

## REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

### INFORMATION RELEASE – on behalf of Dobson Engineering

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#### 2018 Flood Recovery Meeting | Lake Country

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First Nations, provincial and municipal representatives gathered in Lake Country on June 25, 2018 to share successes, challenges and lessons learned during this year's spring freshet.

The 2018 Flood Recovery meeting was organized by water resources engineer Don Dobson, of Dobson Engineering. Invitations were extended to Okanagan First Nations, regional districts, and municipalities as well as Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development (FLNRORD,) Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTi,) and Emergency Management BC (EMBC).

During the four-hour meeting, a range of issues were discussed including maintaining and restoring natural drainage paths, water licenses for channel maintenance, disaster financial assistance, flood recovery, orphan dikes, kettle lakes, and future flood mitigation. "With various agencies working in multi-jurisdictional settings, forums like this can help improve the process of flood response and recovery," says Dobson. "This is also an opportunity to work cooperatively on the complex issues around temporary versus permanent works."

Trevor Bohay, Section Head, Regional Water Management with FLNRORD says First Nations consultation early in flood mitigation projects is key. "Reach out to and include First Nations as you start building your plan," says Bohay. A report is expected in 2020 looking at the state of dikes in the province. Bohay says the report will assess who owns the dikes and whether they are up to current provincial standards. "We also need to work collectively to improve floodplain mapping," says Dobson who provided details on a plan currently being managed by the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) to do just that. "We have a very narrow window to come up with creative solutions and to make some of these fixes permanent."

Paul Edmonds, coordinator of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen's Emergency Management Program also attended the forum. "The key to moving forward from the 2018 flood is working together," says Edmonds. "I'm pleased with the commitment from the ministries to discuss details on how we can restore flood impacted areas throughout the Okanagan Valley." Edmonds is organizing a meeting with engineers and ministries to discuss flood restoration options in the Sportsmens Bowl and Park Rill areas near Oliver.

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**Background:** Don Dobson has devoted more than 45 years to issues surrounding water resources in British Columbia. Having spent a combined 17 years with the Federal and Provincial Governments, Don has been instrumental in the development and implementation of industry guidelines.