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## CITY OF KELOWNA

# MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** March 5, 2007  
**File No.:** 1220-20

**To:** Ron Mattiussi, City Manager

**From:** Ian Wilson, Urban Forestry Supervisor

**Subject:** Application for Okanagan Basin Water Board Funding – Okanagan Regional Goose Management Strategy and Action Plan

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT City Council supports a joint application with the City of Vernon, City of Penticton, Town of Osoyoos and District of Summerland to the Okanagan Basin Water Board Water Management Grants program, for \$30,000 + in funding to assist with the implementation of the Okanagan Regional Goose Management Strategy and Action Plan.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Okanagan Regional Goose Management Committee was formed in 1995 to address ways to minimize the impact of geese within an urban environment. Participating municipalities and funding partners include the City of Vernon, City of Penticton, Town of Osoyoos and the District of Summerland. Over the years the Committee has met with some success but is of the opinion that goose populations are increasing and contributing to poor beach water quality.

Canada geese are congregating on beaches up and down the Valley where water quality samples in summer show e-Coli counts reaching threshold levels. The City has embarked on a two year study with the University of Victoria to better determine the source of e-Coli water contaminants. The preliminary results indicate that more than 60% of the e-Coli originate from avian sources.

IHA introduced new standards for beach water quality monitoring and advisories in 2006, causing significant concern throughout the Okanagan Valley. In 2006, several Kelowna beaches were very close to reaching levels requiring swimming advisories, in spite of our on-going efforts to improve water quality. Swimming advisories due to decreased recreational water quality will have a negative impact on the quality of life Kelowna residents enjoy today as well as the tourism industry. Research by Tourism Kelowna indicates that the number one activity visitors engage in while visiting Kelowna is visiting parks and beaches. We are confident the complete implementation of the Action Plan will greatly reduce the likelihood of swimming advisories in 2007.

In July 2006 Robertson Environmental Services Limited and Ophiuchus Consulting completed the Okanagan Regional Goose Management Strategy and Action Plan on behalf of the Committee. The report, which recommended the City continue to participate on the Committee to minimize the impact of geese on our beach parks and sportsfields throughout the Okanagan Valley and that a zero tolerance waterfowl policy be adopted on beach parks, was presented to and approved by City Council on September 11, 2006.

In January 2006 EBB Environmental Inc. was awarded the contract to implement the Okanagan Regional Goose Management Strategy and Action Plan which includes public education, reduction of geese in conflict areas, population control by egg addling, scare tactics, relocation of geese, lethal damage control, on-going monitoring of goose populations and program administration. The program is expected to cost approximately \$150,000 annually including aerial surveys to ensure accurate monitoring of the goose population.

The scope of the program will ultimately be determined by the partnering municipalities' ability to secure funding through the budget process or the reallocation of funds from current operational budgets. To ensure the Committee is able to implement as much of the action plan as possible staff is recommending submitting an application to the Okanagan Basin Water Board for funding.

Individual grants range between \$3,000 and \$30,000 however staff is requesting the adjudicators consider additional funding due to the regional scope of the program. One of the strengths of the application is that five municipalities representing three regional districts are working in collaboration to best address the problem, and not simply move it to other areas in the Okanagan Valley. In 2006 \$645,987 worth of eligible proposals were submitted for the \$300,000 allocation.

If successful the program will have a positive impact on recreational water quality, local watersheds and water reservoirs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Wilson", is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Ian Wilson  
Urban Forestry Supervisor