

MINUTES

International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control Annual Meeting

Sonora Community Centre
Multipurpose Room 1
8505 68th Avenue
Osoyoos, BC

Tuesday October 20, 2009
2:30 PM

Attendance

	United States	Canada
Chairs	Dr. Cynthia Barton	Kirk Johnstone (host)
Members	Col. Anthony Wright Kris Kauffman	Glen Davidson Brian Symonds
Secretaries	Robert Kimbrough	Daniel Millar
Guests	Commissioners: Lyall Knott (Canada) Tom McAuley (Canadian Section, IJC), Dr. Mark Colosimo (US Section IJC), Larry Merkle (USACE), Ray Newkirk (WA Dept of Ecology), Amy Reese (USACE), Michael Laitta (IJC). <i>And joining the meeting in progress...</i> Brian Guy (Summit Environmental), Kathleen Porter (Sequoia Mediation), Michael Barber (Washington State University), Lai Tran (Washington State University), Marc Beutel (Washington State University)	

Minutes

Introductions

Chair Kirk Johnstone welcomed and led introductions of the Board members and guests.

Review of the Agenda

Two items were added to the agenda: a review of certain comments and questions from the public in last year's public meeting; and a discussion of letters from Wilbur Hallauer and Eike Scheffler.

Business from the Previous Meeting

Previous Meeting Action Items

4.3 *The Board agreed to hold a conference call to sort out details on selecting contractors to complete the studies...* Conference calls were held May 21 and September 23, 2009.

4.3 ...*Secretaries to proceed quickly with preparation of statements of work.* Statements of work were prepared by the Secretaries for studies 1,4,5,6,7,8. In addition, the IJC Canadian Section hired Denis Davis to expedite the RFP process for studies 7 & 8, while the US section engaged the Washington State Department of Ecology to develop a contract for studies 1, 4 & 5.

Kris Kauffman noted that the anticipated application from the Washington State government for a new Osoyoos Order (for 2013) is still outstanding.

Previous Public Meeting Comments

Mike Cantwell: Could the lake level be brought lower than usual in the winter to kill off milfoil? The Board noted that this action might be worth considering if there was sufficient community support

and evidence that the procedure would be successful. Section 10 of the 1982 orders makes allowance for such deviation from the rule curves. Col. Wright noted that the use of a combination of drawdown and freezing to control milfoil at other reservoirs had, at best, inconsistent results. Others pointed out that the water quality and ecological studies (studies 4 & 5) may address milfoil. Ray Newkirk noted that the lower the lake is drawn down in the winter, the greater the chance that it cannot be brought up again in the spring, making the procedure risky.

ACTION: Contact the Canadian and US agencies responsible for milfoil eradication to determine if the Board could be of assistance by organizing the suitable lowering of Osoyoos Lake levels.

Ralph Keuler: When an unusual operation of the lake or river is anticipated (including backwater from the Similkameen), a press release should be issued to inform the public. It is likely that such messaging via newspaper would be too slow for the event. BC Environment issues flood notices, and the Washington Department of Ecology issues notices when the water level is expected to drop. Generally, Board members felt that issuing high water or flood notices was outside the Board's purview.

**International Watershed Initiative proposal:
GIS Data Harmonization Workshop for the Okanogan Basin**

Michael Laitta gave the Board a presentation on GIS harmonization in the Okanogan. He described four reasons for harmonized hydrographic data: assist border communities with the development of integrated and sustainable decision making tools; reduce redundancy in the reporting and tracking of legal and policy issues; strengthen and formalize federal, regional and local stakeholder participation; and, allow stakeholders to look at transboundary basins and hydrography together for real world applications and analysis, offering a common base structure for other adaptive management practices to occur.

The harmonization process has four steps: establish a common baseline drainage area limit; harmonize these drainage area units where possible; assess the stream, rivers and water bodies, establishing flow path continuity; and, coordinate a regional/local hydrographic data harmonization workshop to refine hierarchical drainage areas. The goal of this hydrographic harmonization effort is a detailed, standardized, hydrologically-sound binational system of stream, river and watershed addresses. Without harmonized federal and local data, it is difficult for the scientific and engineering communities to integrate and deliver water information along our shared border.

The next steps in the project are as follows: with Board input, determine appropriate provincial and state participants for a hydrographic data harmonization workshop; determine a location, date and duration (3 full days recommended); and, assure international travel for selected participants.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Laitta described the workshop as very small, and very technical, in which a group of GIS professionals will align existing data. He suggested a time frame of February - March 2010 at a location dependent on participants...likely Spokane. He requested—and received—the Boards authorization to hold the workshop.

ACTION: The Board Secretaries will work with Mr. Laitta to verify the proposed attendees and define a desired outcome for the workshop.

New Business

Status of Active Studies in the Plan of Studies

Brian Guy and associates from Summit Environmental Consultants Ltd. are working on studies 7 & 8 in advance of the 2013 renewal of the IJC's Osoyoos Lake Orders. Michael Barber and associates from Washington State University are undertaking studies 1, 4 & 5. They each gave a dry run of their public presentation for the evening's meeting.

Plan of Studies	
1.	Lake levels during drought years
2.	Criteria for declaring drought
3.	Dates for changing lake levels
4.	Effects of the dam on water quality
5.	Including ecosystem requirements in the Order
6.	Impacts of climate change
7.	Factors that govern lake levels during floods
8.	Verifying the capacity of the outlet channel

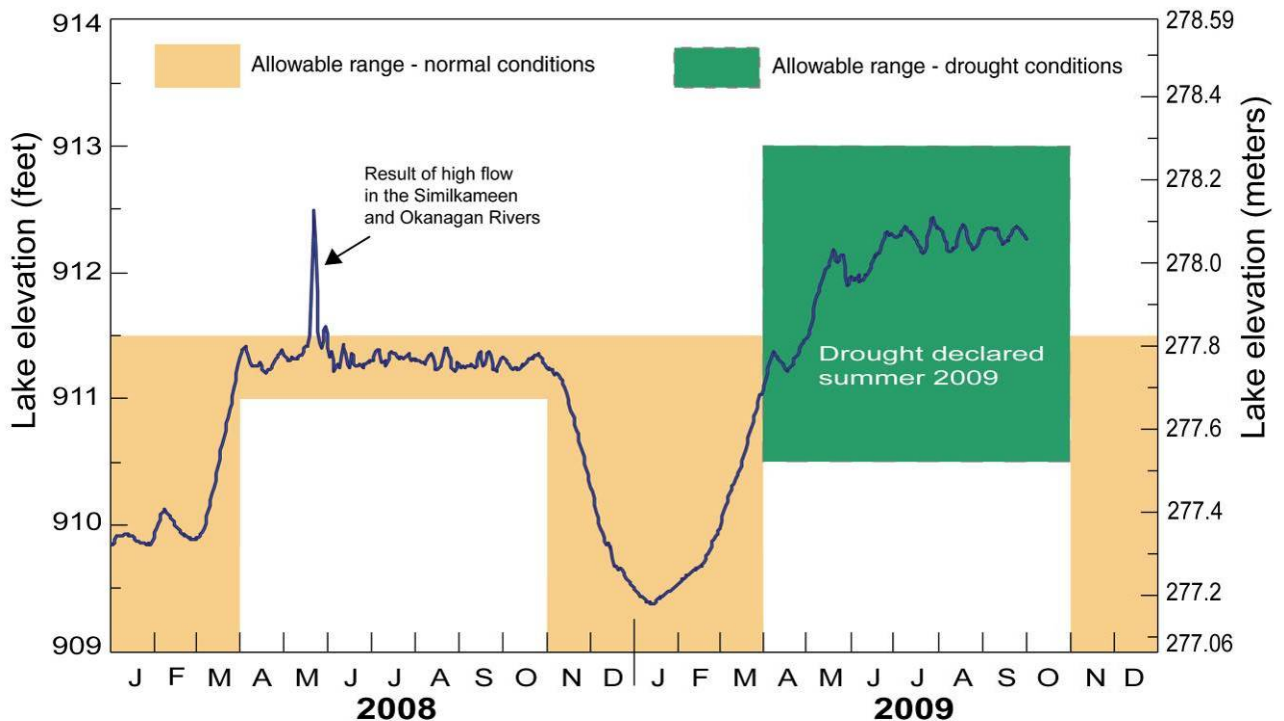
Dr. Guy is well advanced in his work, enough to suggest that the current operating regime for Zosel Dam could not be improved to reduce peak lake levels during flood events, although lowering the lake in advance of a flood could possibly delay the rise by up to a few days at most.

As Dr. Barber's studies are still in their infancy, he used the opportunity to introduce his research team to the Board, review the questions to be answered, and present an initial time line.

The Board asked that Dr. Guy and Dr. Barber remain non-technical in their evening presentations and avoid speculating on the results of the studies. To Dr. Guy's suggestion that the Board might benefit from a collective public consultation for all eight studies, the Board acknowledged the idea might be worth considering after the studies have matured.

Compliance with the IJC Orders in 2008-09

Robert Kimbrough presented a hydrograph of Osoyoos Lake levels. He observed that 2009 is a drought year, with all three criteria met: April to July flow of the Similkameen less than one million acre-feet (808,400 ac-ft); April to July inflow to Okanagan Lake less than 195,000 acre-feet (148,571 ac-ft); and, level of Okanagan Lake in June or July fails to reach 1,122.8 feet (1,122.4). As such, the allowable range of water levels in Osoyoos Lake from April through October is 910.5 to 913.0 feet. Mr. Newkirk noted that the Province and the State had agreed to keep the level of the lake below 912.5 feet during this period—in exchange for an equivalent volume of water from Okanagan Lake—in order to reduce grievances from Osoyoos lakeside residents. 2009 was the eleventh year since 1987 that the Board has declared drought, although on three occasions it was rescinded.



Status of Works and Maintenance at Zosel Dam

Ray Newkirk reported that Zosel Dam remains in good shape. Last year, he advised that the State would be seeking an independent inspection of the project. However, financial considerations have precluded this option, and as a result the State inspector of dams is scheduled to do an inspection rather than a third party. He noted that the State is considering changing the dam's risk status from intermediate to low.

ACTION: The Board requested that Mr. Newkirk provide members with a copy of the inspection report when available.

Mr. Newkirk reported that in 2009, flows in the river did not meet the requisite flow (2,500 cfs at or below lake level 913 feet) to demonstrate the conveyance of the Okanogan River between the lake and the dam per condition 3 of the 1985 Order. The last conveyance survey/analysis was conducted in 2006. Surveys must be conducted a maximum of 10 years apart, and five years apart if actual flows over the preceding years since the most recent survey have been insufficient to demonstrate adequate conveyance.

Another Science Workshop

Daniel Millar reminded Board members of the 2007 Osoyoos Lake Water Science Forum which was sponsored by the community and the IJC. He noted that on February 6, 2009, the Chair of the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society, Mark McKenney, had e-mailed the Board suggesting that his Society would be interested in helping to organize a 2009 Science Forum if the Board concurred. At the time, the Board responded that 2009 was a bit premature.

After discussion, the Board concluded that a five year separation between such fora was typical and appropriate. Without committing to a second forum, they noted that 2012 would be an opportune time as it would follow the completion of the Osoyoos Lake studies and precede the renewal of the Order in 2013.

Visit to Zosel Dam

The Board reviewed the schedule for the upcoming Zosel Dam tour. [On October 21, the day after this meeting, Board members visited Zosel Dam in Oroville, Washington, reviewing its operation and maintenance per section 14 and 15 of the 1982 Order.]

Letters Received from Wilbur Hallauer and Eike Scheffler

Prior to the meeting, the Board received letters from two community residents. Mr. Hallauer described the situation on Osoyoos Lake and the outlet channel prior to the construction of Zosel Dam in 1988. He was very supportive of the facility and its benefits. On the contrary, Mr. Scheffler expressed disappointment with the dam, the operation of the lake, and the Board.

Both letters were distributed, discussed and considered among Board members.

Review of the Agenda for the Public Meeting

Board members reviewed and approved the agenda for the evening's meeting with the public.

Adjourn