

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER

Ref #: 166425

FOR MEETING

Date: March 9, 2016

Title: Gallagher Lake Irrigation System Rock Slide and Damage to Intake

Meeting with: Mayor Ron Hovanes, Town of Oliver; Ministers of Agriculture, Transportation and Emergency Management, and CSCD, on Thursday, March 10, 2016.

Issue: A rock slide at Gallagher Lake has damaged and buried a large irrigation intake pipe and intake siphon meaning that there is currently no irrigation water supply to about 600 agricultural and industrial users in the South Okanagan. The Town of Oliver is seeking financial support to restore service and repair damage.

Background:

January 25 – Rock slide occurred damaging the irrigation system intake at Gallagher Lake. This is a 1950mm reinforced concrete pipe which was generally designed and buried to an appropriate depth to withstand force; however some of the rocks which came down upon it were sufficiently large as to breach the protective layer of soils over the pipe. Access is restricted to the site and the infrastructure is buried. The system cannot supply water without the intake functioning, which is affecting about 600 agricultural and industrial users (fruit orchards and vineyards).

February 2 – The Town of Oliver met with engineering consultants to discuss options and do an onsite assessment. The area is very unstable at this time of the year. Rock scaling has commenced, damage assessment will follow. The Town worked to confirm technical and logistical options for clearing the site and replacing the pipe.

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Mandate Considerations: N/A
Liquefied Natural Gas Considerations: N/A
Fiscal Considerations: Dependent upon Cabinet / Treasury Board approval.
First Nations Considerations: The main staging area for work is on Okanagan Indian Band lands. Oliver has a Band Resolution giving access to lands to fix the pipe and will endeavour to minimize damage and will complete restorations.
Communications: N/A

Discussion:

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No state of emergency was declared so no funding is available through EMBC via the *Emergency Program Act*.

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The Town of Oliver has been working on twinning its water system (separating out irrigation from potable) and received grant funding under CBCIP (2003), BCCWIP (2005), MRIF (2008), Gas Tax (2013) and some smaller water system projects under Towns for Tomorrow.

Recommended Response:

- We are concerned with the effects that this natural disaster could have on the Oliver community, it agriculture industry and the economy.

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- Restoration of the intake is not eligible under current infrastructure grant programs such as the New Building Canada Fund – Small Communities Fund as work has commenced.
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