



Drought conditions are expected this summer. (Photo 146292925 © Torbz | Dreamstime.com)

OKANAGAN BASIN WATER BOARD MAKES PLANS

By Kevin Rothwell

Drought preparations underway for the Okanagan

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The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) has updated its drought response strategy in anticipation of a possible drought this summer.

The strategy was developed in 2016 to facilitate timely communication with local water suppliers and the Province of B.C., and to promote a more consistent and cooperative valley-wide response to drought.

The strategy includes actions to be carried out by staff in a water-short year, including workshops, the release of “Drought Bulletins” to Okanagan utilities and media, and other communication efforts.

The OBWB will be participating in provincial Thompson Okanagan Regional Drought Response Team meetings, held each summer to monitor water supplies. The board also heard about the annual Okanagan Water Supply Webinar, held May 12, which included updates on reservoir levels, snow pack, groundwater, a look at the weather and wildfire forecast, and an outlook on the Okanagan fishery.

Summary

2021 Okanagan Water Supply Webinar

Watch later Share

Wildfire K60064 - Merritt Zone

Watch on YouTube

- Fuel conditions are dry for this point in the wildfire season
- Low snow pack values and dry condition this winter and spring are concerning.
- Green up of grass and forest fuel will limit wildfire starts and growth in the short term.
- The June rains are usually the best indicator of wildfire season potential in July and August (fingers crossed!)

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2021 Okanagan Basin Water Board

The board indicates that significant June rains are needed to make up for a very dry spring. OBWB will also relaunch the **“Make Water Work”** campaign.

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