

## Record of Meeting

### International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control Public Meeting

The Old Depot  
Oroville, Washington  
September 24, 2002, 7:30 PM

#### Attendance

	<b>Canada</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Chairs</b>	Kirk Johnstone	Dr. Cynthia Barton (host)
<b>Members</b>	Brian Symonds Glen Davidson for Jim Mattison	Col. Ralph Graves Kris Kauffman
<b>Secretaries</b>	Daniel Millar	Robert Kimbrough
<b>Observers</b>	IJC Commissioner Dennis Schornack, IJC Commissioner Robert Gourd, Gerry Galloway (Secretary, U.S. Section, IJC), Murray Clamen (Secretary, Canadian Section, IJC), Tom McAuley (Canadian Section, IJC), Lisa Bourget (U.S. Section, IJC), Larry Merkle (USACE), Marian Valentine (USACE), Ray Newkirk (WA Ecology), Robin McNeil, and nine members of the public.	

#### Agenda

##### **1. Welcome and introductions—Dr. Cynthia Barton**

Dr. Barton introduced herself and then asked the Board, IJC members, and members of the public to introduce themselves.

##### **2. Review of the agenda—Dr. Cynthia Barton**

Dr. Barton reviewed the agenda for all in attendance. There were no comments.

##### **3. IJC and the Osoyoos Lake Orders—Larry Merkle**

Larry Merkle gave a presentation on the International Joint Commission, the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control, and an overview and history of Osoyoos Lake and Zosel Dam.

##### **4. Osoyoos Lake drought conditions—Daniel Millar**

Daniel Millar gave a presentation on the three drought criteria that are provided in the Commission's 1982 Order of Approval for Osoyoos Lake. He reviewed the variability of water elevations that are allowed during "drought" years and provided a retrospective analysis on the occurrence of past drought years in relation to the drought criteria.

## **5. Hydrologic conditions in 2001-2002—Brian Symonds**

Brian Symonds reviewed the hydrologic conditions in the Okanagan Basin during the previous 12 months. Streamflow was about 50 percent of average in 2001, however, flow during the last part of 2001 was fairly normal. In April 2002, basin snowpack was 111 percent of average for the Similkameen Basin and 109 percent of average for the Okanagan Basin. The April–July runoff in the Similkameen River near Nighthawk, WA was about 1.5 million acre-feet. April and May were cooler than normal, as a result, high elevation snowpack did not melt until late May. Mean streamflow in the Okanagan Basin during the summer of 2002 was around 15 cubic meters per second, an amount that is satisfactory for meeting consumptive demand and maintaining adequate instream flow.

## **6. Washington Dept of Ecology management of Osoyoos Lake levels in 2002—Ray Newkirk**

Ray Newkirk reviewed the operation of Zosel Dam during 2002 and began by acknowledging that staff from the Oroville—Tonasket Irrigation District actually maintain the dam outflow in accordance with direction from the Washington Department of Ecology. He indicated the lake elevation was kept between 911–911.5 for most of the summer of 2002 except during the freshet when elevations exceeded 911.5. One gate on the dam was kept wide open in May to allow for passage of Sockeye Smolts. Flow in the Okanogan River downstream from Osoyoos Lake was in backwater from May 29–June 20, 2002 in response to high flow in the Similkameen River. The annual peak outflow from the lake, equal to 2,380 cubic feet per second, occurred on June 9, 2002. The annual maximum lake elevation, equal to about 912.5 feet, occurred on June 1-2, 2002.

## **7. Questions and comments from the public**

Lionel Dallas stated that the Okanagan Basin might be anticipating a shortage of water because of various reasons such as global warming and an increase in irrigation water demand due to the increase of wineries in the basin. Brian Symonds responded that global warming would not impact forecasts for individual years as these forecasts are based on observations of snowpack, weather and antecedent conditions for that particular year. Forecasts can vary significantly from year to year even in the absence of global warming. He went on to explain that global warming may result in winter precipitation falling as rain rather than snow. This would mean losing the ability to store water in the snowpack and streamflow would tend to be more uniform throughout the winter and spring. Additionally, global warming could lead to a 2-3 week shift in the spring freshet. Brian indicated that wineries use less water than other crops historically grown in the basin. Brian commented that improvements in irrigation technology have resulted in more efficient use of irrigation water in the basin.

Web Hallauer presented the idea of damming the Similkameen River to capture streamflow generated by snowmelt and precipitation. He indicated that the majority of water in the Okanogan River at the mouth originates in the Similkameen Basin. He suggested that a reservoir on the Similkameen could be used for flood control and for providing irrigation water. He identified a few potential locations for a dam including a site near Princeton, B.C., near Pesayten Creek, and Shankers Bend. Mr. Hallauer requested that the Board assemble appropriate Okanogan-Similkameen water managers to begin dialogue and consideration of regulation of the Similkameen.

## **8. Adjourn**