. And, the board received letters from six organizations supporting the OBWB's call on a temporary boat moratorium, pull-the-plug legislation, and increased federal funding support for B.C.'s inspection stations.

New amphibious milfoil harvester currently in transit: The OBWB's new harvester is scheduled to arrive at the Port of Montreal in early March and is expected to be delivered to Vernon by the end of the month. The Water Board is planning to host a public event in June to officially showcase and launch the machine once harvesting season begins. Stay tuned.

OBWB's 2023 conservation efforts reviewed with eye to 2024: The board received a report on its 2023 [Make Water Work](#) outdoor residential water conservation campaign. Highlights included two new garden centre partners in the valley, advertising on billboards, TV, radio and social media, wrapped vehicles and more. In all, the campaign delivered more than 6.7 million views. With a budget of \$52,670 and in-kind support, staff delivered a campaign worth \$77,867. The report will help inform Make Water Work 2024. A new communications piece for agricultural water users was also shared with the board. It is available at <https://tinyurl.com/yh64uzu7>. And, the OBWB has been supporting the Province of B.C. in promoting its "Decoding Drought" community workshops aimed at answering questions ahead of another potential drought year. The next provincial workshop is March 9, 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Beasley Hall in Lake Country. Find more information at <https://tinyurl.com/decoding-drought>.

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