

INTERNATIONAL OSOYOOS LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL
Conference Call
Wednesday March 11, 2020 at 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM PDT

BOARD MEMBERS

Cindi Barton	Chair, U.S. Section
Dave Hutchinson	Chair, Canadian Section
John Arterburn (Absent)	Board Member, U.S. Section
Col. Mark Gerald (Absent)	Board Member, U.S. Section
Kris Kauffman	Board Member, U.S. Section
Arnie Marchand	Board Member, U.S. Section
Ted White	Board Member, Canadian Section
Sue McKortoff	Board Member, Canadian Section
Brian Symonds	Board Member, Canadian Section
Anna Warwick Sears	Board Member, Canadian Section

BOARD STAFF and BOARD MEMBER ASSISTANTS

Andy Gendaszek	Secretary, U.S. Section
Martin Suchy (Absent)	Secretary, Canadian Section
Kevin Shaffer	Technical Assistant to Colonel Mark Gerald
Rebecca Koch	Acting Secretary, Canadian Section

IJC REPRESENTATIVES and GUESTS

Wayne Jenkinson (Absent)	Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Mark Colosimo (Absent)	Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section
Paul Allen	Communications, Canadian Section
Caron DeMars	Senior Advisor, U.S. Section

1. Approval of the Agenda

The meeting began at 10:00 and was led by Dave Hutchinson (Canadian Co-Chair). The meeting agenda was accepted with no changes required.

2. Approval of December Conference Call Minutes

The Board reviewed the December 10, 2019 conference call minutes. Anna Warwick Sears moved to approve the December conference call minutes, seconded by Sue McKortoff. December conference call minutes were approved with no changes.

3. Hydrologic Conditions and Climate Forecast

Hydrology and Weather

Osoyoos Lake level was 910.11 ft on March 9th and has been within the Condition 7 “normal rule curve” since the December conference call. The March 9th lake level was slightly lower than the historic mean of 910.84 ft, but was above the historic minimum of 909.11 ft. The Osoyoos Lake level has been increasing since February 12th following the Applicant’s plan to ramp up from winter lake levels. The discharge of the Similkameen was 801 cfs on March 9th and has been above the historic mean since

January 2nd. Discharge at the Nighthawk gage was disrupted by ice from January 13-26. The Okanagan Lake level also decreased since January 7th and was 1120.74 ft on March 9th in anticipation of higher-than-normal spring runoff. Consequently, discharge of the Okanagan River down stream of Okanagan Lake was higher than the historic mean: on March 9th, discharge of the Okanagan River at Penticton and Oliver was 1134.6 cfs and 1174.5 cfs, respectively. Discharge of the Okanagan River at Oroville was 1225.2 cfs on March 9th, which was also above the historic mean. The formation of an ice jam during cold weather in January reduced discharge in the Okanagan River downstream of Okanagan Lake and caused a concomitant increase in level of Osoyoos Lake until the ice jam broke up when the temperature increased later in January.

Snowpack

According to the BC River Forecast Centre, the snow water equivalent increased in the Okanagan and Similkameen Basins from lower-than-normal snowpack conditions observed in early winter as a result of series of winter storms during January and February. Okanagan Basin snowpack increased from 91% of normal on January 1st to 115% of normal on March 1st. Similkameen Basin snowpack similarly increased from 75% of normal on January 1st to 112% of normal on March 1st. As of March 9th, the Mission Creek snow-pillow station in the Okanagan Basin was within the top quartile (75-100th percentile) of the historical range and the Blackwall Peak snow-pillow station was within the third quartile (50-75th percentile) of the historic range.

Outlook

Above normal snowpacks in the Similkameen and Okanagan Basins decrease the likelihood that a drought pursuant to Condition 8 of the IJC Orders for Osoyoos Lake will be declared this year. Seasonal forecasts from Environment and Climate Change Canada favor an increased likelihood of near normal winter/spring (March-April-May) temperatures. The NOAA Climate Prediction Center forecasts a 60% chance of ENSO-neutral through the Northern Hemisphere spring 2020, and a 50% chance of it continuing through summer 2020.

4. Engaging Tribes and First Nations

Arnie Marchand, Board Member U.S. Section, presented an idea to engage Tribes and First Nations in the Osoyoos area. The IJC has a team that is working on engagement with Indigenous People for Transboundary Waters. Most of the team's work has been with Indigenous Peoples from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic coast in Canada and to a lesser extent with the Tribes in the U.S. The IJC team will be available to the Board as a resource to support. Mr. Marchand indicated that the Indigenous People from Saskatchewan to the Pacific have not been as actively engaged with Transboundary Waters' issues as the Indigenous People in the East. This means that the engagement strategy for the Board will differ from the other boards in the East. He recommends reaching out to the technical people first and allow them to brief the council on the issues. The Board discussed past engagement and determined that a new engagement strategy needs to be developed. Andy Gendaszek, IOLBC Secretary U.S. Section, and Mr. Marchand will draft an engagement strategy for the Board prior to the June conference call. As part of this engagement strategy, Board members will informally meet with representatives of the Colville Tribe and Okanagan Nation Alliance.

5. IWI Similkameen Model Update

The competitive process for the Similkameen hydrologic model was completed by the IJC, which received two strong bids. A review committee consisting of technical experts evaluated each proposal and recommended the Similkameen hydrologic contract be awarded to NHC. The Board will monitor the progress made by the contractor through a sub committee consisting of IOLBC members and

secretaries. The contractor will be providing a model update to the Board at the annual meeting in the fall with the final model and report delivered to the IOLBC in 2021. A subsequent, not-yet-funded phase of this project will be to merge the Similkameen model with a separate model that the contractor is developing for the Okanagan Basin.

6. Review of 2019 Board Annual Report

The Board was provided with a draft of the 2019 Board Annual Report to the IJC for review. Members of the Board were requested to provide comments to the Board Secretaries by March 25. The secretaries will reconcile the comments received, then distribute an updated draft to the Board for approval prior to submission to the IJC. The annual report serves as an important record of the Board's activities and documentation of Board decisions.

7. Fall 2020 Board Meeting Update

The Fall 2020 Annual Board and Public Meeting will be hosted by the US Section in September in Oroville, WA. The U.S. Secretary will arrange the Board meeting to be held at the border station office and the public meeting to be held at the Oroville High School gymnasium as has been done in previous years. The Board will be updated with details for accommodations and the field trip at the June conference call.

8. Fall 2021 Science Forum Planning

The last Osoyoos Lake Science Forum was held in 2015. In addition to discussion of water management and lake levels, previous Science Forums included discussion of topics such as water quality and fisheries outside of the Board's mandate from the IJC. The Okanagan Basin Water Board's website includes a page dedicated to the 2015 Science Forum that contains the details of the 2015 Science Forum (i.e. budget breakdown, steering committee members, venue, etc.). The Board is interested in reaching out to the coordinator of the 2015 Science Forum for the 2021 Science Forum.

9. Quarterly Conference Call and Annual Meeting Dates

The dates for the Board quarterly conference calls and the Annual Board and Public meetings are listed below. A tentative conference call is scheduled for April 15 at 10:00 PDT to assess Similkameen and Okanagan Lake drought criteria, if necessary. The Board secretaries will try to reschedule the remaining 2020 Board quarterly conference calls to allow for maximum participation by Board members.

- March 11, 2020 @ 10:00 PDT
- June 10, 2020 @ 10:00 PDT
- September 9, 2020 @ 10:00 PDT
- September 15, 2020 Annual Board and Public meeting in Oroville
- December 9, 2020 @ 10:00 PST

10. Water-level and discharge alerts from USGS

The USGS offers email alerts when specified criteria of hydrologic conditions are met at USGS gages. Board members may be interested when Osoyoos Lake levels are above or below the rule curve or when the Similkameen River discharge exceeds about 18,000 cfs and backwater starts to affect outflow from Osoyoos Lake. ECCC does not offer a similar service for Canadian hydrometric stations. Andy Gendaszek, US Secretary, will distribute instructions to the Board on how to sign up for the USGS email alerts. Dave Hutchinson, Canadian Co-Chair, will send out information on where the Board can find the Canadian data.

11. Round Table

Col. Mark Geraldi, Board Member U.S. Section, will be completing his term in July and will recommend that his successor for Commander of the USACE-Seattle District, Col. Bulluck, assume his position on the IOLBC.

The Board has received the schedule for the IJC Spring Semi-Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. COVID-19 may prevent travel for in-person appearances by Board members and the meeting may be changed to a virtual meeting.

The USGS began an assessment of metals in sediments impounded behind Enloe Dam in Fall 2019. Thirty-five foot cores were collected in Fall 2019 and are currently being analyzed with results planned for publication at the end of 2020. Additional funding was received by the USGS to measure trace element and metal concentrations in water, sediment, and fish tissue in the Similkameen River at the international border.

ACTION ITEMS

In Progress

1. Guidelines for U.S. Department of State (DOS) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) participation as observers for quarterly conference calls and meetings. Board Secretaries waiting for official guidance document for IJC, which is being delayed due to lack of Commissionaires. Continue with interim guidance. Updated guidance document being prepared.
2. Board Secretaries will add Osoyoos Lake inundation maps to IOLBC webpage. Inundation maps are in the process of being created. Will need to link to those maps once they are completed.
3. Board Secretaries to add update on Board website to indicate installation of new High-Water Monuments. Waiting for the US Veterans Memorial Park in order to update the website. Town of Oroville is ready to do whatever they need to do to assist with this.
4. Tidy up the website (i.e. News releases on water level this past summer).
5. IWI 2020-2025 Work Plan proposal process needs feedback.
6. Update the website with the meeting minutes that were approved at the December 2019 call.
7. Investigate setting up automatic email notifications to Board Members when USGS discharge/level thresholds are exceeded.
8. Improve knowledge of the Osoyoos lake water balance (both US and Canadian side)

Completed (since last quarterly call)

1. IWI RFP for the Similkameen model
2. Board Secretaries will continue to look into availability of additional bathymetric data for Lake Osoyoos. Lidar has been sent to Kevin Shaffer, and Joe at the department of ecology.

Previously discussed option for IWI project of bathymetric survey of the low level elevations.

3. Board Secretaries will update IOLBC website with documentary film trailer, vignettes. Working with IJC consultant to upload videos. Could also just add YouTube link to board website.
4. Board Secretaries will prepare a bibliography to initiate the Organization step of the Preparedness Process proposed by CAWG.
5. Arnie Marchand details need to update on the IOLBC website.
6. IWI Similkameen Hydrologic Model RFP to be sent to consultants in December.
7. Develop a sub-committee for 2021 Osoyoos Lake Science Forum, and start looking for funding.

New Items

1. Provide comments on the IOLBC annual report to the Board Secretaries by March 25. Board Secretaries will submit the report to the IJC by April 10.
2. Board Secretaries will send out a doodle poll to the board members to determine a time for the quarterly calls that will work for all of the board members.
3. Develop workplan to engage Tribes and First Nations within the Okanagan/Okanogan and Similkameen Basins.
4. Andy Gendaszek, Secretary U.S. Section, will send out instruction on how to sign up for USGS alerts to the Board. Dave Hutchinson, Chair Canadian Section, will distribute information on where to find similar data on the Canadian side.