

INTERNATIONAL OSOYOOS LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL
Conference Call
Tuesday June 8, 2021 at 9:00 PM – 11:00 AM PST

BOARD MEMBERS

Dave Hutchinson (meeting Chair)	Chair, Canadian Section
Cindi Barton	Chair, U.S. Section
Ted White	Board Member, Canadian Section
Sue McKortoff (absent)	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 (absent)	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
Lt. Col. Mark DeSantis	Representative for Colonel Xander Bullock
Ken Brettmann	Technical Assistant to Colonel Xander Bullock

IJC REPRESENTATIVES and GUESTS

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

1. Review and Approval of the Agenda

The conference call was started at 9:05 AM and led by Dave Hutchinson (Canadian Co-Chair). The agenda was reviewed and accepted with no changes.

2. Introductions (Ken Brettmann and Rod Caldwell)

Rob Caldwell introduced himself as the incoming IJC Canadian Section Engineering Advisor to the IOLBC and several other Boards assuming the duties of the outgoing IJC Canadian Section Engineering Advisor, Wayne Jenkinson. He began his 12-month appointment in spring 2021 and was previously Secretary of IJC Boards within the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Prior to his appointment with the IJC, he was with Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Ken Brettmann joined the Board as the Technical Assistant to Colonel Xander Bullock of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers replacing Kevin Shaffer.

3. Approval of March Conference Call Minutes

The Board reviewed and approved the March conference call minutes with edits to the *Hydrologic Conditions and Climate* section. Anna Warwick Sears moved to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Ted White.

4. Hydrologic Conditions and Climate

Snowpack

The May 15th BC Snow Water Basin Indices for the Similkameen and Okanagan basins were 104% and 80% of normal, respectively. By June 1st, the Similkameen index increased to 110% of normal, but the Okanagan index has decreased to 52% of normal, indicating that snow packs are melting rapidly and are half of normal for this time of year. Individual Okanagan basin snow pillow data for the low-elevation (Brenda Mine) station had already reached zero in early May, but the mid-elevation (Mission Creek), and high-elevation (Silver Star Mountain) stations are rapidly declining and will likely reach zero snow water equivalent (SWE) by mid June, unless conditions change. Washington SNOTEL data for the Upper Columbia were still showing SWE of 137% of normal for June 8, which was not consistent with the BC data.

Hydrology and Operations

Similkameen River discharge has been fluctuating since early May, with a current discharge of 9,260 cfs, no definitive freshet peak this year and flow remaining near the historical daily mean. In the near term (~1 weeks), the Similkameen discharge is forecast to continue decreasing, then level off. The Northwest River forecast Center (NWRFC) Similkameen Water Supply Forecast for April-July is currently 1,388 acre-feet, which exceeds the drought declaration threshold of 1 million acre-feet, indicating Condition 8a drought criteria will not be met.

Conversely, Okanagan Lake levels continue to increase, albeit very slowly (currently 1,122.21 feet), and remaining well below historical daily mean levels. They will need additional basin precipitation to attain the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, & Rural Development target lake level of 1,122.7 feet. As such, the Condition 8bii drought criteria threshold of <1,122.6 feet is likely to be met this year. The Okanagan Lake net inflows for the period April to July is currently forecast at 256 k acre-feet (although no new models have been run since May 1), but remains above the 195 k acre-feet Condition 8bi drought threshold of 195 k acre-feet.

Discharge of the Okanagan River at Penticton and Oliver are both below the historical mean levels since late June, currently 659 cfs (18.7 cms) and 866 cfs (24.5 cms), respectively. Osoyoos Lake level is currently at 911.65 feet, within the normal Condition 7 rule curve, and began levelling off in late May following Okanagan lake outflow reductions. Discharge of the Okanagan River at Oroville is currently 802 cfs (22.7 cms) and has been generally decreasing since early May.

Climate Outlook

The short-term weather forecast for Penticton suggests increasing daytime temperatures peaking to 20C in the coming week, but nighttime temperatures ranging from 0C to near 10C. There is little precipitation expected in the coming 2 weeks other than one day in the following week. The long-term ECCO and NOAA probabilistic for forecasts for the region for Jun-Jul-Aug suggest Above Normal temperatures but no definitive forecasts for precipitation. The Climate Prediction Center has also indicated that La Nina conditions have ended with ENSO-neutral conditions likely to continue through the Northern Hemisphere summer (67% neutral June to August).

5. New Hydrologic Summary Report

Martin Suchy is working on developing an automated report that summarizes hydrologic conditions within the Okanogan/Okanagan and Similkameen basins that pulls data and figures from online resources. Eventually, this report will be available to be emailed to Board members on a regular basis.

6. Osoyoos Lake Science Forum Updates

The Osoyoos Lake Science Forum was rescheduled to late April 2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns. The Forum's Committee will continue to work on fundraising, but most of the base funding has been confirmed. The program committee is in need more U.S. subject matter and ideas may be sent to Brian Guy and John Arteburn of the program committee. The USGS sediment study at Enloe Dam and transboundary water-quality monitoring are potential topics from the U.S.

7. Fall 2021 Annual Board Meeting Planning

The annual Board meeting will be hosted by the Canadian Section on Thursday 10/14 from 12:30 to 3:30 Board Meeting. The public meeting will be held at 6:30 PM. Both the Board and public meetings will be virtual. The Board will look for ways to recognize Al Josephy's contributions to Osoyoos Lake water management during his tenure as the representative of the Applicant.

8. IWI Phase II Update

The second phase of the Similkameen/Okanagan hydrologic modeling study is currently undergoing contracting at IJC. Due to delays in the contracting process, the project timeline and deliverables of the second phase of the modeling effort, which involve linking the Similkameen and Okanagan models will be moved back several months.

9. IWI Fall Funding planning – Ice Jam Proposal

John Arteburn, Board Member – U.S. Section, presented a concept for a proposal to the IWI funding call in Fall 2021. Ice jams at the southern end of Osoyoos Lake have restricted outflow from Osoyoos Lake to the Okanogan River leading to decreased discharge and lower stage in the Okanogan River. As a result, salmon eggs incubating in the Okanogan River downstream of Zosel Dam are vulnerable to freezing and desiccation as well as low dissolved oxygen levels. As a result there is a need to understand the formation of ice jams and potential solutions to prevent impacts on downstream discharge and fisheries.

10. Action Items

In Progress.

1. Develop workplan to engage Tribes and First Nations within the Okanogan/Okanagan and Similkameen Basins;
2. Investigate the extension of inundation maps south of border into Washington State and post on Board website;
3. IJC guidelines for outside participation (Agencies such as the U.S. Department of State (DOS), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Tribal and First Nations) in quarterly conference calls and Board meetings. Board Secretaries waiting for official guidance document for IJC. Continue with interim guidance;

4. Board Secretaries to add Osoyoos Lake inundation maps to IOLBC webpage. Canadian inundation maps have been created, but extend only to US/Canada border;
5. Board Secretaries to add update on Board website to indicate installation of new High-Water Monuments. Waiting for the US Veterans Memorial Park monument to be completed in order to update the website. Town of Oroville is ready to do whatever they need to do to assist with this;
6. Improve knowledge of the Osoyoos lake water balance (both US and Canadian side); and
7. Track USGS Enloe Dam sediment quality project.
8. Invite Trevor Hutton (the new technical representative of the Applicant), to introduce himself to the Board at the Board's March conference call.

Completed Items

1. Secretaries to watch for the schedule release of the BC Snow and Water Supply Bulletin in 2021 before proposing IOLBC quarterly conference call dates for 2021.
2. Update 2020-2021 Work Plan document;
3. Update Board website with September 2020 conference call minutes;

New Items