

**Site Name:**  
Okanagan River Corridor

**Physical Address:**

**RDOSCHR017**

**Photograph by Lynn Alaric**



**Description of Site:**

This site consists of the river course and the riparian corridor through which the river passes. This site includes the southern section of Vaseux Lake which is in Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen Area C, and the entire length of the river through Area C to the southern border at Road 22. Also included are the oxbow lakes which mark the previous course of the river meanders, and the man made elements for control of water flow. Significant features of the river may be seen at:

Feature	Northing (degrees.minutes.seconds)	Westing (degrees.minutes.seconds)
Lagoons	49.16.14	119.31.50
Relatively undisturbed	49.14.16	119.31.51
Oxbow restoration	49.12.39	119.32.41
Channelization	49.9.32	119.32.53
Shippet Oxbow	49.6.46	119.34.9

**Heritage Value of Site:**

**Economic:**

The Okanagan River is the source of the water used in irrigation for the crops grown in the Oliver area. Without this significant water resource, the agricultural activity would not be possible. The river also serves as a reminder of the past fur trapping activity in the early part of the 1800's.

**Environmental/ Scientific:**

The River has been identified as the third most endangered river in Canada because of the stress on this water resource. The river has been altered significantly through this section of the Okanagan Valley in order to control water flow, and the engineering and control of the river has been a major activity since Colonization. The resulting change in the ecosystem has prompted efforts to restore natural habitat for spawning salmon and other native plant and animal species. Throughout the history of water use, the riparian area has been important to sustaining wildlife present throughout the valley, most especially species of birds that make this corridor a recognized bird watching area.

**Landmark:**

The Okanagan River is a landmark used by travelers to mark passage through the area. Most locations in Area C are described in reference to where they are found relative to the River. The presence of the Okanagan River affirms ties this area has to other settlements further north, and south to the United States, ultimately debouching at the Columbia River. It is from the River that this area is recognized as the Okanagan Valley.

First Nations:

Before Colonization, the River was the source of salmon which was the main food resource for the Okanagan Nation. Camps and permanent settlements were located along the length of the river in this section of the Valley.

Recreation:

The river has been enjoyed for thousands of years as a place to swim, and as a place to hunt and fish. The riparian area along the river dykes has been developed as a section of an international hike and bike trail.

**Character Defining Elements:**

- The presence of water which flows from Vaseux Lake through to the southern border of Area C
- The presence of engineered works to use water from the river as an irrigation source
- The presence of engineered earthworks to control the flow of water in a relatively straight course where required to conserve agricultural land
- The presence of engineered weirs to control rate of water flow
- The presence of oxbows lakes and meanders in the river
- The presence of activity to encourage salmon habitat
- The presence of a hike and bike trail
- The presence of a riparian area which includes unique plant and animal species
- The presence of archaeological sites
- The use of the site as a bird watching area
- The use of the river and corridor as a recreational area

# BC Register of Historic Places (Mandatory)

## Okanagan River Corridor

Unique FPT Identifier

### LOCATION

Address #	Street	Community	Postal	Cadastral
		Oliver	V0H 1T0	Lagoons 49.16.14 119.31.50; Relatively undisturbed 49.14.16 119.31.51; Oxbow restoration 49.12.39 119.32.41; Channelization 49.9.32 119.32.53; Shippet Oxbow 49.6.46 119.34.9

### DESCRIPTION

<b>Description</b>	This site consists of the river course and the riparian corridor through which the river passes. This site includes the southern section of Vaseux Lake which is in Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen Area C, and the entire length of the river through Area C to the southern border at Road 22. Also included are the oxbow lakes which mark the previous course of the river meanders, and the man made elements for control of water flow. Significant feature locations are listed above.
<b>Description of boundaries</b>	Oliver Rural
<b>Heritage value</b>	<p><b>Economic:</b> The Okanagan River is the source of the water used in irrigation for the crops grown in the Oliver area. Without this significant water resource, the agricultural activity would not be possible. The river also serves as a reminder of the past fur trapping activity in the early part of the 1800's.</p> <p><b>Environmental/ Scientific:</b> The River has been identified as the third most endangered river in Canada because of the stress on this water resource. The river has been altered significantly through this section of the Okanagan Valley in order to control water flow, and the engineering and control of the river has been a major activity since Colonization. The resulting change in the ecosystem has prompted efforts to restore natural habitat for spawning salmon and other native plant and animal species. Throughout the history of water use, the riparian area has been important to sustaining wildlife present throughout the valley, most especially species of birds that make this corridor a recognized bird watching area.</p> <p><b>Landmark:</b> The Okanagan River is a landmark used by travelers to mark passage through the area. Most locations in Area C are described in reference to where they are found relative to the River. The presence of the Okanagan River affirms ties this area has to other settlements further north, and south to the United States, ultimately debouching at the Columbia River. It is from the River that this area is recognized as the Okanagan Valley.</p> <p><b>First Nations:</b> Before Colonization, the River was the source of salmon which was the main food resource for the Okanagan Nation. Camps and permanent settlements were located along the length of the river in this section of the Valley.</p> <p><b>Recreation:</b> The river has been enjoyed for thousands of years as a place to swim, and as a place to hunt and fish. The riparian area along the river dykes has been developed as a section of an international hike and bike trail.</p>
<b>Character-Defining elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The presence of water which flows from Vaseux Lake through to the southern border of Area C</li> <li>-The presence of engineered works to use water from the river as an irrigation source</li> <li>-The presence of engineered earthworks to control the flow of water in a relatively straight course where required to conserve agricultural land</li> <li>-The presence of engineered weirs to control rate of water flow</li> <li>-The presence of oxbows lakes and meanders in the river</li> <li>-The presence of activity to encourage salmon habitat</li> <li>-The presence of a hike and bike trail</li> <li>-The presence of a riparian area which includes unique plant and animal species</li> <li>-The presence of archaeological sites</li> <li>-The use of the site as a bird watching area</li> <li>-The use of the river and corridor as a recreational area</li> </ul>

# BC Register of Historic Places (Mandatory)

## Okanagan River Corridor

### Functional Type

### Contributing Resources

Type	Era	#	Type
Route	Historic	4	Structure
Traditional Trail or Trading Route	Current	Unli	Landscape(s) or Landscape Feature(s)
Traditional Trail or Trading Route	Historic		
Nature Element	Current		
Nature Element	Historic		
Buried Site	Current		
Hunting or Resource Harvesting Site	Historic		
Sports Facility or Site	Current		
Pedestrian Way	Current		

### FORMAL RECOGNITION

Statute	Enactment	Date
Community Heritage Register	B185/09A	March 19, 2

### COMMENTS and INFORMATION (not used by registrar)