



Regional Board Report

TO: Regional Board

FROM: Todd Cashin
Director of Community Services

DATE: February 22, 2021

SUBJECT: Okanagan Water Basin Board (OBWB) Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants

Voting Entitlement: All Directors – Unweighted Corporate Vote – Simple Majority – LGA 208.1

Purpose: To endorse, by resolution, one Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant application prior to consideration by OBWB.

Executive Summary:

RDCO Community Services staff provides administrative assistance by collating the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant applications that have requested local government support. The applications include those from the RDCO, as well as non-profit community organizations. All applications submitted to RDCO are consistent with water management objectives and reflect the values of the community as outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy. Local government support is required in order to be accepted as an eligible project by OBWB.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Regional Board endorse the following application for the Okanagan Basin Water Board Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program:

- Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program and Okanagan Nation Alliance – Okanagan Lake Responsibility Planning Initiative - \$30,000.00

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Cashin".

Todd Cashin
Director of Community Services

Approved for Board's Consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Reardon".

Brian Reardon, CAO

Implications of Recommendation:

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| Strategic Plan: | Endorsement of the grant application for consideration by OBWB achieves the Regional Board's Strategic Priorities 2019-2022 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Values: Collaboration, Regional Perspective, and Resiliency.• Priorities: Environment. |
| Policy: | Endorsement of the grant application for consideration by OBWB meets several of the goals and objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1336. |

Background:

The OBWB Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants Program is intended to encourage innovative and collaborative projects that promote more uniform standards and best practices throughout the valley. Projects are to address water issues, increase knowledge sharing, and enhance the valley-wide sustainable use of water.

The OBWB will review the projects based on set criteria to determine eligibility for funding. The intent of obtaining a local government resolution prior to OBWB consideration is to ensure that the proposed project is consistent with water management objectives and reflects community values.

Proposal:

One application has requested Regional Board endorsement, the Okanagan Lake Responsibility Planning Initiative, summarized in Table 1 (attached), and is consistent with water-related objectives and community values as outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy. This multi-year pilot project is being co-led by the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, Okanagan Nation Alliance, and the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program to create new ways for Syilx and non-Syilx partners to work together for greater environmental protection for Okanagan Lake and its watershed.

In 2021 the project will follow a Syilx planning and public engagement process to develop the kłúsxnítkw (Okanagan Lake) Responsibility Strategy. This Syilx initiative will provide an opportunity for all partners to engage in a process that will strengthen protection measures for siwłkw (water) and the land, and will ensure solutions are embedded in Syilx water laws, principles, and practices that value water and the environment as the foundation for sustainability. The Strategy will provide guidance for improving land use decision making processes, policies, and practices that address systemic issues, climate change, and provide holistic ways of caring for land and water.

Regional Board Strategic Priorities 2019-2022

Endorsement of the grant application for consideration by OBWB complies with the following goals of the Regional Board Strategic Priorities:

Environment:

- Continue to collaborate with others such as the OBWB to develop strategies, plans, and actions to protect our watersheds, care for our lakes, and maintain foreshore areas.

Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1336

Endorsement of the grant application for consideration by OBWB complies with the following policies of the RGS:

Our Water

- Continue in partnership with the OBWB and regional partners to encourage valley wide cooperation and coordination regarding the conservation of water and protection of all water sources.
- Consider water resources in land use planning decisions.

Our Economy

- Support effectively managing and protecting the integrity of the Region's critical assets such as the lakes, natural environment, and agricultural lands that promote attraction of employment and investment.

Our Ecosystems

- Encourage collaboration to adopt consistent terminology, policies and actions that support the protection and conservation of environmental features and watersheds within the Region.
- Manage growth to minimize disturbance to habitat, watershed, and natural drainage areas and systems.
- Explore funding mechanisms to support regionally significant natural areas, open space and parkland acquisitions.
- Support cooperation with regional partners on environmental matters, particularly where there are developments/issues located adjacent to political boundaries.

Financial Considerations:

Grants available for individual projects range from \$3,000.00 to \$30,000.00. A total of \$350,000 is made available annually by OBWB for this valley-wide program.

Organizational Issues:

Other applications from municipalities, regional districts, irrigation/improvement districts, and non-profit community organizations, will receive support or endorsement from that organization's local government for submission to OBWB. The applications noted are only a portion of the applications that OBWB will be considering for the Central Okanagan area. All applications submitted to RDCO have demonstrated how the project benefits the valley as a whole as required by the grant approval criteria.

External Implications:

Without Regional Board endorsement or support from the RDCO, the grant applications submitted will not be considered by OBWB.

Alternative Recommendation:

THAT the Regional Board not endorse the application for the Okanagan Lake Responsibility Planning Initiative for the Okanagan Basin Water Board Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant Program.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

- *General*
- *Legal/Statutory Authority*
- *Organizational Issues*

Attachment:

- Table 1: Central Okanagan Applications for Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grants