



# Newsletter

## FALL 2017

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## Where the Land Meets

by Judie Steeves - Pulse: Good Neighbours September | October 2017 Okanagan Life Magazine

### UBCO PROF LINKS FARMLAND MANAGEMENT WITH ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND SPECIES AT RISK

**B**iologist Lael Parrott, a professor of earth, environmental and geographic sciences at UBCO, notes there are many benefits to well-managed farmland, other than its vital value for food production, particularly in the unique Okanagan ecosystem, which is home to many rare and endangered species found nowhere else in Canada.

Farmland isn't lost forever to natural processes the way that land would be under asphalt or concrete, and native plants left to continue to grow adjacent to tilled land can have benefits for the farm, the natural environment and the community.

Parrott points out that humans also benefit from natural ecosystem such as those found on well-managed agricultural land, including erosion control, habitat for pollinators, local micro-climate regulation, natural pest control, aesthetics water filtration and flood mitigation.

"Best management practices on agricultural land can ensure that these ecosystem services are maintained on our landscape, benefiting landowners and society as a whole," she says.

She also emphasizes the importance of keeping such ecosystems un-fragmented so that animals can move through the Valley.

"Compared to more urbanized land uses, agricultural land often provides opportunities for species to move between habitat patches in the valley bottom.

Sometimes private agricultural land is the only possible option that species have to

move through in order to get from one natural habitat to another," says Parrott. "So allowing for species to traverse agricultural properties, by removing unneeded fencing or other barriers/deterrents and maintaining existing natural vegetation on the property, for example, can be extremely important for conserving biodiversity."

Parrott is leading a study looking at areas suitable for biodiversity conservation on privately-owned agricultural land.

For instance, ecosystem services-benefits, which are often economic, which people obtain from ecosystems-are provided by farmers now. Agriculture also contributes to the quality of life of a community, she says, adding, "Leaving natural buffers between farms and residential neighbourhoods is good for everyone. It raises property values higher with that green space."

"We need to consider such benefits in our land use planning," she believes.

Parrott is in the second year of a study funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Canada, which is focused on exploring possibilities for conserving species at risk habitat on agricultural land, or minimizing the impact of farming on such habitat. Initially the study included the whole Okanagan, but this year, it's been narrowed down to the Central Okanagan, in part because there are other projects under way in that region, which would align well with this study.

*Continued on next page...*

### EDITORIAL

**F**ollowing a very hectic and eventful, if all too short summer, one thing is abundantly clear to the residents of the Okanagan Similkameen. The type of occurrences that we used to expect during our long, hot and dry springs and summers can no longer be taken for granted. The spring of 2017 was wet and windy. Rivers, creeks and lakes overflowed their banks. Infrastructure and lower lying public and private property was flooded. As a result of the precipitation the vegetation, particularly the wild grasses and weeds, experienced an extended growing season.

Then when the temperatures climbed during the summer months the grasses and other vegetation, including the fir and pine needles so ubiquitous in our region, dried out. The winds continued to blow all of the while. This coincided with the early general B.C. wildfire season which included wildfires that decimated the Cariboo and Chilcotin regions and forced people from Cache Creek to William's Lake and out to Anahiem Lake across to Kamloops to evacuate their homes. British Columbia's largest ever recorded wildfire the Plateau Fire happened this summer.

We had wildfires outside of Princeton, Joe Rich, Peachland and Summerland. There were small, quickly extinguished grass fires all up and down the valleys. We were very fortunate that there were no serious losses to wildfires in our area, like there were in

*Continued on next page...*

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other locales in B.C. and Washington state. However the constant smoke, which did invade our valleys, was, and is, a reminder of what could happen and how close we are to an emergency occurring. Our grasslands and timber stands are ripe for burning and subject to human error or lightning strikes. This state of affairs has continued to exist well into the fall.

One only has to look at pictures of the devastation that occurred in Kelowna and Barrier in 2003 to be reminded of what could happen here. Likewise the analogy of California's battles with brush fires, and subsequent loss

of life and homes, can be drawn when the tinder dry grasses, minimum precipitation and hot dry winds are considered. Short duration precipitation will not be enough to change the existing state of affairs.

However, in spite of the conditions, on various walks on the locally open trails many cigarette butts were evident. These were often seen mere centimetres from dry grass or brown needles. It goes without saying that fires, cigarettes and motorized apparatus must be used cautiously in our forests, bushes and grasslands even after the bans on them are removed by the relevant authority. Perhaps the warning signs that have been posted at trailheads should remain up as a reminder.

The large 'Cigarette Sign' that was erected on the Hope Princeton Highway (B.C. #3) during the 1960's and 70's was an excellent reminder of what a wayward spark or but could do.

Likewise, motors without spark guards, hot brake drums and metal on rock concussion can set off a hot smoldering piece of bark, dried grass or other combustible. This is true even on the gravel roads of our region. Most of these roads have very combustible fuel along each side of them. An ember and some wind can result in some serious damage.

Let's keep our region safe.

### *Where the Land Meets continued from front*

In the first year, she says land use policies throughout the Valley were pulled together and meshed with conservation interests to produce a map where critical habitat was over-laid on the agricultural land map.

"There's a lot of adjacency and overlap," she says. "We have a unique habitat; unique ecosystems, especially in the valley bottom where agriculture exists, and where much of the natural habitat has been lost."

Attempts are being made to identify key

wildlife corridors – particularly north and south in the Valley, and between high and low-elevation features.

Parrott notes that a particular area of concern is the City of Kelowna, which now occupies almost all the low-elevation land on the eastern side of the Central Okanagan.

She points to best management practices to promote such activities as encouraging protection of habitat for burrowing owls on rangeland; or leaving borders of farmland natural for the use of creatures such as insects and birds, which also provide pollination services for farmers and insect control.

their natural state as much as possible for the use of birds, bees, butterflies and so on; where fencing is no longer needed, remove it; use sustainable farming practices, such as minimizing the use of chemicals; keep such natural habitat as native trees in place where possible; and identify what is feasible to improve conditions on and around the farm for native creatures.

Unfortunately, the big issues are not related to farming, but revolve around land use issues like loss of habitat and fragmentation. Part of the reason the Okanagan has been selected as a pilot area is because 30 per cent of the species at risk are found here, as well as 45 per cent of species of concern, she explains, warning that farmland will be even more critical the more the Valley builds up.

We still have opportunities to do things differently here. We could be more proactive to such opportunities as maintenance of buffer zones, and we need to designate wildlife corridors.

In collaboration with local planners, a habitat connectivity project will be launched, and she hopes to see some different planning proposals that are more respectful of species at risk, whether amphibians, owls or other birds.

To discuss the project, contact the professor at: lael.parrott@ubc.ca



*Dried vegetation became omnipresent in the Okanagan Similkameen during the Summer and Fall of 2017. This photo of the forest floor was taken only five metres from Trout Creek in mid-October.*

"I view agricultural land as critical to the Okanagan, but we need to recognize its benefit as habitat for wild species; for its air and natural environment protection too," she says.

"And, growers also benefit from natural ecosystems. We all fit into a larger landscape. Neither water nor bees respect property lines."

Parrott suggests there are a number of steps farmers could take to help protect habitat: intentionally leave unused field margins in

## Giant's Head Mountain Trail

**T**he District of Summerland was approved for a sizeable grant from the provincial government on Friday, Oct. 13, 2017.

As part of \$10.1 million in funding announced for rural projects, Summerland received a \$435,000 rural dividend grant.

Mayor Peter Waterman said the money will be used for the trail project in Giant's Head Mountain Park.

"This will not only provide a better use of trails, but it will also bring in environmental aspects to make sure the mountain is properly preserved," he stated.

A master plan had been drafted earlier this year, after a consultant came in and analyzed the environmental sensitivity of the mountain, as well as usage patterns by the public.

"It's a tremendous opportunity for Summerland ... we become more of a destination," Waterman boasted when asked about what he thinks the grant will enable.

He added the project will also include creating specialized features for users on the mountain, in accordance with the activities they are doing.

"People that mountain bike, for example, will have an individual trail pattern that will be different from what they've been using in the past."

Of the 90 local governments, First Nations groups and non-profit groups that were awarded funding from the provincial government, Summerland's grant was the second-largest handed out.

"We certainly appreciate that the government has seen fit to put this in our direction," Waterman said.

Only the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (\$500,000) received a larger grant.

In the South Okanagan, the Town of Osoyoos earned a \$100,000 grant and the Town of Oliver was awarded \$49,660.

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## An update to the Okanagan Lake Foreshore Inventory and Mapping (FIM) report has taken on additional significance in light of this year's historic lake levels.

by J.P. Squire/Special to The Okanagan Weekend – September 30, 2017

**T**he report data was collected last year and a final version was completed last spring to provide a summary on the condition of the Okanagan Lake shoreline in 2016.

It marks the second time that the entire Okanagan Lake shoreline has been catalogued and mapped, and provides excellent information about what the shoreline looked like last year.

That makes it especially useful as governments and property owners recover from the flood and plan for the future. It also provides an ongoing measure of the environmental impacts of development over time.

Last fall, all 290 kilometres of shoreline along Okanagan Lake was surveyed. The 2016 FIM data shows that 59 per cent of the shoreline has already been developed while 41 per cent of the lakefront remain in its natural state.

Rural and residential land use development has been an important factor in the loss of natural shoreline on Okanagan Lake.

Since the initial report in 2011, 4.1 kilometres or 1.42 per cent of the natural Okanagan Lake shoreline was lost or permanently altered. Key changes to the shoreline includes the removal of native vegetation; construction of 165 retaining walls that altered 1.45 kilometres of shoreline; 164 new docks; nine new marinas; more road access; and general landscaping.

Lakebed materials were also disturbed along 4.1 kilometres of the shoreline.

Careful management to maintain natural habitat along the waterfront will be critical to prevent loss of key habitat for species like kokanee salmon, say officials.

Important ecosystem services, like water filtration and flood protection, may also be permanently lost over time unless these areas are better protected. Threatened and endangered species are also very sensitive to disturbance and often have a limited capacity to respond to changes.

"Each small change to the natural areas around the lake has a negative cumulative effect on the natural ecosystem to function and provide services such as clean drinking water, water infiltration, flood control, and

critical habitat for fish and wildlife," said Jason Schleppe, senior biologist with FIM project.

"At the current rate of land development, the natural areas around the lake that are not located in parks or protected areas could be completely lost to development in 40 to 160 years."

This large range reflects the fact that development rates go up and down from year to year. However, without any changes, all of the remaining unprotected natural shoreline along Okanagan Lake could be lost within the next generation or two.

In addition, the 2016 FIM project provides key information to resource managers to promote and implement better shoreline management. Understanding the rate of change can assist in developing plans that preserve important habitat.

The main recommendations of the report outline the need for collaborative action by everyone involved including development of an Okanagan Lake shoreline management plan.

The report also calls for more active support and engagement through education and outreach initiatives around shoreline management.



## NOTES FROM THE PAST

### Vacuuming Rivers ...and Wallets

BY JOE FOY

*Watershed Sentinel – September/October 2009*

A fellow I knew once told me how he spent a summer selling vacuum cleaners door to door in small towns on the prairies. He soon developed a simple three step programme. First, he would get invited into the home. Second, he would find dust under the sofa and in the corners. He's talk and talk about potential health effects, until the dust bunnies under the couch took on the proportions of King Kong. And third, he just happened to have the solution to the "dust problem" in the trunk of his car - a brand new vacuum cleaner. In the wink of an eye people were making monthly payments on vacuum cleaners they didn't even know they needed!

That's exactly what is going on in BC right now with our wild rivers.

The BC Liberal government of Gordon Campbell has teamed up with private power companies to sell us unreliable hydro-power we can't use, can't afford, and don't want. And so far they are doing pretty good for themselves, with signed long-term contracts

worth 31 billion dollars and hundreds of wild rivers staked for future power projects. If the massive Bute Inlet project goes through, the public will be on the hook to the private power guys for more than \$50 billion, which is larger than the provincial debt! Ever so grateful, the private power guys have been donating to the BC Liberals like crazy. So, how did they do it? It's been pretty much like selling vacuum cleaners. First, the provincial government invited the private power companies into the province by bringing in the 2002 Energy Plan.

The 2002 Energy Plan manufactures the need for private hydro-power by restricting BC Hydro's ability to plan and build new hydro power plants. BC Hydro has been ordered to buy power from the private guys in long-term contracts at far above market rates.

And Hydro has been ordered to buy a lot of power, in part because Hydro is no longer allowed to rely as much on Port Moody's Burrard Thermal power plant as a back-up for winter-time peak power use or for an emergency. The result has been a staking good rush on BC's wild mountain rivers, as companies make plans to dam and divert them for power production. But BC's wild mountain rivers freeze up in the winter months, which makes private power a lousy, unreliable, and expensive winter backup power source.

And that's exactly what the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) ruled on July 27 when they stated that the BC government should rely on Burrard Thermal as a back-up power plant instead of the private power guys, and do more to conserve power. The BCUC rightly concluded that, though the Burrard plant has a massive power potential, it sits idle for most of the time like a spare tire in the back of a car.

### Conkle Lake Park

In the early years of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society the South Okanagan was represented by Joe Smith, Bill Kreller and Doug Fraser as Directors. Their local interests and efforts helped secure the preservation of the Vaseux California big Horn Sheep range, the Haynes Ecological Reserve at the north end of Osoyoos Lake and Conkle Lake Provincial Park northeast of Bridesville.

There are two access routes to Conkle Lake Park:

- off Highway 33, 4 miles (6 km) north of west bridge via Ripperto Creek Forest Service Road, a 26 km long, single lane very rough gravel road, but handy if traveling Highway 33 south of Kelowna



One of the many provincial, regional and municipal signs warning trail users to exercise extreme caution. In spite of these warnings 'human caused' fires still occurred.



The indicator needle never dropped below EXTREME for the entire Summer and Fall of 2017 in the Okanagan Similkameen. Luckily, this region did not experience the same devastation as other parts of the province.

## NOTES FROM THE PAST

• or from highway 3, just west of Johnstone Creek Provincial Park (between Bridesville and Rock Creek) via Johnstone Creek West Road – Conkle Lake Road, which is well signed at Highway 3 and at side roads, 25km gravel, mostly rough both roads are listed as 2 wheel drive. With no recent logging in the area these roads have not been maintained for several years.

A good reference is the “Backroad Map Book”, published by Mussio Ventures Ltd. Vol III, Kamloops/Okanagan, available at book stores and sports shops. This is in response to a detailed request by the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society. Conkle Lake Park was established March 15, 1973. It has an area of 1467 acres (587 ha), with 34 vehicle/tent campsites and 2 groups camp sites located on a bench above the north end of the lake. Also provided are pit toilets, hand pumped water and a car top boat launch.

The lake lies north-south, at an elevation of approximately 3700ft. (1228m) is 1.9 miles (3km) long and the north, (campground end) of the lake is a 550yds (500m) wide sandy beach as shown on the enclosed photo. The south facing aspect of the camp ground and beach result in warming this site, beach and

water early in the camping season makes swimming great for a longer season. Besides swimming the lake also provides reasonably good fishing.

A hiking trail circles the lake as well as leads to the west from the campground to a scenic falls. This is a very busy Park and Campground in the summer months but lightly used after Labour Day.

It is thanks to the foresight of your early directors and your Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society we have this gem of a Provincial Park today.

**T**he Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society endorses the South Okanagan Naturalists Club by the following letter. We trust Mr. Barisoff will give a positive concrete answer as to action taken re: Off Road Vehicles control.

South Okanagan Naturalists Club October 17, 2009 the Honourable W. Barisoff, Speaker & M.L.A. Parliament Buildings Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Dear Mr. Barisoff:

We remain concerned that your government has not yet introduced an act to control ORVs (off road vehicles) as detailed in the enclosed copies of our two previous letters about ORVs (March 2009 and March 2007). So far, we have not received a reply to either of these two previous letters. I attended the all-candidates meeting in Penticton last spring where you said that you always provide feedback to each of your constituents. you also said that your role as Speaker does not impede your responsibilities as our MLA. Since most, if not all, of our some 100 members are also your constituents, we hope to receive a reply to this letter and our two previous letters in the near future. Please note that the mailing address on our two previous letters is no longer correct due to the closure of Penticton's downtown post office, so please reply to the return address on this letter. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Dr. J. E. Bryan, Conservation  
Committee Chair, South Okanagan  
Naturalists Club

Cc: BC Nature, Okanagan Similkameen  
Parks Society



*Water and open, natural habitat are important to all sorts of wildlife. This turtle is headed into Swan Lake, close to Okanagan Lake.*



*Another turtle suns himself on the muddy banks. Water and shoreline conservation may be the last thing on our minds after the Spring Floods but J.P. Squires article give an indication of the changes that are occurring every day. What is it that we may be in for in the near future if the habitat along the shorelines is continually taken over by 'man'?*

# OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY

Box 787, Summerland, BC V0H 1Z0

Website: [www.OkanaganSimilkameenParksSociety.ca/com/org](http://www.OkanaganSimilkameenParksSociety.ca/com/org)

E-mail: [info@OkanaganSimilkameenParksSociety.org](mailto:info@OkanaganSimilkameenParksSociety.org)

CRA Registration Number: 119066199RR0001



## Statement of Income and Expense

For the Year Ending 2016 December 31

	2016	
<b>Income</b>	\$	
Private Donations (receipted+non-receipted)	2,778.89	
OSPS Membership Dues	570.00	
SDCU Interest / Dividends / Bonuses Earned	1,092.91	
Mutual Fund Cash Dividends	340.20	
Gifts from Registered Charity / Will Bequest	1,449.48	
Sales (books, calendars, posters)	449.50	
GST / PST rebate (57%)	0.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,680.98</b>	Total-up ^
<b>Expense</b>		1433.11
Administration	0.00	
Advertising & Promotion	0.00	
Box rental / postage / shipping	223.65	
Charitable Society Costs (BC, CRA)	40.00	
Cost of goods to sell	0.00	
Equipment purchases	0.00	
Equipment depreciation	0.00	
Events / workshops expense	162.83	
Gifts / Honorariums	67.20	
Insurance premiums	300.00	
Interest paid / late fees / cheque fees	0.00	
Meeting room rental	388.00	
Memberships in other organizations	259.00	
Office supplies & expense	97.31	
OSPS newsletter layout / printing / postage	902.85	
OSPS Programs	400.00	
Printing & copying-general	0.00	
Professional services	0.00	
Support to Purchase / Manage Conservation Lands	10,000.00	
Travel: accommodation / mileage / meals	1,196.51	
Website domain names / hosting	0.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,037.35</b>	Total-up ^
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expense:</b>	<b>(7,356.37)</b>	





# Answers to Some Questions About a Proposed National Park

BY RICHARD CANNINGS, M.P.  
Nov. 6, 2017

Federal and provincial environment ministers and local First Nations chiefs announced last week that they will re-open talks to create a national park in the south Okanagan.

This was the latest step in long process that began in 2002, when a delegation of local mayors, First Nations leaders, and other concerned citizens met with Prime Minister Jean Chretien to convince him that a national park was needed in this area.

That visit led to a federal-provincial agreement, and in 2011 a feasibility study recommended proceeding with the park proposal.

The provincial government subsequently dropped out of the process, but re-entered it in 2016 with an intentions paper that eventually announced a renewed interest in a national park.

I believe that a national park would be a tremendous legacy for the valley, both in terms of conservation, the economic activity it would stimulate, and the facilities it would provide for resident and visitors alike.

Scientific public opinion polls have found strong support for the park proposal in the region, however it's understandable that many local residents have questions and concerns.

I'd like to cover a few of those here, with the caveat that I can't presume to know all the exact details of the final park proposal, since many of them will be worked out over the months (and years) to come.

What area is covered by the park proposal? Previous park boundaries outlined in the 2011 feasibility study and the provincial intentions paper would suggest that the park would consist of the South Okanagan Grasslands Protected Area (Crown Lands on the east side of the Okanagan Valley from Mount Kobau south), and perhaps also the White Lake Grasslands Protected Area (Crown Lands south-

west of Okanagan Falls) and the Vaseux Bighorn National Wildlife area.

Private lands are not included, as they would only be added to the park on a willing seller basis. There will be no change in private land use regulations in place now as the result of a new park.

Ranching: It's important that any new park proposal should accommodate people who make their livelihoods on the Crown Lands in question, so it is heartening to hear that Parks Canada has indicated that this would be the first National Park allowing grazing exactly as it had been done under provincial regulations.

Helicopter training: HNZ Topflight is a significant economic driver in the south Okanagan. They now operate under permit with BC Parks and would have to obtain a similar permit from Parks Canada when a new park is established. I recently met with HNZ, and they have already met with Parks Canada about their concerns; they are "cautiously optimistic" that this issue will be resolved to their satisfaction.

Fishing is allowed in National Parks.

Firewood cutting is already not allowed in the provincial Protected Areas that could become part of the new National Park. Most people I've talked to get their firewood on the east side of the Okanagan Valley in areas not included in the previously proposed park boundaries.

If you have other concerns or comments, please email me at [Richard.Cannings@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Richard.Cannings@parl.gc.ca).



**Welcome to OSCA's**



**Bird Migration Program**



This project was undertaken with the financial support of:  
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada



Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

*OSCA hosted an educational weekend at the marshes adjacent to Vaseux Lake. Netting and banding local birds along with informative talks and demonstrations were on the agenda. Plans to share more in the next newsletter are underway.*



# Vaughn Palmer: Review raises doubts about Site C's costs, schedule

SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

**V**ictoria – An independent review for the B.C. Utilities Commission raises new doubts about whether B.C. Hydro can stick to its commitment to finish Site C on time and on budget.

Both goals are at risk, with the project in danger of falling a full year behind schedule for diverting the Peace River while eating through the initial contingency budget at a prodigious rate.

This according to a report from Deloitte LLP, the international accounting and financial consulting firm brought in by the commission to help answer key questions in the NDP-cabinet ordered review of Site C.

Though the firm relied on information provided by B.C. Hydro itself, the findings go beyond anything the Crown corporation has acknowledged in media briefings and public reporting.

The most immediate concern is with the main civil works contract for excavation of the river banks, building the coffer dams and tunnels to divert the river, and then constructing the giant earthworks dam itself.

At the outset of this year, the contractor was already falling behind schedule, according to Deloitte.

Then on Feb. 11, a 400-metre-long tension crack opened up on the north bank, forcing a 10-week halt to construction on that side of the river. Barely had construction resumed when a second 250-metre-long tension crack emerged on the same side of the river.

The builder has advised Hydro that those and other causes for delay will mean a seven-month setback to the construction schedule. Hydro rejected that forecast and instead entered into talks with the builder to make up for lost time on the first crack and to mitigate any problems associated with the second.

Because Hydro did not share details, Deloitte could only guess at the outcome. The key question is whether it would affect the most critical milestone in the schedule, diversion of the river itself.

This can only happen in a narrow window when the Peace is at low water and the upstream W.A.C. Bennett dam is available to help manage the flow. Target date is September 2019 and if that is missed, diversion would have to be put off a full year.

“The ability to hit the start of river diversion milestone is at considerable risk,” says Deloitte. “As the mitigation plan is still under development, we are unable to comment on the likelihood of success. Lastly, we do not have information on the potential costs of implementing the mitigation plan.”

Adding to the uncertainties is the fact one of the three partners to the contract has declared bankruptcy and been terminated from working on the project.

“While according to B.C. Hydro this termination will not have a significant impact, Deloitte is of the view that this termination will create a period of instability that may impact the ability (of the remaining partners) to meet the planned work schedule in the short to medium term.”

Nor is that the end of potential obstacles to the claim of on time and on budget. Not likely will those tension cracks be the last problem in an area with significant geotechnical risks, many only vaguely understood.

Hydro has yet to award major contracts for the generating station and spillway and the transmission project. And as Deloitte notes somewhat dismissively, the experience with the civil works contract to date “raises concerns” about Hydro’s ability to accurately estimate large contracts.

“Should these contracts have similar discrepancies between planned versus actual values, the project contingency may be insufficient to cover them.”

All of which feeds into the second major concern identified in the Deloitte report, the prospect of budget overruns.

Hydro’s initial contingency fund for Site C was \$794 million, which Deloitte reckons to be about half the optimum margin of safety on a project the size and scope of Site C.

Sure enough, Hydro has already been forced to commit \$356 million worth of contingencies, thereby blowing through almost half of the initial budget in the first two years of an eight-year construction schedule. Alas the breakdown of those commitments is blanked out in the report for “confidentiality” reasons.

The saving grace on the contingency side was the decision by Treasury Board in the Ministry of Finance to set aside a further \$440 million as a second contingency. Plus Hydro reaped a \$400 million windfall owing to lower than budgeted interest rates on project borrowing.

But if the Bank of Canada proceeds with its recent signals on interest rates, that \$400-million advantage could readily be reversed. And the report warns that further setbacks could readily devour the rest of the contingency funding as well.

Deloitte then outlined three possible scenarios for the \$8.8 billion project.

If Hydro keeps construction on track for a river diversion two years from now, Deloitte reckons it can be delivered on schedule at the end of 2024 and a cost of no more than \$9.2 billion.

If the diversion has to be put off for a year but there are no other major setbacks, Deloitte’s medium risk scenario forecasts a price tag of up to \$10 billion.

But if the one-year delay is compounded by other setbacks in delivery and cost-containment, then the worst case scenario has the tab running as high as \$12.5 billion.

Deloitte next turned to costing three options proposed by the cabinet: keep going with Site C, suspend operations or cancel it outright?

But that is a topic for another day.

VAUGHN PALMER  
*Vancouver Sun*

<http://vancouver.sun.com/opinion/columnists/vaughn-palmer-review-raises-doubts-about-site-cs-costs-schedule>

# MEMBERSHIP FORM Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society • Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual (\$10.00) \_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_ Organization (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ (Income Tax Deductible) ☐ I wish to receive the OSPS newsletter by email

\_\_\_\_\_

## Request for Assistance

**T**he OSPS is one of a rare breed of not-for-profit, all-volunteer societies which operates “in the black” without any government funding. Thanks to current and past members’ generosity, and a couple of extremely considerate legacies, along with careful democratic budgetary operations, the OSPS is financially stable. Through it all the society has managed over the years to have great success in the South Okanagan-Similkameen region.

However, your memberships are not just important, they are essential to the contin-

ued effectiveness and existence of the OSPS. Please complete the membership form in this issue and encourage others to renew or become new members. We are aware that you have much to share with others regarding the value of the OSPS in the past, and the need for it to continue into the future. This is very important as we continue to address the unrelenting pressure on our beautiful, fragile valleys.

Volunteers who would like to be more active would be encouraged to apply to join our board of directors. We currently need 3 or

4 new directors on the Board. We typically meet 10 times a year (not July and August), on the first Tuesday of each month. We have been meeting in Summerland as we draw from Kelowna in the North and Osoyoos in the south. Please consider the idea.

Keep those email addresses coming, so that you may receive the newsletter electronically. Should you have an idea for an article or story please feel free to submit it. We hope that you will find this and all issues entertaining and informative.



*The hornets have dug in for the long term. Industrious members of the Okanagan ecosystem, these residents have created a home for themselves.*



*Not to be outdone the intrepid wasps have also built a nest in the low trees and grass. Note the dryness of their neighborhood.*