



August, 2026

Your newsletter from the
Black Mountain Irrigation District
No. 62

www.bmid.ca

BMID WATER NEWS

Stage 2 Drought Restrictions

BMID has enacted Stage 2 drought restrictions throughout the entire District. Please see the BMID web page for the watering procedures for Stage 2 conditions. This higher stage was set primarily so that we have more water in reservoirs prior to the winter. The watershed is the driest on recent record and less runoff is expected as the dry ground will absorb significant water before we receive any runoff. Please do what you can to conserve. See Page 2 of this newsletter for more details on the state of Mission Ck.

Agricultural Overage Charges for 2026

BMID's normal irrigation volume allotment is a maximum annual watering depth of 685mm (100%). With varying drought restrictions through much of the year, the Board has set the irrigation allotment for 2026 at a ceiling of 90% of normal allotment or 617mm. Overages of up to 20% will be charged at the cost of \$ 0.15/m³. Overages above 20% will be charged at \$0.50/m³. All large agricultural connections should regularly check their water meters or the irrigation usage reporting letters.

2026 Water Irrigation Tax

The irrigation tax rate for 2026 will be:

- Grade A land \$166.00 / acre
- Grade C land, \$132.80 / acre

2026 Irrigation Turn-off Dates

The planned days for irrigation turn-off will be 7 to 10 days earlier than normal. Our license annually permits watering until Sept. 30. BMID's objective is to leave upper storage reservoirs at higher levels over the winter. This year, shut-off will be the week of Sept 29-Oct 2, 2026. Spray filler water will be allowed after that. Field and orchard watering will not be permitted.

Maximum Irrigation Rates

Irrigation for the district must follow two operating parameters: one is the volume allotment of water allocated to each property per year, the second is the flow rate at which water can be applied. The irrigation flow rate is between 5.0-6.5 USgpm/acre, based on Grade A area and the soil type. The flow rate permitted per acre will be provided on the irrigation reports and can be provided if you call the office.

Those customers that were over their permitted flow rate in 2026 must make adjustments over the winter so that they are within the irrigation flow rate before water will be turned on in 2027.

AAP PROCESS—McDOUGALL WATER TUNNEL EXTENSION

Right now, BMID is working through a critical phase of our history. Water security is an issue that is in the forefront of the local, provincial and federal governments. Being a local water provider, BMID faces challenges of the current drought and of the integrity of our primary water supply conduit located in Gallaghers Canyon.

In early 2027, BMID is looking to begin construction on the \$32,000,000 McDougall Water Tunnel Extension project. The project relocates our conveyance infrastructure to bypass unstable silt slopes in Gallagher's Canyon. The work will be BMID's most expensive project to date. It will require funding from five sources: from development charges; renewal reserve; revenue surplus; borrowing; and from a potential federal grant through the Build Communities Strong Fund. BMID has requested 50% funding from this resource. This project is shovel-ready, but BMID has not yet received a decision from the Federal government. Our local MP is supportive of this project.

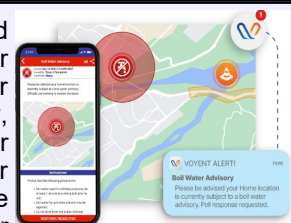


For a public water utility, public assent is required to borrow funds to verify that the project is not opposed by the ratepayers. The assent procedure set by the Provincial government is an Alternative Approval Process (AAP). It is a reverse petition. The process sets an opposition bar at 10% of the ratepayers who must sign the petition that they oppose the project. The number of water accounts is 11,056 so 1,105 signatures are required. No reason for opposition is necessary.

The ratepayers that can vote are defined as those customers with name on title for a BMID water account. Anyone with name on title may vote. Anyone owning multiple properties can vote once for each of their properties. BMID has advertised the AAP in the local newspapers, posted it on our website, and notified 5,700 accounts by means of our Voyent Alert app that sends messages to our account contact list. BMID held two open houses on Aug.19th and Aug.26th, 2026. Signed petitions can be submitted at the BMID office up until 4:00 pm Monday, September 21, 2026.

For more details on the project, see the red link buttons on the front page of the BMID website. There are 11 story-boards that provide details on project scope, timing, costs, funding, interest rates, and rate impacts. AAP petition forms are available for download and can also be obtained at the BMID office. BMID is requesting public permission to borrow up to \$20,000,000 or a lesser amount if we are successful with our grant application to the Build Communities Strong Fund.

Community Alert Program In 2025, BMID subscribed to utilize the *Voyent Alert* software service to notify our customers. With newspaper and media outlets no longer being an effective means to reach the greater community, alternate means are necessary. *Voyent Alert* allows for mass or selective notification to customers by either phone, text (SMS), or e-mail, or combination of the above. The customer also has the choice on whether they want only emergency notifications, reminders, and/or all notifications. To verify how you want to be notified, please visit bmid.ca/forms-guidelines/online-forms and fill out the on-line form. Customers are also encouraged to sign up for e-billing for their invoices in order to avoid mail delays and reduce district postage costs.



"It is a popular delusion that the government wastes vast amounts of money through inefficiency and sloth. Enormous effort and elaborate planning are required to waste this much money."

— P. J. O'Rourke (US Writer & Humourist)



BMID WATER NEWS

2026 WATER DRAW Voyent Alert and E-billing

For 2026, every 3 months, BMID will hold a draw for 3 months free water to 3 residential customers. To be eligible, the customer will have provided BMID with their information for the Voyent Alert notification system. There are still 6 winners to be decided from those who sign up for the Voyent Alert water app. See page 1 for details.

2026 Water Usage

BMID monthly water usage for 2026 year-to-date and the 20-year-average is listed. Units are in megaliters (ML).

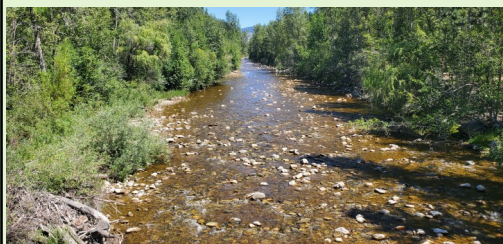
1 ML=1,000 m³. **Red denotes estimate**

Month	2026	20-Yr Ave.	%
Jan-March	707	658	107 %
April	592	461	128 %
May	1,989	1,392	143 %
June	2,087	1,856	119 %
July	2,839	2,810	101 %
August	2,400	2,658	90 %
September	1,350	1,356	100 %
Oct-Dec	900	889	101 %
Total	12,864	12,080	106 %

Overall water usage is tracking higher than the recent 20-yr average due to the very early and dry spring, more agriculture being on-line, and more domestic connections on the water system. BMID uses only 6% of the total average annual runoff in Mission Creek. In 1998 and 2003 the total BMID annual flow exceeded 15,000 ML.

REGIONAL DROUGHT AND MISSION CREEK

Anyone who has been watching the Okanagan Valley lakes this year has noticed the low levels of water. The current drought is a result of multiple dry years starting in 2021, being very dry again in 2023 and the watersheds not fully recovering to an average moisture level. The winter of 2025-26 was one of the driest on record. Some of BMIDs upper watershed reservoirs saw record-low inflows.



BMID tracks watershed runoff production above each of our five large dams. Over the winter of 2025-26, the watershed above James Lake Reservoir produced only 15% of its normal runoff. James Lake Reservoir filled to only 66% full. BMID called a for Stage 2 restrictions and supplied the north end of the district through wells and

the Mission Creek system. BMID is assessing diversion ditch routes to increase the watershed catchment area for James Lake Reservoir. Over the past winter, Belgo Reservoir only received 30% of its annual inflow. Belgo Reservoir filled, but had very little overflow. The BMID water managers of the 1920s and 30s had excellent foresight to construct two diversion ditches into Belgo Reservoir. The high elevation watersheds above Fish Hawk and Graystoke dams produced 70% of their normal runoff. BMID has reservoir expansions identified for Loch Long, below Graystoke Dam, at Fish Hawk, and at Mission Lake. All sites are above 1,800m elevation (> 5,900 feet). The high elevations receive more reliable precipitation.

Mission Creek was more stressed this year than any other recent year. For most years BMID releases water to maintain a flow of 1.0 m³/s through the summer to lower Mission Creek. This year, BMID was only able to maintain a flow of 0.50 m³/s.

The watershed was so dry that without additional releases from BMID storage reservoirs, lower Mission Creek would have been completely dry in the third week in August. The last time this occurred may have been the 1929-31 drought.

BMID is actively working with the Province, Okanagan Nation Alliance, the OBWB staff, and the City to plan for more secure water for all water demands, including supporting fish flows for the lower creek. BMID has made it clear that our customers have paid for the construction and maintenance of our reservoir storage. They have first priority on the stored water. Constructing additional storage will be the only way to consistently support the returning sockeye salmon to Mission Creek.

CORNISH-MORRISON-OLD VERNON ROAD PROJECT

Community leaders must understand the intrinsic value of agriculture for the valley and that it should be supported. The agricultural lands around Summerland and its large water supply capacity provided a level of protection for the community during the 2026 Bald Range fire. Irrigation keeps our communities from becoming tinder-dry. The spin-off benefits resulting from investment in agriculture are substantial.

BMID has received requests to supply water to lands on both the north and south sides of Upper Scotty Creek.

This year, BMID received a water license for Cornish Well. The well will supply the low elevation lands along Old Vernon Road which in-turn, frees up water supply for hundreds of acres of land at higher elevation. These lands can be supplied by gravity from upper Scotty Creek.

BMID received a \$2,000,000 grant from the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAFBC) for funding 2,500 metres of 300mm irrigation watermain from Cornish Well to Old Vernon Road. BMID is partnering with the City of Kelowna for the roadworks. The \$3.6 M project is funded by agriculture development charges, revenue surplus and by the IAFBC grant. This project will be completed in October of this year and will not impact on water rates.



SCOTTY CREEK UPPER INTAKE PROJECT

As part of irrigation supply to the north end of the District, construction is underway for an upper water intake on Scotty Creek.

The creek intake was awarded to R & L Construction who submitted a low bid of \$1.7 M. The project is underway. Creek flow is being diverted through a 600mm bypass pipe. The instream work is to be done between August 15 & October 15. The project will be completed in late Nov. 2026.

This project, along with the adjacent Cornish-Old Vernon Rd watermain project, is being funded by the IAFBC \$2M grant, by BMID agriculture development charges, and by the adjacent land owner who will be supplied with water from this intake. The project will not impact on water rates.



"If the earth is a mother then rivers are her veins."

— Amit Kalantri, [Wealth of Words](#)