

## MINUTES

### International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control Public Meeting

Best Western Sunrise Inn  
5506 Main Street  
Osoyoos, BC

Tuesday October 4, 2005  
7:30 PM

#### Anticipated Attendance

	<b>United States</b>	<b>Canada</b>
Chairs	Dr. Cynthia Barton	Kirk Johnstone (host)
Members	Col. Debra Lewis Kris Kauffman	Glen Davidson Brian Symonds
Secretaries	Robert Kimbrough	Daniel Millar
Guests	Commissioners: Irene Brooks, Jack Blaney  Tom McAuley (Canadian Section, IJC), Dr. Mark Colosimo (US Section IJC), Larry Merkle (USACE), Marian Valentine (USACE), Ray Newkirk (WA Dept of Ecology), Chris Bull (Glenfir Resources)  Stan Storwick (Osoyoos), Ralph Longanecker (Tonasket), John Biele (Oroville), Guy Fisher (Oroville), Tom Scott (Oroville-Tonasket Irrigation District), Wilbur Hallauer (Oroville), Anita Lehman (Osoyoos), Fran Carter (Osoyoos), Walt Wiebe (Osoyoos), Gwen Monteith (Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society), Alan Hamlet (U. Washington), Bill Taylor (Environment Canada), Ruth Schiller (Osoyoos), Gerald Bruck (Osoyoos), Ken Brettmann (USACE), Joe Falkoski (Bridesville), Ron Chabot (Osoyoos), Seshu Vaddey (USACE), Eike Scheffler (Osoyoos)	

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions Kirk Johnstone  
Mr. Johnstone welcomed guests then introduced Board members, Commissioners, and staff.
2. Review of the agenda Kirk Johnstone
3. IJC and the Osoyoos Lake Orders – context Daniel Millar  
Mr. Millar gave a short presentation describing the International Joint Commission, its Osoyoos Lake Board of Control, and the Osoyoos Orders.
4. 2004 – 2005 Hydrologic conditions and drought operation Brian Symonds  
Mr. Symonds reviewed the year's hydrologic conditions in the Okanagan and Similkameen basins. Notes from this review are attached.
5. Washington Department of Ecology management of Osoyoos Lake levels in 2004 – 2005 Ray Newkirk  
Mr. Newkirk advised that he had received notice of the

Board's drought declaration in April. Subsequently, BC and Washington arranged an informal agreement to keep the level of Osoyoos Lake below 912.5 feet (one half foot below allowable) in exchange for an equivalent half foot of storage to be released from Okanogan Lake in May to benefit smolt migration.

Mr. Newkirk then advised guests of the high and low flows and water levels that have occurred in Okanogan River and Osoyoos Lake this year.

6. Update on Orders renewal in 2013 Cynthia Barton

- Introduction of the Plan of Study contractor

Dr. Barton reviewed progress toward the renewal of the Osoyoos Lake Orders, particularly the preparation of a Plan of Study to inform the renewal. She advised of a change in the process described in last year's meeting, in that contractor Chris Bull will be aiding the Board in the preparation of the plan.

Mr. Bull introduced his team and described how they will undertake the work—the preparation of a draft study plan. He emphasized that conferring with agencies, individuals and organizations was key to his approach and encouraged any of the guests with relevant issues to contact him. Mr. Bull's work is expected to be completed by February 28, 2006, and will include public consultation meetings in January and February.

7. Questions and comments from the public Cynthia Barton

[paraphrased]

Eike Scheffler: What are the terms of reference for Mr. Bull's contract? As poor water quality—a result of water blockage by Zosel Dam—is more important than water levels, water quality should be included in the work. Removal of the dam would help solve the problem.

Chris Bull: The work will be associated with dam operation and lake levels. However, all issues that are raised will be reported to the Commission.

Eike Scheffler: There is local concern about the FERC relicensing of Enloe Dam on the Similkameen and how it may affect use of the Similkameen's water in Canada.

Chris Bull: The Similkameen will be considered to the extent that it affects water levels in Osoyoos Lake.

Eike Scheffler: The next Orders for Osoyoos Lake should include water quality issues.

Joe Falkoski: Will the Commission study the impact of proposed parks on the watershed? For example, Parks tend to be areas of water retention that affect flow in the river.

Eike Scheffler: The Commission must consider the possibility that Chinook salmon may be listed as endangered and how that may place demands on water

levels in the lake.

Eike Scheffler: Why don't the Commission and Board broaden their mandate to include water quality, not solely water levels? We need to look at a new way to manage the lake.

Fran Carter: There is concern about muck in the lake, milfoil, etc. Twelve years ago, the lake was clean for swimming. Now there is a strong odour. Water quality has declined and is an important issue.

Ruth Schiller: The revised Order needs to include water quality.

Joe Falkoski: (To guests...) All of our concerns should be brought directly to Chris Bull so that he can include them in his work.

Eike Scheffler: Water quality must be front and centre to Mr. Bull's report and the renewal of the Order, not an appendix.

Commissioner Blaney: The Commission wrote to both the Canadian and US governments after last year's meeting to report the community's concern about poor water quality in Osoyoos Lake. But local and regional governments must accept significant accountability for this issue. The Commission does not have the authority to deal with all issues, but it can recommend action by others.

8.

Adjourn 9:00 PM

Mr. Johnstone advised guests that this would be Col. Lewis' final year as a US member of the Osoyoos Board. He thanked Col. Lewis and guests, then adjourned the meeting.

A Report to the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control

Review of Hydrologic Conditions  
in the Okanagan and Similkameen Watersheds  
for the Period October 1 2004 to September 30, 2005

Brian Symonds, P. Eng.  
Ministry of Environment  
October 4, 2005

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Streamflows and lake levels in the Okanagan and Similkameen watersheds were at or near normal in the fall of 2004.

Winter streamflows and snow accumulation are both impacted by temperatures and precipitation during the late fall and winter period. For the period November through March temperatures across southern BC were generally around or above seasonal normals. Precipitation during the same period was highly variable as illustrated by the precipitation recorded in Kelowna (Okanagan) and Princeton (Similkameen) being 107% and 75% of normal respectively. Winter streamflows throughout the region were generally above normal due to the fall and winter rainfall and the higher winter snowmelt associated with the warmer temperatures. This was particularly noticeable in drainages located at the low to mid elevations. Observed inflows to Okanagan Lake for the five month period were 272% of normal.

In addition to the overall mild weather patterns discussed above there was an intense Pacific frontal system that affected south and central BC during the last half of January. This system produced unusually elevated freezing levels and precipitation which resulted in significant snowmelt and runoff across the region. The rapid increases in runoff led to severe ice jamming on many streams including the Similkameen River in and around the Keremeos area.

On April 1, 2005 the Snow Water Index for the Okanagan-Kettle was 82% of normal with only one station in the Okanagan being above normal. In general snow conditions at lower elevations and on the south and west sides were in the 45-75% range with somewhat higher values being reported at higher elevations and along the north and east sides of the basin. In the Similkameen watershed the Snow Water Index for April 1 was only 44%. This was the lowest April 1 index value ever recorded for the Similkameen.

Reflecting the record low snowpack in the Similkameen watershed the April to July volume forecast at Nighthawk was 620,000 ac-ft. This forecast was less than the 1 million ac-ft specified in Criterion 8(a) of the 1982 "Order of Approval"

and a drought was declared for Osoyoos Lake operations on April 8, 2005. The observed April to July flow at Nighthawk was consistent with the forecast and the declaration remained in effect throughout the 2005 season.

Table 1 summarizes the drought criteria and hydrologic conditions in 2005.

**Table 1: Summary of drought criteria and hydrologic conditions in 2005**

<b>Drought Criteria</b>	<b>Forecast value</b>	<b>Actual value (preliminary)</b>	<b>Drought criteria met?</b>
Flow in the Similkameen less than 1 million ac-ft	620,000 ac-ft	622,230 ac-ft	Yes
Inflow to Okanagan Lake less than 195,000 ac-ft	396,000 ac-ft	328,900 ac-ft	No
Level of Okanagan Lake less than 1,122.8 ft	1,123.7 ft	1,123.9 ft	No

2005 spring freshet occurred earlier than normal on most streams. Initially there was some concern about the rate of recession of streams in both the Similkameen and South Okanagan however, rainfall in the late spring and early summer proved sufficient to maintain streams at reasonable levels into mid summer, easing the concerns.

Unregulated late summer and early fall streamflows have generally been below normal due to below normal precipitation during August and September. Okanagan Lake and River are currently in the normal fall ranges.