



## BOARD REPORT: January 28, 2022

1450 K.L.O. Road, Kelowna, BC, V1W 3Z4

P: 250-469-6187, 1-800-363-6684

[www.oksir.org](http://www.oksir.org)

### 2022 OKSIR Directors

#### Voting Directors

**Shirley Fowler,**  
2022 Chair  
RDNO

**George Bush,**  
2022 Vice Chair  
RDOS

**James Baker**  
RDCO

**Dave Dobernigg**  
Fruit Grower, North

**Amarjit Lalli,**  
Fruit Grower, Central

**Tim Lavery**  
CSRD

**Walter Makepeace**  
Fruit Grower, South,  
Organic

**Brad Sieben**  
RDCO

#### Non-voting Directors

**Dr. Susanna  
Acheampong**  
BC Ministry of  
Agriculture

**Taras Pojasok**  
Agriculture and  
Agri-food Canada

### 2022 Chair and Vice-Chair Elected

The SIR Board is pleased to announce that Director Shirley Fowler, RDNO (Armstrong) and Director George Bush, RDOS (Cawston) were elected on January 28, 2022 as the SIR Board Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. All elected official appointments remained the same as 2021, and the Board anticipates welcoming new grower representatives at the upcoming March meeting.

### SIR Financial Plan Adopted – First Tax Increase in Over a Decade

The SIR Board adopted Bylaw No. 39, SIR 2022-2026 Five Year Financial Plan that outlines the Boards \$4.2M annual budget. The increase in total tax requisition to the Regional Districts for 2022 will be 4%, and the parcel tax rate will increase by 8%, from \$139.26 per acre of planted codling moth host trees to \$150.40 per acre. The last time either tax rate was changed was in 2010.

### Third-party to Assess Economic Importance of OKSIR to Apple and Pear Growers, Following Recommendation in Province's Tree Fruit Stabilization Plan

Cascadia Partners has been engaged to assess the economic value growers receive from the SIR Program. The Ministry of Agriculture's recently released plan *The Path Forward: A Blueprint for B.C.'s Tree Fruit Industry* recommended that an economic assessment be completed, and if the Program is determined to be critical to the success of industry, it recommends that funding models to support the grower portion of the costs be considered.

The number of apple orchards in the service area has shrunk by two-thirds since the Program was initially launched, due in part to industry fragmentation and the lure of higher-value crops like cherries and grapes. The Program was initially funded with a significant portion of funds coming from senior government. Over the past decade, however, senior government funding was ended and the costs were shared solely between the growers and local taxpayers.

The apple industry has been in a sharp period of contraction since 2018, losing significant amounts of acreage. This continued loss of taxable acreage, together with increasing costs driven by inflation and increases to minimum wage, has created a need to evaluate the funding model of OKSIR. The Board believes that if OKSIR is demonstrated to be essential to the economic viability of the apple sector, then senior government funding should be restored during this period of industry stabilization and rebuilding.

The next regular meeting of the OKSIR Board will be 9:00 a.m. on **Friday, March 11, 2022**, with hopes of holding the meeting in-person at RDCO.

