



Okanagan Basin
WATER BOARD

BOARD REPORT: November 5, 2021

1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC V1W 3Z4

P 250.469.6271 F 250.762.7011

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

Doug Holmes, 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.

Scott Boswell, Okanagan
Water Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be held December
7, 2021 at 10 a.m. online.**

Stay connected! Follow us on



Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

Province releases Okanagan Lake Regulation System report: The board discussed the release of a report to modernize Okanagan lake level management, helping address valley flood, drought, and fish habitat concerns. The “Plan of Study for Modernizing the Okanagan Lake Regulation System” (OLRS) was developed in partnership between the OBWB and B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR). Currently, FLNR staff manage the lake based on a 1976 operating plan, with minor updates since then. The plan recommends 17 studies (e.g. looking at hydrology, fish management, climate change), culminating in a final study to modernize the OLRS. Last month, the OBWB presented recommendations to the provincial budget committee, requesting \$1 mill. /year for the next five years to complete the studies. Find the Plan of Study at <https://bit.ly/3G NUeeu>, and a presentation on the plan at <https://youtu.be/N1byBsSlb8w>.

Board receives microplastics presentation: Directors received a mid-point update on a project looking at microplastic pollution in Okanagan Lake, funded by the OBWB’s Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) Grant Program. The project, by FreshWater Life, included surface water trawl sampling on the lake in August and sampling at the Kelowna Wastewater Treatment Plant. Okanagan College Water Engineering Technology students are now reviewing the samples. Results are expected by spring 2022.

OBWB looks ahead to 2022 grant year: The board approved improvements to the 2022 WCQI grant application process and adopted the theme “source water protection.” Applications that meet the theme are awarded additional points when going through the review process. The call for proposals will go out in late November with an application deadline of Feb. 28, 4 p.m. More info. will be posted at www.OBWB.ca/WCQI.

Looming groundwater licence deadline discussed: OBWB directors were updated on the March 1, 2022 deadline for groundwater licencing in B.C., required by the province’s Water Sustainability Act, adopted in 2016. Those using well water for non-domestic use (e.g. farms or community water utilities) must obtain a licence by March 1. Residential well owners are not required to get a licence, but are encouraged to register their well so the province is aware of it when reviewing licence applications for nearby properties. Information for the public has been posted at <https://OkWaterWise.ca/>.

Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum 2022 – call for posters: The OBWB is partnering with the International Joint Commission, Osoyoos Indian Board, Okanagan Nation Alliance and others to host the Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum, April 28-30 in Osoyoos. A call for posters has gone out, looking for submissions that present on findings relevant to the Okanagan/Okanagan watershed. More details are available at www.OBWB.ca/OLWSF.

Water Board approves 2022-23 budget: Directors approved a \$3.69 million budget. The budget includes funds for the Milfoil Control Program, Sewerage Facilities Assistance (SFA) Grants Program, and the Water Management Program (which includes the Water Stewardship Council, Water Research, WCQI grants, and Communications and Outreach). This year’s budget includes funds to review the SFA program to determine future funding needs, and whether policies need to be updated.

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