

INTERNATIONAL OSOYOOS LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL

Conference Call

June 13, 2017, 9:00 – 11:00 AM PST

BOARD MEMBERS

Cindi Barton	Chair, U.S. Section
Bruno Tassone	Chair, Canadian Section
John Arterburn	Board Member, U.S. Section
Col. John Buck (<i>absent</i>)	Board Member, U.S. Section
Kris Kauffman	Board Member, U.S. Section
Ford Waterstrat	Board Member, U.S. Section
Glen Davidson (<i>absent</i>)	Board Member, Canadian Section
Sue McKortoff	Board Member, Canadian Section
Brian Symonds	Board Member, Canadian Section
Anna Warwick Sears	Board Member, Canadian Section

BOARD STAFF and BOARD MEMBER ASSISTANTS

Andy Gendaszek	Secretary, U.S. Section
Gwyn Graham	Secretary, Canadian Section
Kevin Shaffer	Technical Assistant to Col. John Buck

ADDITIONS TO THE CALL

Mark Colosimo	IJC, U.S. Section
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APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Meeting was led by the Canadian Chair; meeting agenda was accepted with no changes and finalized.

DECISION ITEMS

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes of the March 14, 2017 conference call. The summary will be posted on the Board website.

SUMMARY OF BOARD PARTICIPATION AT IJC SPRING SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

U.S. co-chair reported that Board presentation was well-received and that some of the repetitive background information on the Board could be removed for future presentations for sake of brevity and to focus more on key issues and highlight Board activities. Board co-chairs commented that the climate change workshop (facilitated by the IJC Climate Adaptation Working Group -CAWG) that formed part of the IJC spring semi-annual meeting was well attended by all Boards with facilitated breakout sessions that explored planning, activities and challenges across the different IJC Boards with regard to Climate Change impacts, preparedness and adaptation. The Boards' self-assessment survey rankings were provided with the IOLBC ranking high compared to other Boards. Board members consider this to be

due in part to the climate change studies and considerations that fed into the Osoyoos Order renewal process in 2013, including re-shaping of the rule curve and provisions for adaptive management. The relatively small size of the watershed, the high level of connection between the Board and other water management interests that are also engaged in climate change studies was identified by Board members as likely contributing to the high self-assessment ranking. In addition, the Osoyoos Order only concerns lake levels whereas other IJC Boards have additional mandates concerning issues such as water quality making their planning with respect to climate change more complex. A draft report on the IJC climate change workshop is expected to be released by the IJC during the summer. There may also be further follow-up engagement by the IJC.

UPDATE ON HYDROLOGICAL CONDITIONS AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Board members remarked on how quickly the Okanagan water supply forecast concerns changed from low-flow concerns to flooding concerns from early March to June. The late winter period-early spring period was characterized by high elevation snow accumulation and heavy rains in April and May which caused water levels on Okanagan Lake to increase earlier than usual and with related high releases caused high inflows to Osoyoos Lake. The snow accumulation for the Similkameen was close to normal but temperature variations caused 4 separate peak flow events and resulting backwater effects at the confluence with the Okanagan River caused Osoyoos Lake levels to increase. The peak water level on Osoyoos Lake was observed at 914.79 ft. on June 3rd and would have gone higher if a slight temperature decrease hadn't slowed the rate of snow-melt driven discharge on the Similkameen River (that resulted in the easing off of the backwater effect that was constraining Osoyoos Lake discharge). Okanagan Lake crested at 1126.15 ft. on June 8th which sets a new record high for the 1944-2016 period of record. Okanagan system operators (BC FLNRO) have indicated that there will be a longer period of high release from Okanagan Lake, to allow levels to return within the normal seasonal range and that this will result in high inflows to Osoyoos Lake through the summer period, possibly resulting in lake levels that are slightly above the normal summer rule curve maximum of 912 ft. for much of the summer.

The level of Osoyoos Lake exceeded the IJC rule curve maximum of 912 ft on May 5th but since this was due to a combination of extremely high inflow from the Okanagan River and the backwater effect from the Similkameen River (at the confluence with the Okanagan River), and given that Zosel dam was passing as much water as possible (gates fully open as of April 26) this rule curve exceedance is compliant with Condition 9 of the IJC Orders.

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (Province of British Columbia) is reported to be mapping the maximum high-water level elevation on the Canadian side of Osoyoos Lake. The USGS also took measurements in the Okanagan River on May 10th and June 1st to verify gage rating during high discharge. High water levels have resulted in socio-economic impacts around Okanagan Lake (Impact will likely be in the \$20 Million range). The Town of Osoyoos implemented a sandbagging program with the help of BC government staff (BC FLNRO) and took other public safety precautions including closure of recreational boat launch sites and a strong public outreach and communication campaign. Impacts on the U.S. side of the border included flooding of a large portion of the municipal park/campground at the south end of Osoyoos Lake.

UPDATE ON IOLBC WEBSITE COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA COVERAGES

As the forecast for high water conditions became evident, the Board posted supplementary information on the Board's website to highlight the potential for higher than normal lake levels and the comparison of this season's levels with past (period of record) water level ranges. The IJC also issued a press release to provide additional public information and to highlight that Zosel dam was releasing as much water from Osoyoos Lake as possible. The Board will continue to update the website as conditions (and forecasts) change and will post photos of high-water conditions on the Board website.

Local media has been regularly covering the high water event, including articles in the Osoyoos Times and coverage on the local Global TV station for the Canadian side.

UPDATE ON DOCUMENTARY FILM

The project lead (Al Josephy – Washington State Department of Ecology) has asked for coordinated IJC and Board comments on the rough cut of the film. The U.S. Board secretary will coordinate Board comments and IJC review once the rough cut has been viewed by relevant personnel.

DISCUSSION OF BUFFER ZONE FOR OSOYOOS LAKE MILFOIL HERBICIDE APPLICATION.

The Board received information on local lakeshore resident concerns on the U.S. side of Osoyoos Lake regarding the proliferation of aquatic milfoil weeds (an invasive species), partly exacerbated by milfoil harvester debris that floats south of the Canadian zone, that cannot be treated with herbicide applications (as per normal WA state practice) within a 1300 ft buffer zone of the international border. They are seeking approval for a variance or permission to be able to use approved aquatic herbicide in the buffer zone. Board members identified relevant contact with BC agencies and the Okanagan Basin Water Board for further follow up by the Lake Osoyoos Association regarding the issue of herbicide application within the buffer zone and milfoil harvester operations.

ANNUAL IOLBC MEETING

The IOLBC's annual meeting is scheduled for October 17-18, 2017 in Osoyoos, BC. The Canadian Secretary will organize logistics for the Board meeting on the afternoon of October 17 followed by the public meeting in the evening. A field trip will also be organized for Board members. Board members discussed a field trip to view the dams that form the Okanagan River system and learn more about these operations as they control inflow to Osoyoos Lake, possibly combined with a salmon hatchery visit.

STATUS OF ACTION ITEMS

1. **In progress:** Board Secretaries will investigate funding of adding webcams to Zosel Dam.
2. **Completed:** U.S. Secretary conferred with the Applicant about the possibility of adding flows projected by the Applicant to the plot of real-time data with the rule curve hosted on the USGS website. Because of uncertainty in the timing of the freshet it is difficult to add this information to the real-time data plot.
3. **In progress:** Funds for staff gages at Zosel Dam has been requested from the IJC.
4. **In progress:** Board Secretaries will continue to look into availability of additional bathymetric data for Lake Osoyoos.
5. **In progress:** Board Secretaries will update IOLBC website with documentary film trailer.
6. **In progress:** Board Secretaries will prepare a bibliography to initiate the Organization step of the Preparedness Process proposed by CAWG.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

1. Board Secretaries will provide revised language for website information on continuation of high water conditions for review by selected Board members and posting to the website.
2. Board Secretaries will poll for a day in July to convene a meeting to review current rough cut version of the documentary film.
3. Board members to consider feasibility of establishing a 1894 Osoyoos Lake record flood high water mark.