

Meeting Minutes

Annual Public Meeting, International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC)

Tuesday, October 17, 2017
6:00 – 8:15 PM

Sonora Center, Osoyoos, BC.

List of Acronyms

IJC	International Joint Commission
IOLBC	International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control
OBWB	Okanagan Basin Water Board
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
WADOE	Washington State Department of Ecology
BCFLNRO	BC Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Membership

	United States	Canada
Co-Chairs	Cynthia Barton	Bruno Tassone (host)
Members	John Arterburn Col. Mark Gerald Kris Kauffman Ford Waterstrat	Ted White (<i>absent</i>) Sue McKortoff Brian Symonds Anna Warwick Sears
Secretaries	Andrew Gendaszek	Gwyn Graham
IJC representatives	Rich Moy (Commissioner, U.S. Section), Wayne Jenkinson (Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section), Mark Colosimo (Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section)	
Guests	Al Josephy (WADOE), Jiri Bakala (Ascent Films, Inc.), George Kaminsky (WADOE).	

The meeting was opened at 6:00 pm by Bruno Tassone (Canadian Board Chair) with welcoming remarks and introductions of the Board members and IJC Commissioner Rich Moy.

Bruno Tassone provided an overview presentation of the IOLBC and IJC Orders for Osoyoos Lake, including background information on the Boundary Waters Treaty and its relevance to Osoyoos Lake. The rule curve conditions of the IJC Order for Osoyoos Lake was also explained and the role of Washington State Department of Ecology as owner of Zosel Dam and Applicant to the IJC Order.

Canadian Board member, Brian Symonds provided a brief overview of the hydrology of Osoyoos Lake and the broader Okanagan Lake and Similkameen River systems, describing the late snow accumulation in spring, the high rainfall amounts in spring and the subsequent extremely dry summer conditions. He explained that Osoyoos Lake levels exceeded the rule curve during the freshet period (early summer) due to high inflows from the Okanagan River system (high discharge from Okanagan Lake) and the backwater effect from high flows in the Similkameen River at the downstream confluence with the Okanagan River (reducing discharge

from Osoyoos Lake). Given the natural drivers to the high water levels and that Zosel dam was maximizing discharge through the dam, the exceedance is permitted under the IJC Orders and not a compliance issue.

Question from public: Is the level at Zosel Dam the same at the upper part of the Lake? Answer: Subtle elevation difference under normal conditions, water flows from north to south through the lake; these conditions persisted through the year.

Comment from the public: Flat water levels on Osoyoos Lake have encouraged too much development too close to the lake with poor consideration of risk.

Question from public: Is there any control of the Similkameen?

Answer: No storage/flow regulation on the Similkameen River; the proposed Pinceton Dam (Fortis BC) could possibly shave some of the peak flow off the Similkameen, but there's no indication that this project is going ahead at present; Enloe Dam (on U.S. side of border) is a run-of-the-river dam with little storage. There is no diversion from the Similkameen to Osoyoos Lake.

Question from public: Is there a plan to draw down lake in advance of a high snowpack? This was asked by a person who had water seepage problems in their basement during the freshet period.

Answer: There's typically a small window of time to shave off a little bit of the flood peak elevation. The system is affected by conditions in the Similkameen and Okanagan Lake (which had a very unusual and difficult-to-predict inflow pattern this year). When the lake level is high, the basement seepage can be caused by rising water-table (groundwater) conditions in the near-shore area.

George Kaminsky (WADOE) provided a presentation of recent Okanogan River channel survey work, showing digital visualization images of variation in bathymetry and channel profile from the outlet of Osoyoos Lake along the Okanogan River to slightly downstream of Zosel Dam. Presentation shows extent of Tonasket Creek fan, slightly upstream of Zosel Dam.

Question from the public: Is there a survey map pre-Zosel Dam?

Answer: There is a pre-dam map but comparisons weren't made using this new survey data although similar benchmarks for both surveys were referenced with a high level of accuracy.

Comment from the public: Amazing to see underwater expression of oxbow channels.

Response: Channel morphology (shape) is very complex and interesting.

Note: The Board will seek to add the visualization of the channel survey to the Board website.

Question from the public: How much has Osoyoos Lake silted up?

Answer: Past data is based on 7 transects across the lake for bathymetry; so data is sparse for assessing changes based on the current survey that only covered the outlet of Osoyoos Lake.

The meeting hosted the debut screening of the recently produced documentary "A River Film" with introduction by the lead producer, Al Joesphy (WADOE) and Jiri Bakela (Director/Cinematographer).

Comment from public: Excellent film. Please make copies available for high schools, elementary schools, and Okanagan College. Youth need to see it.

Comment from public: Movie is well balanced and not too technical, yet technically accurate.

Comment from public: Put it on YouTube.

Response: A distribution plan is being developed and will eventually allow for internet access.

Comment from audience: What is our ability to rent it and show at events?

Response: It will be made available for distribution and for local events (there is a screening at the Oliver Theatre next week co-organized by the OBWB). Anna Warwick Sears can be contacted.

Comment from audience: Show it to a few politicians.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 PM