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March 2011

A newsletter from the
Black Mountain Irrigation District
No. 40

VALLEY WATER NEWS

BMID AGM

The date for BMID's 90th Annual General Meeting has been set for Wednesday, April 13, 2011, 7:00 pm at BMID's 285 Gray Road office. Items of business will be presentation of the Trustees Report, the Operations Report, Water Quality Report, and the Financial Report.

The 3-year term for Trustee Allan Kirschner expires in 2011. Allan has served 4 terms as Trustee and has informed BMID that he will be seeking re-election. Nomination forms will be available at the District office starting March 21, 2011, with nominations closing April 1, 2011. If an election is required, it will be held at the BMID office from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm on April 15, 2011. An early poll will be held at the office April 8 from 12:00pm to 6:00 pm.

BMID 2010 Water Usage

Total BMID water consumption was lower in 2010 than in previous years with only 11,522 megalitres of water being used. This is about 10% lower than the long term trended average. The lower use can be attributed to less intensive agricultural production, timely rainfalls, and more efficient use by our customers.

Water use reports for 2010 are being prepared for the larger irrigated parcels and will be mailed out in March. The reports will show the total allocated water for the parcel and the monthly usage.

BMID Maintenance and Renewal

A new back-up **chlorinator** was installed at the Surge Tower this February and work is underway to replace the primary chlorinator at the Mission Creek intake. The header piping, chlorination equipment and analyzers are being replaced. The work is being done by BMID staff and Interior Instrument Tech Services.

The **travelling screens** located at the intake off of Mission Creek provide screening of debris and sand particles prior to the water entering the water distribution system. The screens collect materials 70 thousands of an inch in size and larger and automatically backwash when they become clogged with material. Mechanical components of the screens were checked with some of the parts replaced and/or repaired. (cont'd on next pg.)

BC WATER ACT MODERNIZATION

The Province of BC is in the process of modernizing the Provincial Water Act. The Water Act is the legislation that enables the Province to control water use and water withdrawals throughout BC. The Water Act Modernization (WAM) process began in 2010 and included a large consultative component with workshops and stakeholder meetings across the Province. BMID participated in several of these workshops and provided written comments through the submission by the Water Supply Assn.

BMID has successfully worked with various versions of the Water Act since 1921. The current version serves our utility well, however there are stakeholder groups that are not as well served by the current legislation. Notable areas where changes to the Act are being considered include added protection of stream health, the consideration of water in all land-use decisions, regulating groundwater use, regulating water during drought, improving security, water use efficiencies and conservation, and enabling a wider range of governance approaches.



The current BC Water Act originated from the *Gold Fields Act* of 1859 which was the result of damage and diversions caused during the 1850s Gold Rush. Within it was the concept of appropriation which was the first one that specifically dealt with water rights and rental of water from the Crown. The *Water Privileges Act* of 1892 followed and dealt specifically with *water rights* and that the

right-to-use, and the *flow-of-water* was vested in the Crown (with the Province). In 1909, the first true Water Act was a consolidation of a number of acts that related to water. The Water Act was revised and updated many times including versions in 1914, 1925, 1939, 1951, 1960, 1981-82 Statute Amendments, 1987 Amendment and the Water Amendment of 1992. In 1995, the *Water Protection Act* was passed which only allows the bulk export of water from BC in containers of 20 litres or smaller. It also prohibits large inter-basin transfers.

BMID customers may wonder how their water rights are protected and administered through BMID. BMID holds water *Storage* licenses on Mission Creek and Scotty Creek to store snowmelt water in our reservoirs for release during the summer. BMID holds *Waterworks Local Authority* licenses to divert water from the creeks year-round for domestic purposes, and *Irrigation* licenses to divert water 6 months a year for agriculture. Each taxed parcel in BMID is permitted to receive an annual depth of 675mm of water over the irrigated area. The annual volume is regulated by BMID based on there being sufficient water available in our upland reservoirs. The annual volume is not a right to the individual, but rather an allowance per parcel based on water availability. BMID administers the usage through the District by-laws. Water meters help to regulate and promote equity for all customers.

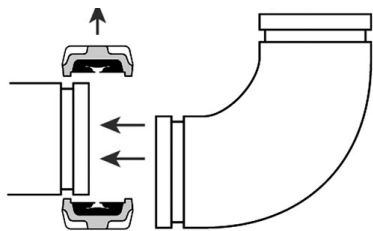
BMID is not in favour of wide-scale changes to the Water Act as any change must result in a definite improvement to the current regulation. Water regulations must continue to evolve to meet the wide range of conflicting demands on the water resource.

"There is enough water for human need, but not enough for human greed"
Mahatma Gandhi

BMID WATER NEWS

BMID Reservoir Project

Preparation work continues on the transmission mains that are to convey water to and from the proposed Black Mountain Reservoir. The last large steel pipes will be coated this month. Welded connections will be used where high strength is needed for the joints. A grooved joint system will be used where the pipe is located below existing roads where working space is limited. A typical grooved connection is illustrated in the diagram below.



BMID is renting a special grooving tool that can cold-press a 7mm groove into the large steel pipe in a matter of minutes. The machine rolls the large pipe and hydraulically presses in the groove.

Designs are complete for a portion of the transmission mains from Highway 33 to the BMID Reservoir site. BMID is working with the City on the reconstruction requirements for Joe Rich Road north of Hwy 33.

The primary objective for the pipe installation will be to get the water to the site of the UV disinfection building that will be located below the BMID Reservoir. The construction of the UV disinfection system is a higher priority than the reservoir and will be completed first.

Kelowna Joint Water Committee

The five large water utilities are continuing to work on the Kelowna Integrated Water Supply Plan. The plan is being developed to confirm that the right decisions are being made with respect to interim and long term water quality improvements for Kelowna. The senior officials at the City and at the Province require confirmation that there is no duplication in service or economic inefficiencies are being incurred due to the current operating structures. Draft versions of the plan are expected to be developed in April of 2011.

The recent public feedback provided to the Central Okanagan MLAs listed Water Quality Improvements as the number one community priority.

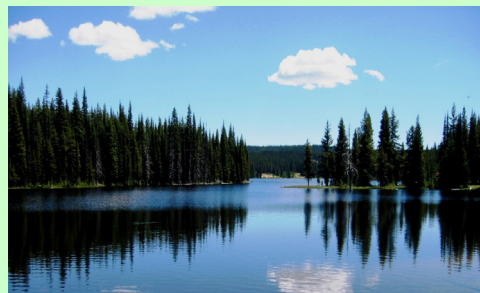
OBSERVE, RECORD & REPORT
questionable watershed activities to
BMID at 765-5169

MOTORIZED VEHICLE ACTIVITY IN THE WATERSHEDS



There is recreational motorized use year-round in the back-country above and around Kelowna. We are not as fortunate as the Capital Regional District (Victoria) or the Greater Vancouver Regional District watersheds (Capilano, Seymour and Coquitlam) where no public access is permitted. It is too late for that to occur in the Mission Creek and Scotty Creek watersheds.

The Crown (Province) allows activities in the backcountry areas, but has restrictions on where persons can go and how they can access specific areas within the watershed. BMID is fortunate in that the Graystoke plateau portion of our watershed is Provincial Park and is designated as a non-motorized vehicle area. The Graystoke plateau is highest elevation land mass in the Okanagan and produces the highest volume and highest quality water in the region. (Loch Long photograph). It is a sensitive habitat area with the only permitted motorized vehicles allowed belonging to Provincial Parks staff, BMID staff to maintain and operate our facilities, and the Kelowna Snowmobile Club (KSC) during specific times of the year. The KSC has operated responsibly in this area since 1970. Because of their track record, the KSC has an agreement with the Province allowing them to operate and maintain designated groomed snowmobile trails in the backcountry.



BMID has an informal agreement with the Kelowna Snowmobile Club where we watch out for each others facilities and promote stewardship within the natural environment. The KSC grooms approximately 250 km of trails in the Graystoke and surrounding areas. If damage or abuse is occurring in the watersheds at any time during the year, please report it to BMID phone number on this newsletter. Please try to include the following data when reporting:

- Description of Activity** taking place such as ground displacement, mud bogging, littering, and destruction of natural habitat, forests, or riparian areas
- Identification of Offender** photographs, license plate numbers, number of vehicles, colour of vehicle's, make, model, etc.
- Time of Incident** day, date, time
- Location of Incident** which road, kilometer marking, GPS coordinates etc.

BMID collects and reports this information to support the Province in stopping the damage from irresponsible activities within the watersheds. If enough public support is available to inform the agencies of watershed damage, it greatly assists the efforts of the Provincial Enforcement Officers.

One of the advantages of having an accessible watershed is that the public can visit the watershed, experience the natural environment first-hand, and learn to respect, appreciate and protect the resource. It is hard to appreciate something that you cannot experience first-hand. Being able to access the backcountry should be considered a privilege and not a right.



Crown Forest damage by 4x4 vehicle

"It is our responsibilities, not ourselves, that we should take seriously."
Peter Ustinov, British actor and writer