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March 2010

A newsletter from the Black Mountain Irrigation District No. 36

BMID WATER NEWS

Annual General Meeting: The date for the AGM has been set for April 14, 2010 at 7:00 pm at the BMID Main office at 285 Gray Road. The 3 year terms of Heinz Koetz and Laurence Petch are ending. Nominations forms will be available starting March 22, 2010. Nominations will be accepted from March 29 up until 4:00 pm, April 9, 2010 at the district office. If an election is necessary, it will be held on April 16th, 2010.

Scotty Creek System Separation:

The majority of contract work was successfully completed by Bennett Contracting of Kelowna in 2009. Remaining work includes the installation of a pressure reducing valve chamber, a double check valve, and the installation of four services. This project was our highest priority water quality improvement project. Our next highest priority project is the installation of UV disinfection for the Mission Creek water source. UV disinfection provides an additional barrier of protection from hard to kill protozoa such as *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia Lamblia*. The UV disinfection facility is to be located south of the proposed Black Mountain Reservoir.

Black Mtn. Reservoir Project Update

Sandblasting and pipe coating continues at the BMID yard at Belgo Road. Our sandblasting contractor was away for 6 weeks over Christmas and in January. The coating of pipe works for the Black Mountain Reservoir project will be completed this spring.

Treetop Road Water main

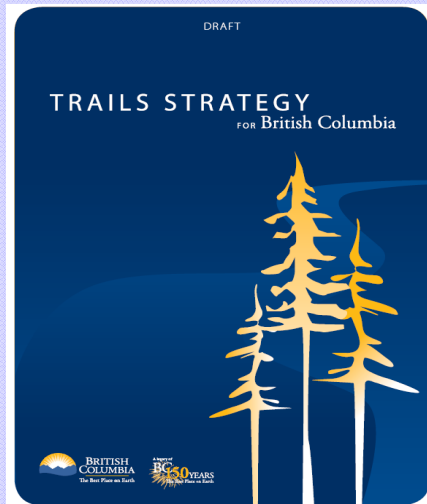
BMID is installing 125 metres of 200mm diameter main and a Pressure Reducing Valve station on Treetop Road this spring. The connection allows BMID to provide improved water service and fire protection to the upper areas of Swainson and Treetop Roads. The system in this area has limited fire flow capacity. The connection also allows emergency water supply (domestic water only) to the entire district if there are problems in the lower sections of the primary transmission mains.

"The only books that separate ground water and surface water are our law books."
- Duane Smith, Executive Director, Oklahoma Water Resources Board -

MINISTRY OF TOURISM

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MOTCA) is becoming a major stakeholder in backcountry governance and enforcement. The Province has an objective to increase backcountry tourism in our natural areas throughout BC. This includes increasing motorized vehicle access on registered trails. Presently there is a substantial number of unregistered, illegal trails throughout the backcountry.

In late 2008, MOTCA released the first draft of a *Trails Strategy for BC* and requested comments from a wide range of stakeholders. BMID, through the Water Supply Association (WSABC), provided comments to MOTCA. The comments were specifically related to the lack of recognition in the draft document to Community Watersheds and the protection of water resources.



At the February Okanagan Water Stewardship Council meeting, MOTCA officials presented the feedback that they heard from the Province on their first draft and presented their revised objectives. The largest change will be in the area of protecting and ensuring environmental stability. Both the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council and the WSABC were pleased to hear this.

Mission Creek is a "Community Watershed" meaning that a community downstream relies on the watershed for drinking water. Higher awareness and protection is required for Community Watersheds to ensure that drinking water sources are protected.

BMID WILL BE 90 YEARS OLD

The Black Mountain Irrigation District received our *Letters Patent* on November 3rd, 1920 from the Lieutenant Governor of that time, E.W. Hamber. Later this year, BMID will celebrate our 90th birthday. Our Board is considering ways in which to celebrate the event.

As time continues to march on, BMID is very interested in collecting photos, stories from persons involved with the district, and information on relevant historical events that have occurred during the last 90 years.



Supply Conduit major wash-out of 1973

The intent is to obtain the permission to use community information and photos in the development of a book on the history of the District. BMID is also looking for persons interested in working to assemble a book on the history of the District. Names and information will be received at the BMID offices over the next few months.

KELOWNA SNOWMOBILE CLUB

BMID staff were invited to speak at the Kelowna Snowmobile Club dinner on January 19, 2010. The KSC has operated in the Mission Creek watershed for more than 40 years. The club operates in a responsible and sustainable manner and is an operational model that the Province (MOTCA) is considering for allowing motorized vehicle clubs to operate in the backcountry. The reasons for the KSC success are because of education, investment of volunteer time, contribution of funds to maintain their trails, and protecting the natural features of their operating tenure area.

VALLEY WATER NEWS

Highway 33 Upgrading The Provincial contract for the 4-laning of Highway 33 from Muir Road to Gallaghers Road is underway. The work is to be completed by October, 2010. BMID staff are busy replacing all small diameter services along the Highway corridor. The intent is to minimize the risks of future breaks within the highway corridor. The condition of the 40 year old galvanized services along this stretch of Highway have been found to be poor and in need of repair.

The Highway work will include the installation of two large 42" diameter steel pipes for water supply to and from the proposed Black Mountain Reservoir.

We remind all motorists travelling through the construction zone to pay attention to signage and posted speed limits. There are many dangers through the construction zone for the workers, the motorists, and especially the school kids.

Water Supply Association The WSABC has been very active this year in lobbying for support for the Lakeview Irrigation District in their efforts to protect the natural habitat and riparian areas in Bald Range Creek in the Lambly Creek watershed. The government had allowed new trail construction in this very sensitive habitat and soil area of the watershed.

Kelowna Joint Water Committee

Communication and coordination with the City of Kelowna will be the highest priority item for the KJWC in 2010. A coordinated Water Quality Improvement Plan for Kelowna was presented by the KJWC to City Council last year on March 9, 2009. Council did not understand the plan and preferred to study governance prior to providing support for funding applications by the Water Districts. Subsequently, the four Water Districts directly lobbied the MLAs and Minister of Community Development for funding on the basis that there are 55,000 persons that have not received funding assistance for more than 40 yrs.

In January, 2010, the Minister sent a letter to both the Mayor of Kelowna and the Improvement Districts stating there would be no funding for Kelowna. He advised the City and Districts to communicate better and come back to the Province with a coordinated, collective, agreed-upon plan for water quality improvements and funding requests for Kelowna. Presently there are no surplus Federal or Provincial funds available.

"We forget that the water cycle and the life cycle are one." - Jacques Cousteau -

Ministry of Environment (MOE) BMID is working with the MOE to exchange water storage held in Belgo Reservoir for water storage held in Loch Long Reservoir. BMID would receive the Loch Long dam and higher quality water from that area. MOE would receive the equivalent volume of water from Belgo for conservation storage and minimal maintenance requirements.

BMID is also working with MOE is to obtain licensing revisions for additional storage at the proposed Black Mountain Reservoir.

WATERSHED DAMAGE CONTINUES

On the weekend of January 30-31, a local Conservation Officer fined one person in a large 4x4 vehicle that was stuck in the mud in Little Trapper Lake in the BMID Scotty Creek watershed. The vehicle had broken through the frozen surface layer and had damaged ground in the foreshore along the lake. Although driving large vehicles into the backcountry is not illegal, the trucks must stay out of sensitive riparian (wetland or creek bank) areas.



A \$575 fine was issued to one offender, however there were other vehicles present that immediately left the site. The conservation officer was unable to catch the other offenders.

BMID staff are in the watershed less frequently during the winter season. Photos of the offender and their vehicle could not be obtained from the Province. The information is classified as confidential when fines are issued. If the offender challenges the fine, the information may be released to the public. If BMID staff view and photograph public vehicles damaging our watershed, we will consider printing the photos and issuing them to our ratepayers in our newsletter. It is our belief that the greater public disapproves of this activity and continued public pressure must be applied to reinforce the message that mud bogging in watersheds is simply unacceptable.

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



BUYER BEWARE-HOME WATER TREATMENT

Residents have reported to BMID staff that a private water treatment company has been making erroneous statements about the quality of tap water supplied by BMID. The sales persons were vague and did not provide specific details when asked which water quality parameters are out of compliance. BMID is considering legal action in regards to the false claims made by the company.

Some BMID customers have spent up to \$5,000 for a home treatment system, treating tap water that already meets all of the national guidelines.

If you are contacted by a water treatment salesman who is stating that the water quality is poor, please ask them for specific information on which water quality parameters are out of compliance and have them document the results and provide you with a copy. If they cannot do this, then the statements made may be questionable. Any reputable company should be able to back up their statements with facts. Typical raw water parameters for the Mission Creek water source are listed on our web page at www.bmid.ca. The two most common issues that we hear of are related to chlorine (taste) and hardness of the water (Scotty Creek area only).

Chlorine Taste: Chlorine is necessary to kill bacteria and viruses in the water. The taste of chlorine and presence can in most cases be reduced by leaving an open drinking water container overnight in your fridge. In time, the chlorine will dissipate to the air.

Hard Water: Hardness of water is an aesthetic parameter, meaning it is not a safety issue but one of public preference. Harder water typically means the water has a higher level of dissolved minerals. It may in fact be healthier for people that soft water. Soft water lathers better with soaps and shampoos and is preferred by most people. The Scotty Creek subdivision, for six months each year, is only BMID area supplied with groundwater. The water is considered moderately hard. For this water, customers may prefer to install a private water softening system, but continued maintenance of the system is required. Water softeners elsewhere in the District are not necessary as the creek water is already soft.