

INTERNATIONAL OSOYOOS LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL
Conference Call
Tuesday December 7, 2021 at 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM PST

BOARD MEMBERS

Dave Hutchinson	Chair, Canadian Section
Cindi Barton	Chair, 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
John Arterburn	Board Member, U.S. Section
Col. Xander Bullock	Board Member, U.S. Section
Kris Kauffman	Board Member, U.S. Section
Arnie Marchand	Board Member, U.S. Section

BOARD STAFF and BOARD MEMBER ASSISTANTS

Andy Gendaszek	Secretary, U.S. Section
Martin Suchy	Secretary, Canadian Section
Ken Brettmann	Technical Assistant to Colonel Xander Bullock

IJC REPRESENTATIVES

Paul Allen	Communications, Canadian Section
Rob Caldwell	Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Adam Greely	Senior Advisor, U.S. Section

1. Approval of the Agenda

The meeting was led by Cindi Barton and the agenda was approved with minor typographical errors corrected.

2. Approval of September Conference Call Minutes

The Board reviewed the September 7, 2021, conference call minutes, which were approved after removal of multiple mentions of the IJC Commissioners. Anna Warwick Sears moved to approve the minutes and Sue McKortoff seconded the approval.

3. Approval of Annual Board and Public Meetings Minutes

The Board reviewed the Annual Board Meeting minutes. Dave Hutchinson moved to approve the Annual Board Meeting minutes and Sue McKortoff seconded the motion to approve. Anna moved to approve the Annual Public Meeting minutes with the correction of one typographical error. Col. Bullock seconded approval of the Public Meeting minutes.

4. Hydrologic Conditions and Climate

Martin Suchy (Canadian Section Secretary) provided an overview of the fall hydrologic and climatic conditions with a focus on flooding following an atmospheric river event in November. Parts of the lower mainland of British Columbia (e.g., Abbotsford and Vancouver) recorded their wettest November within the historical record, but precipitation was close to normal within the Okanagan Basin. Record precipitation during the November atmospheric river event occurred within the Similkameen River basin, particularly within the basin of its tributary the Tulameen River.

Flood frequency analysis at ECCC hydrometric stations showed flooding within the Similkameen River ranged between a 50- to 100-year recurrence interval whereas 1000-year or greater recurrence interval flooding was measured in the Tulameen River where focused precipitation occurred. Major channel changes as well as landslides occurred within the Tulameen River during this event. Measurements were taken at ECCC gages during the peak of the Similkameen River flooding and technicians are analyzing these measurements to finalize measured discharges and revisions to preliminary discharges may occur. Velocities as high as 5.7 meters per second were measured during these events. Discharge was less at the downstream USGS gage at the Similkameen River at Nighthawk relative to the ECCC hydrometric stations upstream due to dissipation of the flood peak and out-of-channel storage upstream. Discharge at the Similkameen River at Nighthawk was also measured at the peak of the event and the flow was confined to within the channel and there is good confidence about the measured peak discharge at this station.

Increased discharge and stage of the Similkameen River caused backwater and backflow during the November flooding such that Similkameen River water entered Osoyoos Lake. Maximum reverse discharge recorded on November 16, 2021, was -398 cubic feet per second, which led to a rise in Osoyoos Lake levels for several days. The last time a reversal of flow was measured at the USGS gage at the Okanagan River at Oroville was in the 1970's during the spring freshet. The November 2021 reversal of flow was the first occurrence of this during the fall. Zosel dam gates were opened after peak Osoyoos Lake level such that the lake could naturally drain and were lowered once Osoyoos Lake declined to the targeted elevation.

Okanagan Lake did not increase greatly during the November storm event because of lower precipitation rates in the Okanagan basin than the Similkameen basin. Okanagan Lake levels gradually recovered from near historical lows during the summer as runoff was stored.

Early December snowpack was below normal within both the Okanagan and Similkameen basins. The long term climate forecast is for a high chance of La Nina conditions during the winter and a moderate chance of La Nina conditions during the spring. La Nina conditions imply wetter and cooler conditions for the Similkameen and Okanagan basins.

5. 2022 Work Plan Update

The Board reviewed the 2022 workplan and updated the Board's core activities and priorities through 2022. The Secretaries will work on updating the 2022 Work Plan and distribute it to the Board for approval.

For the core activities, a bullet point will be added to indicate that the Board will submit proposals to the IJC IWI program to support projects that address emergent or ongoing concerns of the Board. In addition, estimated costs of the IWI projects will be included within the workplan to help IJC budgeting. This item will replace Appendix C within the previous workplans.

For special projects, the proposal to study the formation and occurrence of ice jams and measure the bathymetry of Osoyoos Lake will be added to the 2022 workplan. The Board needs to include these items within the workplan prior to applying for funding from the IWI program, which is a new requirement of the IWI program. The Zosel Dam operational model priority will be updated to include the addition of updated bathymetry obtained in summer 2021 and specificity about using the staff gages to collect data at Zosel Dam to inform the model.

The communications plan will be revised to remove reference to the development of an email distribution list, which has not occurred. Instead, the Board will work with the IJC to distribute news releases to U.S. and Canadian media.

6. Osoyoos Lake Science Forum Updates

Anna Warwick Sears provided updates on the Osoyoos Lake Science Forum scheduled for April 2022. The program committee is meeting in December and the program has been set. Fundraising efforts have also been successful and the budget for the forum is complete. Due to the pandemic, travel restrictions for several agencies have not yet eased.

7. IWI Ice Jam Proposal

The ice jam proposal was submitted to the fall IJC-IWI proposals and the Secretaries are waiting to receive the IWI program's review. The Secretaries will respond to conditions of the review in coordination with the Board.

8. Scheduled 2022 Meetings

Prior to the December conference all, no concurrence about the 2022 Board conference call schedule was reached. The Secretaries will work with the Board to find dates for the 2022 Board conference calls in the coming weeks.

9. IJC MS Teams Account

Board Secretaries are working with IJC to develop access to an IJC MS Teams account and once establish plan to use it for Board communications.

10. Round Table

The IJC newsletter recently featured an article about the 75th anniversary of the Osoyoos Lake Board of Control.

Reversal of flow due to flooding of the Similkameen River was captured by drone footage obtained by biologists from the Colvile Confederated Tribes. This footage was picked up by some news outlets in their coverage of the November flooding.