

INTERNATIONAL OSOYOOS LAKE BOARD OF CONTROL

Conference Call

June 14, 2016, 9:00 – 11:00 AM PDT

BOARD MEMBERS

Cindi Barton	Chair, U.S. Section
Bruno Tassone	Chair, Canadian Section
John Arterburn	Board Member, U.S. Section
Col. John Buck	Board Member, U.S. Section
Kris Kauffman	Board Member, U.S. Section
Ford Waterstrat	Board Member, U.S. Section
Glen Davidson	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

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

GUEST

Mark Colosimo (IJC Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Meeting was led by the U.S. Chair; meeting agenda was accepted with addition of discussion of the communications plan.

DECISION ITEMS

The Board approved the summary of the March 15, 2016, conference call. The summary will be posted on the Board website pending approval by the IJC.

The Board approved the May 31, 2016, version of the IOLBC Communications Protocol.

The Board approved three additional documents via e-mail by June 22, 2016:

1. Board letter to Applicant regarding ramping rate advice
2. Board decision-making guidance
3. Board work plan for 2016-17

HYDROLOGIC OUTLOOK

Board Secretaries provided a brief climate and hydrology overview, indicating that the unusually warm weather in April and May had greatly accelerated snowpack depletion, resulting in an early onset to freshet (approximately 4 weeks earlier than usual). The BC snow index showed an overall new record low on May 15th, highlighting the effect of the early onset of warm weather. Due to the early onset of freshet, there is concern over early onset of low flow conditions, particularly in unregulated tributaries to the main-stem Okanagan River system. Okanagan Lake is currently close to full-pool water level (full pool = 342.48 m or 1,123.62 ft). On June 14th, the Okanagan Lake level was 342.46 m or 1,123.56 ft (this exceeds the IJC drought criterion of 1,122.6 ft). At the same time last year (2015), the Okanagan Lake level was 342.34 m or 1,123.16 ft. The difference in Okanagan Lake level for the June 14 date from 2015 to 2016 is 0.12 m or 0.4 ft. Calculated cumulative net inflow to Okanagan Lake since April 1 (2016) is 418,703 ac-ft (this exceeds the IJC drought criterion of 195,000 ac-ft).

The water level for Osoyoos Lake exceeded the rule-curve maximum (912 ft) due to freshet inflows on April 23 and returned to within the rule curve limit by May 24, reaching an instantaneous maximum level during that period of 912.75 ft. Similkameen River discharge is currently below average, after above average discharge in April. The April-July forecast for the Similkameen River at Nighthawk is 106% of normal.

To date, the Applicant has been maintaining Osoyoos Lake levels in compliance with the terms of the Order.

IJC FALL SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING AND ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

A number of Board members expressed interest in attending in person, in some cases pending IJC support. The IJC will require a request from the Board to consider support for Board member attendance.

The Board discussed plans for the upcoming annual Board and public meetings to be held in Oroville on September 20. The Board meeting will start earlier than usual (1 p.m.) to provide more time for agenda items. The Board considered different location options for the public meeting and the high school was considered the best of the available options. Potential field/site-visit options were discussed for the morning of September 21.

HISTORICAL WATER RIGHTS DOCUMENTS FOR OROVILLE-TONASKET IRRIGATION DISTRICT (OTID)

Board member Kris Kauffman provided copies of historical documents related to the water rights issued by the State of Washington to the Oroville-Tonasket Irrigation District (OTID). The Board discussed and will consider adding a presentation to the annual public meeting (September 20) on the history of cooperative water storage in Osoyoos Lake between Canadian and U.S. water managers, particularly during times of drought or water shortage.

ENLOE DAM

The Board discussed recent information indicating that the Okanagan Public Utility District is planning to proceed with refurbishment of the power plant for this project, which has minimal reservoir storage and operates essentially as a run-of-the-river project. Considering that the current dam has been in place since 1920, the power plant refurbishment it is not expected to create a backwater effect at the international boundary, nor impact the Osoyoos Lake Order. The site of the dam is on or near a natural flow barrier to anadromous fish passage (traditionally known as Coyote Falls by local indigenous people).

OUTREACH

Board member Brian Symonds presented an overview of the Board to the BC Water Supply Association at their workshop on April 8, 2016, highlighting the Order renewal process and related changes to the Order as well as a hydrologic outlook for 2016.

Board member Sue McKortoff provided an overview of Osoyoos Lake Appreciation Day, organized by the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society. Sue invited the Oroville and Tonasket Councils and Lake Osoyoos Association members. Anna Warwick Sears and Richard Bussanich (ONA) provided public speeches on aspects of water resource management, water conservation and fisheries/ecosystem management. The event marked the 25th anniversary of the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society. Sue also indicated that the Town of Osoyoos has been proactive on water conservation, having already implemented outdoor watering restrictions and the appointment of a summer water ambassador to promote water conservation practices in the community.

Board member Anna Warwick Sears was interviewed by the local newspaper (The Osoyoos Times) as part of her engagement during the Osoyoos Lake Appreciation Day. Topics included the current scope of the Board mandate, water quality interests and the role of the IJC in responding to Canada/U.S. referrals on transboundary water issues.

NEXT MEETING

The Board holds its next quarterly conference call on September 13. That meeting will include agenda items from the current meeting that were postponed for lack of time (items 11-14). Agenda item 13 (review of three documents) was handled via e-mail by June 22, 2016.

STATUS OF ACTION ITEMS

In progress: Ecology will develop an operations model for Zosel Dam with assistance of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In progress: Board Secretaries will investigate possibility of adding webcams to Zosel Dam.

Completed: Secretaries will draft letter to Ecology with ramping rate advice for Board review.

Completed: The Secretaries will prepare draft language to add to the IJC guidance on Board decision making with examples of and information about Board decision-making practices.

Completed: The Secretaries incorporated Board member input into draft document outlining Board protocol for communicating with the Applicant and the public.

Completed: The Secretaries will revise the work plan for Board review.

Completed: Board members notified Secretaries regarding receipt of IJC press releases.

Completed: The Secretaries posted the summary of the December 2015 conference call on the board website after seeking IJC approval for posting.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

Canadian Secretary will provide the Board a comparative assessment of Okanagan Lake level trends for 2016 and 2015.

U.S. Secretary will provide the Board with detailed water-supply forecasts for the Similkameen River at Nighthawk for the remainder of the summer.

The Secretaries will post the summary of the March 2016 conference call on the board website after seeking IJC approval for posting.

Secretaries will request IJC travel funds for Board members who would like to attend the fall semi-annual meeting in Ottawa, ON

The Secretaries will finalize the September 20 annual Board meeting agenda and provide briefing materials in advance of the meeting. They will also plan a Board field trip for September 21.

The Board will review the presentation that Brian Symonds gave to the BC Water Supply Association on April 8, 2016. Following Board approval, the presentation will be posted on the Board website.

As an FYI only, Secretaries will inform the IJC of possible reactivation of Enloe Dam.

The Secretaries will ask the documentary maker if he can give a brief presentation during the public meeting on September 20.

Secretaries or local Board members will ask local papers if they can write a story to help promote the September 20 public meeting. Possible topics are 1) progress report by film maker (if available) and 2) presentation on informal agreement regarding bi-national sharing of water stored in Osoyoos Lake during times of drought or water shortage.