

## Canada releases pulse flows to the Okanagan River, starting August 29

Starting August 29, 2016, and continuing for about eight days, Canadian authorities will increase flows from Lake Okanagan to assist migrating salmon. This increase is expected to raise Osoyoos Lake levels temporarily by about 3-4 inches. For more information, see [Ecology News Release](#).

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## May 11, 2016: Drought Criteria not met in 2016

The International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (Board) has reviewed the criteria for drought conditions in the Okanagan Valley per Condition 8 of the International Joint Commission's 2013 Supplementary Order of Approval. Based on water-supply forecasts as of early April, the Board has decided that the criteria for a drought to be declared were not met in 2016.

The Order states that for drought conditions to be declared, criteria (a) and either (b i) or (b ii) have to be met:

(a) the volume of flow in the Similkameen River at Nighthawk, Washington for the period April through July as calculated or forecasted by United States authorities is less than 1.0 million acre-feet; and

(b i) the net inflow to Okanagan Lake for the period April through July as calculated or forecasted by Canadian authorities is less than 195,000 acre-feet; or

(b ii) the level of Okanagan Lake fails to or is forecasted by Canadian authorities to fail to reach during June or July elevation 1122.6 feet Canadian Geodetic Survey Datum.

Recent forecasts exceeded each of criteria (a), (b i), and (b ii). Specifically, on April 13, 2016, the NOAA Northwest River Forecast Center forecasted a **water supply** of 1.587 million acre-feet at the Similkameen River at Nighthawk for April through July at the 50% exceedance level. In early April 2016, the Canadian River Forecast Centre forecasted a net inflow to Okanagan Lake for the period April through July of 618,000 acre-feet, and the Canadian system operator forecasts that Okanagan Lake levels will reach 1,123.7 feet in June or July.

The Board will continue to monitor the hydrologic flow and lake-level projections and will issue notification should there be any change in its assessment of the drought criteria.

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## April 20, 2016: Osoyoos Lake levels are rising! Early onset of 2016 freshet.

The spring **runoff** has started earlier this year due to the above average temperatures over the last few weeks. In response to the warmer weather, mountain snowpacks are now melting and causing water levels to rise in streams, rivers and lakes throughout the Okanagan and Similkameen watersheds, including Osoyoos Lake. **The level of Osoyoos Lake is rising rapidly and expected to continue to rise over the coming days and weeks.** The flow control gates on Zosel Dam have been fully open as of April 19<sup>th</sup>, to allow as much **outflow** from Osoyoos Lake as possible. The rate of rise and level reached by Osoyoos Lake will be dependent upon the weather (i.e., temperatures and **precipitation**) during this

period and is difficult to predict, but **lake-shore residents, property owners and others who might typically be impacted by higher spring lake levels should take their normal precautions to reduce the risk of impacts due to high water levels on Osoyoos Lake at this time.**

Additional updates on conditions will be provided throughout freshet as appropriate.

In the meantime, in addition to the real-time Osoyoos Lake water level information provided at the top of this page, the following websites provide additional information:

[BC River Forecast Centre](#)

[NOAA Northwest River Forecast Center](#)

[Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen](#)

[Town of Osoyoos](#)

[Washington State Department of Ecology – Zosel Dam](#)