

## Meeting Minutes

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

Tuesday, September 17, 2019  
6:30 – 8:30 PM

Sonora Community Centre, 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
BCFLNRORD	BC Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada

#### Membership

	<b>United States</b>	<b>Canada</b>
Co-Chairs	Cynthia Barton	Bruno Tassone (host)
Members	John Arterburn (absent) Col. Mark Gerald (absent) Kris Kauffman	Ted White Sue McKortoff Brian Symonds Anna Warwick Sears
Secretaries	Andrew Gendaszek	Martin Suchy
IJC representatives	Lance Yohe (Commissioner, U.S. Section), Wayne Jenkinson (Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section), Mark Colosimo (Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section), Paul Allen (Communications, Canadian Section), Caron DeMars (Senior Advisor, U.S. Section), Adam Greeley (AAAC Fellow, U.S. Section)	
Guests	Al Josephy (WADOE), Felicia Minotti (Global Affairs Canada), Doug Walker (U.S. State Department)	

#### **Welcome, Introductions, and Review of Agenda**

The meeting was opened at 6:30 p.m. by Bruno Tassone (Board Chair, U.S. Section) with welcoming remarks and introductions of the board members and IJC Commissioner Lance Yohe who was in attendance. He then reviewed the agenda for the Public Meeting.

#### **IJC Orders of Approval**

Bruno Tassone presented an overview of the IOLBC and the IJC Orders of Approval for Osoyoos Lake and discussed allowable lake levels under the rule curve established under the 2013 Supplementary Orders of Approval. He described the system of dams regulating the Okanagan Basin, including Zosel Dam, which controls the level of Osoyoos Lake and is operated by the Washington State Department of Ecology, the Applicant to the IJC Orders of Approval.

## Hydrological Conditions and Lake Levels in 2019

Canadian Board member, Brian Symonds, provided a brief overview of the hydrology of Osoyoos Lake, the Okanagan/Okanogan River, and the Similkameen River during 2019. Low snowpack contributed to low runoff in the Okanagan and Similkameen River Basins. While drought criteria were met in the Similkameen Basin, drought criteria were not met in the Okanagan Basin and therefore a drought pursuant to Condition 8 of the IJC Orders of Approval for Osoyoos Lake was not declared. Concerns about adequate water supply to meet for irrigation and instream flows for fish in Washington led Washington State Department of Ecology to apply for a Condition 10 variance to operate under the drought rule curve. The decision was made before the end of the spring freshet so that water could be stored in Osoyoos Lake. Zosel Dam operators tried to keep as much water stored in the lake as allowed under drought rule curve. Several small exceedances occurred in July and August during rainfall events and gates were opened and closed to bring lake levels back into compliance.

## Ecological Operations

Al Josephy (Washington State Department of Ecology) presented a plan to release water in September that was stored in Osoyoos Lake because of the Condition 10 variance. As a result of increased storage in Osoyoos Lake in 2019, there is a unique opportunity to release an extra foot of water to benefit fisheries. Ecology consulted state and tribal natural resource agencies who adapted a plan to create a 24-hour release of 1,100 cfs downstream of Zosel Dam to flush fine-sediment from gravels used by spawning steelhead and Chinook salmon in the Okanogan River downstream of Zosel Dam. High discharges typically occur during the spring freshet when backwater conditions occur resulting in the accumulation of fine-grained sediments. Fisheries biologists will monitor the change in fine-grained sediment.

## Special Projects Updates

Martin Suchy (Board Secretary, Canadian Secretary) presented several Board projects that have been completed or are in process. A high-water monument was installed near the Memorial Fountain in Osoyoos in March 2019 and a similar monument will be installed in Oroville in Fall 2019. The USGS now streams a webcam image of Zosel Dam, which is accessible from the USGS Osoyoos Lake gage webpage. The Board also applied for funding to develop a hydrologic model of the Similkameen River Basin, which will complement a model of the Okanagan Basin to analyze the impact of climate change on the IJC Orders of Approval for Osoyoos Lake.

## Public Comments

Question from Public: Why were lake levels higher this year?

Response: Lake levels were higher in 2019 because a Condition 10 variance was granted to the Applicant so that Zosel Dam could be operated to maintain lake levels within the Condition 8 drought rule curve. This allowed storage of water to supply irrigation users and ensure adequate instream flows for fish.

Question from Public: I enjoyed the Science Forum that was put together several years ago and would like it to be hosted again.

Response: The Board will look into hosting the Science Forum in the future.

Comment from Public: Can Similkameen Reservoir be created to address flooding seen in 2017 and 2018?

Response: A reservoir in the Similkameen Basin to prevent flooding is not feasible because the storage capacity needed exceeds what could reasonably be built.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 PM**