



2009 – 2010 Report from the Chair

Welcome to the 16th Annual General Meeting and Conference of the Water Supply Association of B.C. It is great to be back once again in the beautiful City of Osoyoos and at such a wonderful facility.

The Water Supply Association is entering its 87th year as an association. We are committed to representing the interests of B.C. water suppliers and their customers. Your attendance at this meeting is a testament to our relevance and success in meeting the needs of our members and your support is greatly appreciated.

The Association is made up of about 120 members, including improvement districts, municipalities and regional districts. We also count among our ranks consultants, suppliers and a range of government and non-government agencies, organizations and associations that we network with on a regular basis. We have four new members this year and I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Town of Osoyoos and the City of Armstrong, along with new associate members Aplin & Martin Consultants and Neptune Industries.

These are challenging times for our industry. Whether you are large or small, an improvement district, municipality or regional district, tough economic conditions, water supply challenges and the need to cost effectively improve and deliver high quality water to our customers are just a few of the issues water suppliers are facing. The Water Supply Association of BC strives to be a leading advocate on behalf of our members to insure your interests are met across the broad spectrum of challenges you face in the day to day operation of your utilities.

Your Directors met several times over the course of the year and sub-committees have been formed to deal with the set of core objectives identified in our strategic plan. Considerable progress has been made. The strategic planning approach to identifying core Association objectives has proven to be very effective in focusing the Association's efforts on the issues that matter the most to our members.

Briefly, the key objectives can be broken down into five main categories:

1. Water Resource Management/Source Water Protection,
2. Regulatory Agency Issues,
3. Communications and Research,
4. Administration, and
5. Training and Education.



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The task list under each of these objectives is ambitious and, although we might not meet all of our goals, the Directors are focused and committed to doing the best they can. A summary of the progress made on specific topics during the past year includes:

1. Water Resource Management/Source Water Protection:

Crown Lease Sales of Reservoir Lots: It would appear that the Province's longstanding effort to sell crown lease land on reservoir lots on the shores of drinking water reservoirs in the Okanagan has finally been abandoned. The Minister of Forests and Lands, Pat Bell, announced at the UBCM in Whistler at the end of September that the project is closed.

The WSA lobbied long and hard in opposition to the sale of these lands. The first Association position statement against lot sales was adopted back in June, 2002. Virtually every local and regional authority in the Okanagan Valley came to oppose the sale of this land, with many formally adopting the WSA position.

RMZ intervention: The Association presented a brief to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts in support of the Ministry adopting responsible recreational trail development policies that protect water quality. The focal point of these discussions was the escalating conflict over the Recreational Motorized Vehicle Zone (RMZ) in the Lambly and Powers Creek watersheds.

2. Regulatory Issues:

Water Act Modernization (WAM): The Spring Workshop in April provided members with direct input into the Association's submission to the WAM process. The submission focused on Water Act amendments that allow for greater source water protection, flexible water allocation plan scenarios and better water governance arrangements.

3. Communications and Research:

Web Site Update: A professional web design company has been hired to overhaul the Association web site. The new site will be easy to navigate and update and allow our members easy access to a broad range of information. We will have the new site up and running in the near future.

4. Administration:

The Administration sub-committee, led by Cheryl Halla, has worked on a number of important issues over the past year. This work includes preparing the annual budget for adoption by the Directors, planning and holding the Spring Workshop and AGM and providing a broad array of member services.

5. Training and Education:

EOCP: This sub-committee has been very active during the past year. Directors have met with EOCP representatives on a number of issues. It is our objective to



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make operator training more affordable and accessible to our members and we are optimistic the new EOCP Training Registry will help make that happen.

WSA Symposium: The third annual training symposium was held in February at the UBCO campus in Kelowna. This was the final year of our commitment to sponsoring this event and the decision has been made to not proceed with it in the future. We anticipate more training opportunities will be available in the region through both the EOCP Training Registry and private industry.

WSA Training: The Association will continue to organize and support training events for elected representatives, administrators and operators. as opportunities arise. This includes our annual Spring Workshop, the AGM and other special events.

We have had tremendous cooperation from our MSC members in providing accredited operator training and thanks go out to that group for the invaluable assistance they have given to helping our operators get the CEUs they need to keep up their accreditation.

This year's Spring Workshop was held on April 8th and 9th at the Harvest Golf Club in Kelowna. We had over one hundred in attendance to hear an interesting list of presentations. Both the Tom and Rose Carter Scholarship and the Ted Allingham Memorial Scholarship were presented to Aileen Hagel, a very well qualified and deserving candidate with tremendous potential to contribute to the water supply industry in the future. A special session on legal issues was held on the second day of the workshop. Barry Williamson of Young Anderson spoke about a number of legal issues of significance to public bodies including Conflict of Interest, Misrepresentation and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy.

The Water Supply Association also continued our pivotal role in affecting provincial policy on a number of fronts over the past year. As previously referenced, the Association updated and reaffirmed our opposition to the sale of crown leases, provided a brief to the Minister of Tourism Culture and the Arts on recreational trail development in Community Watersheds and made a formal submission to the Ministry of Environment on Water Act Modernization.

Looking to the future there remain notable issues on the horizon that will affect our industry. The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport have indicated they are still committed to establishing province-wide water treatment standards. Water treatment requirements have a significant financial impact on our members and the Association will be a strong advocate of responsible and cost effective water treatment requirements.

Consistent with the water treatment issue is that of senior government funding for water quality improvements. With mandatory water quality improvements comes the responsibility for the Province to provide funding assistance to water suppliers,



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regardless of whether the water supplier is a regional district, municipality or improvement district.

Looking to the future we also look to the past and the winding up and dissolution of two long-time members and supporters of the Association. This is the home stretch for both the Lakeview Irrigation District and Westbank Irrigation District. After 59 and 88 years of incorporation respectively, on December 31, 2010 the District of West Kelowna will assume responsibility for the assets and objects of both organizations. We will take the opportunity in tonight's proceedings to recognize the history and substantial contribution of these two organizations to our industry. For now the Association looks forward to working with the District of West Kelowna as it moves forward as a valued member of the Water Supply Association.

In closing I would like to say that the Water Supply Association plays a pivotal role in the complex challenges our industry faces. The Directors provide considerable time and effort in carrying out their duties and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize them now.

From the Black Mountain Irrigation District, Vice-Chair Bob Hrasko; from the District of Lake Country, Jack Allingham; from the Regional District of North Okanagan, Al Cotsworth; from the Glenmore-Ellison Improvement District, Nancy Howlett; from the Kaleden Irrigation District, Kevin Huey; from the City of Armstrong, Pat Hickerson; from the Westbank Irrigation District, Brian Jamieson; from the District of Lake Country, Michael Mercer; from the Town of Oliver, Andre Miller, and; from the Lakeview Irrigation District, James Moller.

Honorable mention also goes to two former Directors of the Water Supply Association, who remain involved as sage and trusted liaisons: Stu Mould and Bruce Wilson. Both men have served as the Chair of the Association and both volunteer a considerable amount of time assisting the Board of Directors.

Finally, on behalf of all the Directors and members of the Association, I would like to recognize our most trusted and faithful Secretary/Treasurer, Cheryl Halla. Cheryl works tirelessly for the Association and has done so for many years. For most of you, Cheryl is the Association. Much of the credit for our many successes goes to Cheryl, particularly the organization of such special events as this Annual General Meeting.

In closing I would like to thank our colleges in government, industry and the public who assist us with and value the Association's professional representation of the water supply industry and to you, our membership, for your continued support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toby Pike



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WSABC Chair