

Water matters

A newsletter from
the Black Mountain
Irrigation District

Issue Number 5
June, 1997

Vehicle ban affects Graystokes Watershed

Effective July 1st, the Graystokes Plateau will be off limits to motorized recreational vehicles such as 4 x 4s, motor cycles, and all-terrain vehicles. Introduced by the Ministry of Forests to protect sensitive sub-alpine areas, wet meadows, and water resources supplying Black Mountain Irrigation District (BMID), the vehicle ban includes about 90 square kilometres around Graystokes Lake, which is located approximately 30 kilometres east of Kelowna. Affected lakes include St. Margaret, Fish Hawk and Mission, as well as Loch Katrine and Loch Long.

Although the ban is not total — visitors to the area will still be able to drive along one trail linking the major lakes — some off-roaders aren't happy with the restrictions. They feel they're being singled out for blame, and that the damage being done by motorized vehicles is exaggerated.

Not so, according to BMID administrator, Phil Ruskowsky. "Our watersheds are experiencing increasing pressures from



Because of the environmental damage caused by careless off-roaders, all motorized vehicles except snowmobiles will be banned from the Graystokes Plateau starting July 1st.

recreational activities, which includes off-road vehicles destroying sensitive sub-alpine areas and meadows. It's unfortunate

the actions of a few have forced regulations to be imposed in the watershed, but if water quality continues to be compromised as a result of these activities, we have no choice."

Although the ban is a Ministry of Forests initiative made possible by the Forest Practices Code of B.C., policing of the area will be a combined effort of the Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Environment, and BMID. They ask that hikers and snowmobilers watch for offenders, too. If you see a vehicle being operated outside a 'designated motorized recreation access route', please note the license plate number and contact the Penticton Forest District at (250) 490-2200, the Vernon Forest District at (250) 548-1700, The Ministry of Environment at 860-6291, or BMID at 765-5169.



Signage will clearly indicate designated access routes on Graystokes Road from the Linden Lake Road junction to Fish Hawk Lake (connecting to Buck Hills Road), Linden Lake Road from the Graystokes Road junction to Linden Lake, and the unnamed rough road from Linden Lake to Jubilee Mountain and Loch Larsen (connecting to Haggart Creek Road).

See page 2 for a map of the designated routes.

Annual Report from BMID Trustees

Meetings/Elections

BMID's Board of Trustees met 33 times during 1996. Gord Ivans was elected board chairman, and Jim Kitaura was re-elected to a three-year term as trustee. The terms of office for trustees Gord Ivans and Alf Kempf expire in 1997; both will seek re-election.

Finances

The district had a successful year financially, transferring \$450,000 to the Capital Works Renewal Reserve Fund to help finance the Black Mountain Reservoir project. To maintain this sound financial position, domestic tolls and irrigation taxes were raised slightly to meet the cost of inflation and other increasing operating costs.

Capital Expenditures

Capital expenditures in 1996 included a power supply upgrade from one phase to three phases at the Mission Creek intake, the purchase of additional water quality monitoring equipment, a renovation of the office complex, and the addition of a storage shelter to the existing warehouse complex.

Ten-Year Capital Works Plan and Charge Rate

A comprehensive capital works report was prepared by Reid Crowther & Partners Ltd. to distinguish between work required because of development and routine improvements by BMID. The district can now plan capital works effectively for the next ten years and set a capital expenditure charge rate which reflects growth rates, interest and inflation rates, the effect of growth on the water supply system, and the resulting capital projects and their timing.

Development

The 1996 growth rate in BMID's service area continued at 2.9 percent. This resulted in 177 new hook-ups, bringing the total number of serviced units to 6,282. According to Kelowna's Official Community Plan, a growth rate of 1.5 percent is expected for the BMID area over the next ten years, which computes to an additional 1060 residential units.

Vehicle Ban in Graystokes Watershed

BMID has long been concerned about increasing damage from off-road vehicles disturbing wetlands and meadows in the Graystokes Plateau. The Ministry of Forests proposed a ban on all motorized recreational vehicles (except snowmobiles) on all area roads except the main Graystoke Road and the Linden Lake Road to Jubilee Mountain and Loch Larson. This order will take effect July 1st, 1997. More information is available at the BMID office or the Vernon or Penticton Forest District offices.

Forest Renewal BC Watershed Assessment

The Ministry of Environment — with funding from Forest Renewal BC — will help clean up past environmental damage in the Mission Creek Watershed. Stream and road assessments are complete, and continuous monitoring sensors and data logging equipment to record temperature, specific conductance, turbidity, and Mission Creek flow have been installed. 'Deactivation' or rehabilitation of roads will be carried out within the next year. This program will improve the effectiveness of BMID's ongoing water quality monitoring program.

Timber Harvesting Management

A detailed survey of all BMID-owned properties was conducted in 1996. Boundaries and tree inventories were examined to establish age, disease, and the net value of timber. This information will help the district establish a timber harvesting program.

Water Quality (Cryptosporidium)

Because crypto and other pathogens are commonly found in drinking water from surface sources, they are the target of stricter regulations and treatment guidelines. To minimize the risks associated with crypto and giardia, BMID's ongoing prevention program includes settling, monitoring for contamination, watershed management, and system maintenance. A watershed watch program was initiated in response to increased vandalism and abuse in the watershed.

Designated vehicle routes



Cards are now placed on vehicles seen in the watershed reminding users they are in a community watershed, and that obvious abuse and questionable activities should be reported.

Thank You to BMID Staff

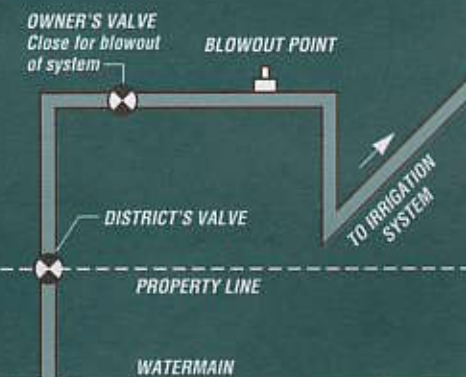
On behalf of all BMID water users, the trustees thank district staff for their continued cooperation and dedication to their responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Gord Ivans, Jim Kitaura, Alf Kempf, Heinz Koetz, and Lawrence Petch

Blow-out specifications

BMID workers have noticed that some growers have the blow-out points in their sprinkler systems incorrectly installed. The fitting for an air hose attachment should be upstream of the grower's shut-off valve so BMID's valve won't be damaged by air pressure blowing through the drain orifice. Having the blow-out point upstream of the owner's valve also enables winterization without waiting for the district to shut off its valve. Please ensure your system fits this specification.



'Showers' not in your financial forecast!

BMID has been reminded by other authorities that water spraying onto roadways from irrigation systems is unacceptable. Apart from the waste issue, a sudden shower onto a windshield or cyclist could cause an accident with potentially serious legal (and therefore financial) implications.

BMID bylaws state water must be contained on the owner's land. Please ensure your roadside sprinkler heads are fitted with suitable screens to prevent water spraying onto roadways.

Water Whys? Water Wise!

Getting to the source

A water supply system includes a source, a treatment system, and a distribution network. In this issue of WaterMatters we'll look at different water sources.

Most people in North America get their water from public utilities, which are companies or government agencies that supply our basic needs for electricity, gas, or water. These utilities get their 'raw' water from either surface water or groundwater sources.

Surface Water

Surface water circulates as part of the hydrologic cycle and accounts for one-third of the world's fresh water. Surface water sources originate in watersheds or drainage basins where precipitation and snowmelt flow downstream into rivers, lakes, and eventually, oceans. Because most urban areas in North America rely on surface water sources, and because consumption and pollution are on the rise, governments are introducing more stringent regulations and encouraging residents to participate in stewardship initiatives.

Groundwater

Groundwater circulates as part of the hydrologic cycle and accounts for two-thirds of the world's fresh water. Groundwater occurs in the tiny spaces between soil particles (silt, sand, and gravel) or in cracks in bedrock, much like a sponge holds water.

The underground areas of soil or rock where substantial amounts of water collect are called aquifers. They are the source of wells and springs, and the top of the water in them forms the water table. Aquifers may be small (covering only a few hectares) or very large (underlying thousands of square kilometres of the earth's surface). They may be only a few metres thick, or measure hundreds of metres from top to bottom.

Groundwater moves continuously, albeit at a snail's pace, from its point of entry to areas of natural discharge. Groundwater moves so slowly, in fact, that its speed is measured in metres per day, sometimes even metres per century! Man-made wells intercept some groundwater, but most continues until it reappears naturally in springs or seepage areas and joins watercourses.

Did you know that a quarter of all Canadians — mostly in rural areas — rely on groundwater to meet their drinking, grooming, agricultural, and manufacturing needs? So, while it may be less visible than surface water, groundwater must be protected against point source contamination (e.g. landfills, leaking septic tanks, and accidental spills) and non-point source contamination (e.g. infiltration from farmland treated with pesticides and fertilizers.) Because groundwater moves so slowly, pollution problems take a long time to appear. Add to this the fact that a contaminated aquifer will be very expensive to rehabilitate (if it can be done at all), and it's easy to see that prevention is key to protecting Canada's most valuable 'hidden' resource.

Meet the Staff

"Them's the breaks" is not something BMID's Dan Faulkner (left) and Brian Krause respond to with a shrug! In fact, when a water main needs replacing or breaks (which isn't often), it's serious work that must be done quickly and carefully so as not to disturb other services or inconvenience customers for too long.

As a utility worker, Dan's other responsibilities include pipe laying and system and hydrant maintenance. Brian's days are spent sampling BMID water, checking chlorine residuals, maintaining pressure reducing valves, testing for backflows, reading meters, and maintaining pumping stations.





All children 12 and under who complete this crossword puzzle and return it to BMID will win a water bottle, and be entered in a draw for an awesome 'super soaker.'

Entries received by June 30th will be eligible.



ACROSS

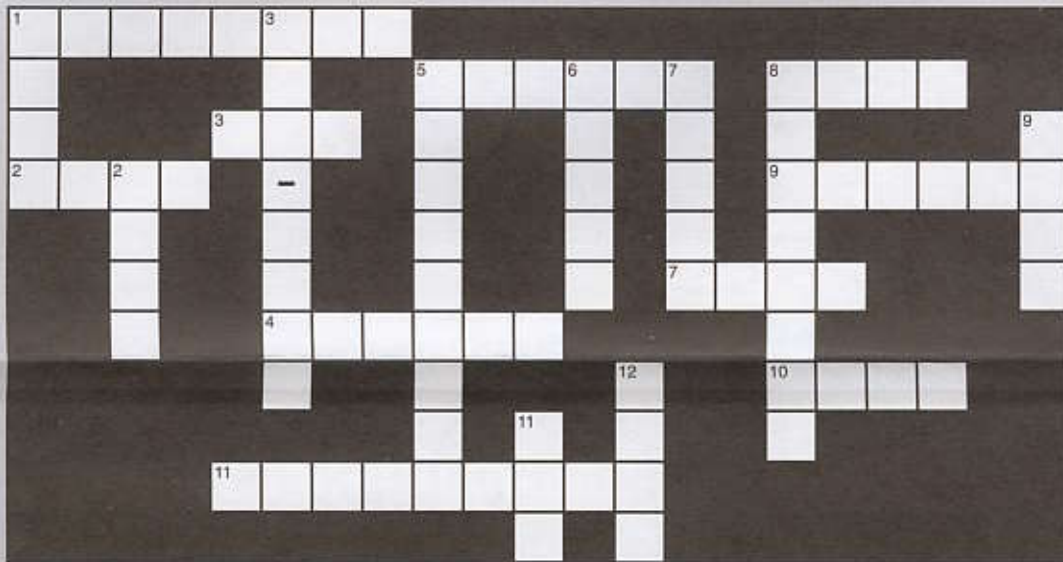
- 1. Too much rain
- 2. Rubber tube
- 3. Not dry
- 4. Water container
- 5. Fast bath standing up
- 7. Water drops from the sky
- 8. Where ducks swim
- 9. Small muddy pool

- 10. Large body of fresh water
- 11. Water tumbling down a mountain

DOWN

- 1. Swimming animals
- 2. Frozen water flakes
- 3. Frozen water in a drink
- 5. Tool for watering lawn

- 6. Healthiest beverage
- 7. Large fast flowing stream
- 8. Frozen flavoured water on a stick
- 9. Throw penny, make a wish
- 11. Large wall stopping water
- 12. Ice water is



Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone _____

WIN
free water
for a year!

We want to know!

To help us better meet your needs, please complete this survey and return it to BMID at 285 Gray Road, Kelowna, B.C. V1X 1W8 (Fax 765-0277). All surveys received before June 30th will be entered in a draw for a grand prize of one year's supply of residential water, to a value of \$192.00. *Staff and BMID officials can not participate in this draw.*

1. Overall, how would you rate BMID water quality?
 Excellent Good Average Poor No opinion

2. Do you buy bottled water for drinking or cooking?
 Year-round During spring run-off Never

3. Do you have an in-home treatment system to improve water quality?

Yes No

If so, do you have a

Point-of-entry system that treats all water coming into the house, or a

Point-of-use system that treats water at your kitchen sink?

Have you followed maintenance directions carefully to prevent bacterial growth?

Yes No

4. Did you boil water for drinking and cooking during BMID's giardia incident in 1987?

Yes No Not applicable

5. Have you ever experienced gastro-intestinal distress you feel was caused by a waterborne disease?

Yes No No opinion

If so, was this confirmed by your doctor?

Yes No

6. Are you prepared to pay higher water rates for improved water quality?

Yes No No opinion

If so, what would you consider a reasonable increase?

5-10% 10-25% 25-50% 50-100%

7. Overall, how would you rate your water pressure?

Excellent Good Average Poor No opinion

8. Do you have water-saving devices such as low-flow toilets or faucet aerators?

Yes No

9. Are you aware that contaminants from improperly connected appliances can 'backflow' into BMID's water system?

Yes No

If so, do you know how to prevent backflow?

Yes No

10. Do you recreate in the Graystokes watershed that supplies BMID water?

Yes No

If so, what form of recreation do you participate in?

Hiking Fishing Hunting Off-roading

Snowmobiling

11. Overall, how would you rate the service you receive from BMID staff?

Excellent Good Average Poor No opinion

12. Have you received adequate advance notice before service interruptions, rate increases, or policy changes?

Always Sometimes Never

13. This is BMID's fifth issue of the newsletter *Water Matters*. Do you think it's a good forum for sharing information with you about BMID and other water-related matters?

Yes No

If not, how would you prefer to receive this information?

Newspaper Radio Bill stuffer No opinion

Comments:

Thank you very much for your participation, and good luck in the draw!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Using common sense – automatically!

Many of you either have or are thinking about putting in automatic, underground sprinkler systems. Please read on to see how they should be designed, installed, and operated.

■ All properties serviced by BMID have an amount of water allocated to the property. This allocation is measured in irrigated area (acres) and is always equal to, or less than, the property's actual area. The allocation varies, depending on how much water (flow rate) has been purchased for the property. The minimum is 5 U.S. gallons per minute — the flow rate presently allocated to most res-

idential properties. If greater flow is needed, additional allocation may be purchased by the property owner. Phone the BMID office at 765-5169 for property-specific information.

■ If you're planning to install a permanent set (underground) system, you must first submit plans to the district for approval. Installation may proceed only after receiving written approval from BMID.

■ Customers installing underground systems must —

- submit a system plan showing the maximum amount of water used at any one time;

- have an approved 'Excess Water Use' permit; and
- arrange for a BMID inspection when installation is complete.

■ Each connection must —

- be installed behind the shut-off valve in the building on the property being serviced by that connection;

- have an approved double-check valve back-flow device.
- be on a time clock set between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.; and
- limit consumption to 10 gallons per minute per station.

■ Installers must not disturb or operate BMID valves. To arrange for a valve turn-on or off, call the office at 765-5169. The fee for this service is \$20.



Pass the grass, please!

If you cut your lawn too short, it's prone to dehydration and, therefore, needs watering more frequently? An ideal length is 2 1/2\"/>

Did you know...
There are ways to landscape that use between 30% and 80% less water than traditional landscaping? Consult your local nursery for suggestions.



Wally says...

Properly-installed, well-maintained and wisely-managed automatic sprinkler systems conserve water admirably. Remember to —

- schedule properly, watering only when needed.
- clean filters routinely, and
- adjust sprinkler head pressure to avoid overlap and the unnecessary watering of roadways and sidewalks.



Still a winter wonderland!

Working foreman, Larry Simla, regularly checks snowpacks in BMID's Graystokes watershed. A 30-percent-above-average snow pack and later-than-normal run-off may cause water quality concerns for BMID customers. But even if it's cloudy, your water still meets all Canadian water quality guidelines. We appreciate your patience, and apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.



Black Mountain Irrigation District
285 Gray Road
Kelowna, B.C. V1X 1W8

Tel. 765-5169
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Please Recycle