

**INTERNATIONAL OSOYOOS LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL  
BOARD MEMBERS' CONFERENCE CALL  
June 18, 2015, 9:00 – 11:00 AM PDT**

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Cindi Barton (absent)	Chair, U.S. Section
Bruno Tassone	Chair, Canadian Section
Col. John Buck (absent)	Board Member, U.S. Section
Kris Kauffman	Board Member, U.S. Section
Glen Davidson	Board Member, Canadian Section
Brian Symonds	Board Member, Canadian Section

**BOARD STAFF and BOARD MEMBER ASSISTANTS**

Marijke van Heeswijk	Secretary, U.S. Section
Gwyn Graham	Secretary, Canadian Section
Sara Marxen	Technical Assistant to Col. John Buck

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

1. The agenda was accepted without change.

**BOARD NOMINATIONS**

2. The Board reviewed the status of nominations for new Board members.

**HYDROLOGIC CONDITIONS AND RULE-CURVE COMPLIANCE**

3. As a result of above-normal winter temperatures and subsequent below-normal accumulation of snowpacks in the Okanagan/Okanogan River basin, the spring freshet started early and did not result in Osoyoos Lake levels above the rule curve, as usually happens during the spring freshet. Snowpacks were especially depleted in the U.S. portion of the basin and Washington State has declared statewide drought conditions. Only one of two drought criteria outlined in Condition 8 of the 2013 IJC Supplementary Order of Approval has been met, however, and the Board has not declared a drought. (The drought criterion that has been met is that the forecasted April-July water supply for the Similkameen River at Nighthawk is less than 1 million acre-feet; forecasted April-July inflows to Okanagan Lake and Okanagan Lake levels are normal and thus the second drought criterion has not been met.)

Because of drought conditions in the U.S. part of the basin, the Applicant is operating Zosel Dam so that Osoyoos Lake levels remain close to but at or below 912 ft, which, per the rule curve, is the summer upper limit under normal (non-drought) conditions.

Lake levels in Okanagan Lake, which supplies the majority of inflow to Osoyoos Lake, are normal and the Canadian Section does not foresee water shortages this summer. From here on out, levels of Okanagan Lake are primarily determined by reservoir operations because there will be little inflow for the remainder of the summer. Every centimeter depth of water in Okanagan Lake is equivalent to a water release of 40 cubic meters per second for one day.

British Columbia's Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations anticipates providing "pulses" of water releases from Okanagan Lake in late summer to minimize the temperature-oxygen squeeze in Osoyoos Lake that may be harmful to fish. Water is released from the top of the lake, which is deep and usually stratified.

Flows in the Similkameen River at Nighthawk started being significantly below normal in late May. On June 17, 2015, the daily discharge (provisional value of 2,210 cubic feet per second) was at a record low for that day since measurements started 86 years ago. At the 50% exceedance level, the Northwest River Forecast Center predicts April through August flows for the Similkameen River at Nighthawk of 773,000 acre-ft, which is 62% of normal.

Temperatures in rivers and lakes are higher than normal for this time of year.

#### **ZOSEL DAM OPERATIONS MODEL**

4. Washington State Dept. of Ecology developed a spreadsheet (model) with historical information about Zosel Dam operations. The information is used as a reference to help predict how Osoyoos Lake water levels may respond to different operational decisions.

#### **REQUEST TO DEVIATE FROM RULE CURVE DURING SUMMER 2015**

5. In early May, Washington State Dept. of Ecology made an informal request that it be allowed to store extra water in Osoyoos Lake, up to a lake level of 912.5 ft, to help mitigate instream flow shortages downstream from Zosel Dam anticipated to result from below-normal snowpack conditions in and near Washington State. Because the drought criteria in the 2013 IJC Supplementary Order of Approval have not been met and thus the Board has not declared a drought, the rule curve limit is 912 ft during the summer of 2015.

The Board discussed the availability of Condition 10 in the 2013 IJC Supplementary Order of Approval, which reads: "In the event of circumstances requiring temporary variation from the levels prescribed in this Order, the Commission upon written advice and recommendation from the Board of Control may allow a temporary deviation from

the levels prescribed in Conditions 7 and 8."

The Board decided against recommending a variance from the rule curve under Condition 10 but would reevaluate that decision as the summer progressed.

Update: On July 28, 2015, Washington State Dept. of Ecology made a formal request for a rule-curve variance under Condition 10 and the IJC approved the variance on the same day at the recommendation of the Board. The variance allowed Washington State Dept. of Ecology to operate Zosel Dam according to the rule curve described under Condition 8 of the 2013 IJC Supplementary Order of Approval until November 1, 2015.

#### **OSOYOOS LAKE WATER SCIENCE FORUM 2015**

6. The Board will hold its annual public meeting during the Science Forum, scheduled for Thursday morning, October 8, and its annual board meeting Wednesday afternoon, October 7. The Board submitted an IJC International Watershed Initiative (IWI) proposal for funding for the Science Forum. The Secretaries are helping organize the Water Science Forum.

#### **DOCUMENTARY PROPOSAL**

7. The IJC will fund the Board's IWI proposal for a documentary of transboundary water-management practices in the Okanagan/Okanogan River system once the Board submits a detailed Statement of Work and addresses some minor comments by the IJC. The submittal deadline is July 31, 2015.

#### **ZOSEL DAM RAMPING-RATE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

8. Washington State Dept. of Ecology is preparing a ramping-rate guidance document for Zosel Dam and the Board clarified which items it would like to see addressed in the guidance.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Secretaries will submit remaining Board Member nomination packages to the IJC for Commissioner consideration.
2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will offer Washington State Dept. of Ecology assistance with Zosel Dam operations model development.
3. Secretaries will submit a Statement of Work to the IJC for the IWI documentary proposal.
4. U.S. Secretary will communicate Board clarifications to Washington State Dept. of Ecology regarding requested Zosel Dam ramping-rate guidance document and offer assistance in preparing the document.