



BOARD REPORT: April 1, 2025

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Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

OBWB Directors

Blair Ireland - Chair,
Regional District of Central
Okanagan

Doug Holmes - Vice-Chair,
Regional District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Victor Cumming, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Rick Fairbairn, Regional
District of North Okanagan

Bob Fleming, Regional Dis-
trict of North Okanagan

Wayne Carson, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Charlie Hodge, Regional
District of Central Okanagan

Subrina Monteith, Regional
District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Sue McKortoff,
Regional District of Okanagan-
Similkameen

Tim Lezard, Okanagan Nation
Alliance

Bob Hrasko, Water Supply
Association of B.C.

Jeremy Fyke, Water
Stewardship Council

**The next regular meeting of the
OBWB will be Tuesday, May 6,
2025 at the Coast Capri Hotel,
1171 Harvey Ave, Kelowna,.**

OBWB receives update on invasive mussels and Wildlife Act review: The Board received an update on invasive mussel prevention efforts, including feedback submitted to the BC Wildlife Act Review to amend the Act to include mandatory watercraft inspections in the province. Currently, laws require watercraft haulers to stop at inspection stations "along their route," but do not cover routes without inspection stations. The update also included Alberta's enhanced invasive mussel defense program which continues to set a positive example for increased investments in protecting Alberta and Western Canada from the threat of invasive mussels. Directors also heard about a UBCO engineering capstone project, advised by OBWB Chief Operating Officer James Littley, focused on designing a modular drive-through watercraft decontamination tank.

Directors hear of upcoming Speaker at April Water Stewardship Council Meeting: At the next Okanagan Water Stewardship Council meeting on April 10 in Kelowna, guest speaker Deborah Curran will be presenting. She is the Executive Director of the Environmental Law Centre and a professor at the University of Victoria. Ms. Curran will talk about how Canada's laws can better support local communities in taking care of their watersheds, and how changes to these laws could help protect the environment for the future. The Water Stewardship Council, a committee of local experts and professionals, provides science-based and local knowledge-driven advice to the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

Wet March has little impact on low snowpack levels, Directors hear: The board received a weather update from OBWB Water Science Specialist, Sandra Schira, noting that while March precipitation was higher than usual, it only resulted in a small recovery in snowpack levels. As of March 1, the Okanagan snowpack was at 82% of normal compared to past years. Precipitation in the weeks ahead will be crucial in determining the likelihood of drought conditions this summer.

Annual Okanagan Water Supply webinar returns April 11: The Water board is anticipating the 13th annual Okanagan Water Supply Webinar, taking place on April 11 and hosted by Dr. Nelson Jatel of the Okanagan Basin Water Board. This free, public webinar will deliver up-to-date, science-based insights on the current state of water in the Okanagan. Topics include reservoir levels, snowpack, groundwater conditions, and seasonal weather forecasts—all essential information for understanding our region's water supply and how to manage it sustainably. The webinar is open to local governments, farmers, water managers, business owners, and any members of the public interested in Okanagan water supply. To register or learn more, visit: <https://obwb.ca/okanagan-water-supply-webinar-april-11-2025/>

Okanagan projects receive 2025 funding to protect and improve Okanagan water: Directors received staff recommendations to fund 15 of the 20 WCQI grant applications received, using 100% of the \$350,000 available funds. The theme for this year's grant is source water protection. The high quality and competitive nature of the applications made the selection process challenging but rewarding. The funded projects will advance water conservation and quality improvement across the region, including projects focused on restoration, source water protection, and groundwater. All projects selected for funding must demonstrate that they will advance water conservation or quality improvement, and ideally fit the grant's annual theme, as well as have an impact valley wide.

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

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