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A newsletter from the
Black Mountain
Irrigation District
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VALLEY WATER NEWS

BMID PROJECTS UNDERWAY

BMID Reservoir BCEA: BMID is carrying out a BC Environmental Assessment for the Black Mountain Reservoir Project. The project has been received by the BCEA office and is now on their website in the Project Information Centre at:

<http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca/faq/>

Documents explaining the BMID project to the EA office and an explanation of the process is included on the web page.

The review is extensive in considering all potential environmental impacts that may be created by the project. The initial meetings for public and stakeholder feedback will be advertised and carried out early in 2009. Comments will be received at that time on the project regarding a wide range of environmental and socio-economic issues.

BMID Reservoir Pipelines: All of the 1050mm diameter of the pipe for the reservoir project has been received and approximately 1/3 of it has been coated. Recent delays in sandblasting and painting have developed and BMID has moved the operations within the existing Cover-All building at our yard at 1200 Belgo Road.

Pipe bends of varying angles are being fabricated at the BMID yards. These special fittings will be required for the installation of the transmission mains which will all be coated steel. A potable water coating is being applied to the inside of the pipe and on the outside, a very durable tank and lining coating is being applied.

BMID SCADA Upgrade: SCADA stands for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System. BMID is investing in the upgrading of monitoring and alarms equipment so that we can monitor and respond to problems throughout the water system more effectively. Computers, SCADA software and some instrumentation are being upgraded. The upgrade will allow BMID operators to access the system remotely and understand what issues or problems are occurring. The new system will have better monitoring capacity, will provide more speed, reliability and better information. It does not replace site visits to our main stations but does provide an additional set of eyes for our operators.

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JOE RICH GRAVEL PIT - PEARSON CREEK

There has been substantial recent media coverage related to the approval of the gravel pit located at the confluence of Pearson and Mission Creeks in the Mission Creek watershed. The pit location is quite high in the watershed, resulting in the potential to impact a large number of downstream water users. The Mission Creek watershed is BMID's primary source of drinking water. Any deleterious materials that enter the creek can compromise the water treatment and disinfection processes that are in place, resulting in reduced safety of water supplied to the public.



Pit from 25 metres from edge of Mission Creek

BMID opposed the issuance of the original small gravel pit permit on private lands in 2005. The pit was originally a small operation, but in late 2007, the owner applied to have the pit expand to 240,000 tonnes which is 10,000 tonnes short of having to do a full-scale environmental assessment such as what BMID is required to do for the Black Mountain Reservoir Project. When the expanded license was applied for, BMID again documented our concerns to the Ministry of Energy Mines and Resources in late 2007. The Regional District and the Interior Health Authority also issued letters of opposition to this pit. Letters were on file from all three local agencies with no response or acknowledgement by the applicant or Ministry prior to the permit being issued.

The Pearson Creek pit is a prime example of the difficulties resulting with the multi-jurisdictional authority that the Provincial Ministries have on private and crown lands. The issuance of a permit on private lands did not respond to local agency concerns related to people that live directly below the activity. The Joe Rich community held a public meeting on September 30th, 2008 to a full house of upset local citizens at Joe Rich Hall. It was apparent that the public consultation process was inadequate and that the information to the local agencies was lacking. It is also apparent that the permit was issued by persons who are not local to our area. BMID's letters to Energy and Mines are located on our website at www.bmid.ca

The pit application was approved in early 2008. The new pit owner began clearing lands and building inadequate silt and sediment control features. It is now too late to keep this area of the watershed intact as the damage to the environment and the clearing of timber and surface cover was done in the first weeks of operation. All that can be done is to ensure silt protection is in place.

The pit operator was subsequently found by the Provincial Ministry Inspector to be in violation of the permit and the operation was subsequently shut down. The Ministry has assured BMID that the Pit Operator will only be allowed to re-start operations once they corrects all of the permit violations and submit designs for sediment and runoff control that are to the satisfaction of BMID and the Ministry. The pit is very high in the watershed should never have been considered as there are sites closer to Kelowna that have far less potential impact to our water resources. BMID, through the WSABC, will be lobbying the Province to adopt better gravel pit assessment standards through the Province. Gravel is needed by our community, but the locations for pits should be considered in a broader context.

Kelowna Joint Water Committee

The KJWC is beginning Phase 3 of a City-wide groundwater protection plan. Initial meetings have been held with the water utilities and primary stakeholders. An educational meeting with both the Regional District and City Planners is scheduled to be held before year end. Meetings with the public stakeholders will be held early in the new year to collect information on groundwater issues and concerns in the region and to educate the public on the risks that could contaminate drinking water wells. Appropriate land use and controls is critical to a successful Groundwater Protection Plan.

The KJWC recently retained Associated Engineering to conduct a review of Water Quality projects in the City. The intent of the study is to confirm whether the current direction of disinfection upgrades is appropriate, or if alternate treatment methods should be considered. The report is in draft form and the five Kelowna water utilities are providing comments so that a final report can be issued before year end.

Water Supply Association of BC

The WSABC is the association of water suppliers that provides a forum for the exchange of knowledge and resources for the water suppliers in the Southern Interior and Kootenays areas of BC. The WSABC has 11 Directors positions and their website is located at www.wsabc.com/

Mr. Bruce Wilson is stepping down as the Chairman of the WSABC. Bruce has provided over 35 years of dedicated service to the water industry starting in the early 1970's having inspected the construction of BMID's Graystoke Dam in 1972 on behalf of the Provincial Water Management Branch. He subsequently held other positions including Manager of Rutland Waterworks for the past 20 years. Bruce was recognized at the recent 2008 WSABC Annual General Meeting with a Lifetime Service award for his outstanding service and contribution to the Association and the water industry.

Okanagan Basin Water Board

The OBWB will have Directors and leadership within the next month due to the recent municipal elections. The board draws from the Regional District Boards whom in turn, draw upon City Councils for their Directors.

We also welcome the staff of the OBWB to Kelowna. On November 14, 2008, they officially relocated from the North Okanagan to the Central Okanagan Regional District office at 1450 KLO Road.



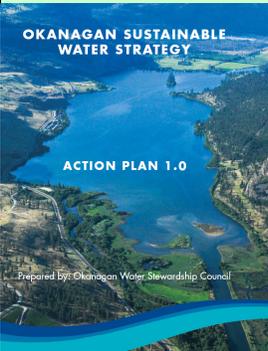
BMID spent approximately three months sandblasting and coating 3000 metres of pipe in our yard at 1200 Belgo Road this summer. The work was being done locally so that relocation and hauling of the pipe would not be necessary and a streamlined operation would reduce costs to all ratepayers. The works protect the 8500 metres of steel pipe for the reservoir project from the elements.

Unfortunately the dust created by the sandblasting was not able to be controlled successfully. BMID spent considerable funds constructing a dust control system that reduced the dust substantially, but not to the satisfaction of the neighbours.

Calls from residents were received by the Interior Health Authority, the Workman's Compensation Board, and the City Bylaw enforcement. Interior Health had no issues with the dust as the particulate levels were not measurable with the equipment that was available in town. Workman's Compensation wasn't concerned with the local area dust but rather that the operation be left outside as it was safest for those most at risk, i.e. the workers who are carrying out the sandblasting operation.



The answers to what is right for this situation is not obvious and the difficulty lies in where the rights of an individual are compromised for community financial reasons. City of Kelowna bylaw enforcement issued a temporary stop work permit and BMID staff met with the City to review options and determine what was appropriate for the community. BMID has subsequently moved the works inside the Cover All building. Sandblasting is underway at the site, but again, at reduced environment levels. The workers are now forced to wear air breathing devices to protect themselves during the sandblasting operation.



Okanagan Water Stewardship Council The OWSC has a renewed 3 year mandate. Recently on October 23, 2008, the OWSC released their *Sustainable Water Strategy* for the region. The document is now available on the web at www.obwb.ca/ with a direct link for download on the main home page. The document provides 45 recommendations and tasks to be carried out in the upcoming years that should promote improved water management in the region. The document is very inclusive and strongly promotes partnerships with all levels of government and community. The OWSC will be looking to facilitate work on many of the recommendations in the document in the next 3 years.

WATER QUALITY - ESSENTIAL VS DESIRED TREATMENT UPGRADES

Dr. Ray Copes from the BC Centre of Disease Control made a very interesting presentation at the WSABC Convention on October 24, 2008. Dr. Copes summarized the findings of the Expert Panel Report on Water Quality and Turbidity. In the closing comments of that report, the experts commented upon filtration versus enhanced methods of disinfection for the provision of safe water to a community. They specifically distinguished between what is "Essential" for safety in the water supply and what is "Desired". The information provided is extremely relevant to what the five utilities in Kelowna need to do to ensure that all Essential barriers are in place for the protection of our community. Barriers that protect us from all known microbiological pathogens are essential. Presently BMID does not have protection against *Cryptosporidium* but has plans to address this risk with the UV light disinfection as part of the BMID Reservoir Project. The expert report can be located at www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/pdf/

OBSERVE, RECORD & REPORT
questionable watershed activities to
BMID at 765-5169

Water and air, the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become global garbage cans.
Jacques Cousteau (1910-1997)