



Photo courtesy Mike Moyer



**Okanagan Basin**  
WATER BOARD

## BOARD REPORT: February 6, 2020

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[www.obwb.ca](http://www.obwb.ca)

### **OBWB Directors**

**Sue McKortoff - Chair,**  
Regional District of Okanagan-  
Similkameen

**Cindy Fortin - Vice-Chair,**  
Regional District of Central  
Okanagan

**Victor Cumming,** Regional  
District of North Okanagan

**Rick Fairbairn,** Regional  
District of North Okanagan

**Bob Fleming,** Regional District  
of North Okanagan

**James Baker,** Regional  
District of Central Okanagan

**Colin Basran,** Regional District  
of Central Okanagan

**Toni Boot,** Regional District of  
Okanagan-Similkameen

**Rick Knodel,** Regional District  
of Okanagan-Similkameen

**Chris Derickson,** Okanagan  
Nation Alliance

**Bob Hrasko,** Water Supply  
Association of B.C.

**Denise Neilsen,** Okanagan  
Water Stewardship Council

The next regular meeting of the OBWB will be 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in Penticton.

### **Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights**

**Board of Directors re-elect chair and vice-chair:** Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) representative Sue McKortoff was re-elected this week as Chair of the Okanagan Basin Water Board and Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO)'s Cindy Fortin was re-elected as Vice-chair, both by acclamation. Additional directors re-appointed to the board include RDNO directors Victor Cumming, Rick Fairbairn and Bob Fleming; James Baker and Colin Basran, returning for RDCO; and returning RDOS directors Toni Boot and Rick Knodel. Water Management Appointments include new Okanagan Nation Alliance representative Chief Chris Derickson, and returning Water Supply Association of BC's Bob Hrasko and Okanagan Water Stewardship Council Chair Denise Neilsen.

**Provincial staff update board on Okanagan milfoil control regulations:** Lora Nield, with B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development presented to the board on the province's most recent milfoil control regulations and future plans. The OBWB has been in talks with the province for several months regarding restrictions on rototilling, which is the most effective method for controlling the invasive weed. At issue is the Rocky Mountain Ridged Mussel, listed federally as a species of special concern. Ms. Nield acknowledged the board's call for more research regarding the impact of rototilling (up-rooting the weed) and the impact of dense milfoil beds on the mussel, and said talks are underway with UBC Okanagan researchers to begin this work.

**Okanagan Wetland Action Plan now available:** A new resource has been developed to help local governments, conservation groups and others protect, re-establish and create Okanagan wetlands. The wetland action plan is one of the deliverables that are part of a multi-year OBWB Okanagan wetland strategy. Research shows about 90% of low elevation wetlands have been lost in the Okanagan and Similkameen since 1800. Wetlands are important ecosystems, providing habitat and food for some of the valley's most at-risk animals, they filter contaminants in water, protect communities from floods and droughts, absorb carbon dioxide and help address climate change. Find the guide at [www.OBWB.ca/wetlands](http://www.OBWB.ca/wetlands).

**Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy online:** The *Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy - Action Plan 2.0* is available at [www.OBWB.ca/SWS](http://www.OBWB.ca/SWS). The strategy will guide the work of the OBWB's technical advisory body, the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council, to develop solutions to help ensure a clean and sustainable water supply in the region. The strategy also identifies several partners to work with in delivering outcomes.

**Sheila Watt-Cloutier headlines local climate talk:** Nobel Peace Prize nominee and well-known human rights advocate Sheila Watt-Cloutier is keynote speaker at an upcoming OBWB-sponsored event, "*Building Community Resilience in a Changing Climate*" on Feb. 26 in Kelowna. The event is being hosted by RDCO and will include the public launch of an Okanagan climate projections report. Tickets are \$15. For more info. and to register, please visit: <http://SheilaWattCloutier-Okanagan.eventbrite.com>.

**For more information, please visit: [www.OBWB.ca](http://www.OBWB.ca)**