

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Electoral Area Services Committee

FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 5, 2026

RE: Review of Osoyoos Lake Floodplain Mapping (A2026.002-ZONE)

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Okanagan Valley Zoning Bylaw No. 2800, 2022, be amended in order to incorporate a floodplain elevation of 280.80 metres Geodetic Survey of Canada (GSC) datum for Osoyoos Lake.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from the Board regarding a proposed revision to the floodplain elevation for Osoyoos Lake in Electoral Area "A".

Strategic Priorities: Operational

Statutory Authority:

Under Section 524 (Requirements in relation to floodplain areas) of the *Local Government Act*, "if a local government considers that flooding may occur ... [it] *may* [emphasis added], by bylaw, designate the land as a floodplain."

If a local government designates land as a floodplain, it *may*, by bylaw, further "specify ... the flood level for the floodplain, and ... the setback from a watercourse, body of water or dike of any landfill or structural support required to elevate a floor system or pad above the flood level."

Further, in adopting a floodplain bylaw a local government "must consider the Provincial guidelines", being the latest version of the *Flood Hazard Area Land Use Management Guidelines* (2004). The stated objective of these guidelines is to:

reduce or prevent injury, human trauma and loss of life, and minimize property damage during flooding events. Experience has shown that regulating land development to keep people out of harm's way is the most practical and cost effective way of achieving these goals.

Importantly, in adopting a floodplain regulation bylaw, a local government retains authority to grant exemptions if it considers it advisable *and* the exemption is consistent with the Provincial guidelines or has received a report from a qualified professional that the land may be used safely for the use intended.

Background:

The Regional District has, since at least 1981, regulated development within the floodplain associated with Osoyoos Lake through its zoning bylaw and designated the "floodplain" as being any area with an elevation lower than 280.70 Geodetic Survey of Canada (GSC) datum.

These regulations have further required that the floor system or pad which supports a habitable area (e.g. the underside of the wooden floor system), is not lower than the flood construction level, which is generally the 200-year flood level shown on available provincial mapping.

The provincial mapping that the Regional District has relied on to apply these regulations was prepared in the late 1980s.

At its meeting of January 13, 2026, the Town of Osoyoos Council adopted amendments to its Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw in order to increase the floodplain elevation of Osoyoos Lake within the Town's municipal boundaries from 280.70 metres GSC datum to 280.80 metres GSC datum.

These amendments were based upon the recommendations contained within a *Flood Mitigation Plan* (2022) completed by TRUE Consulting Limited and incorporating data from the Okanagan Basin Water Board's Okanagan Mainstem Floodplain Mapping (2020) project.

It is understood that these changes to the floodplain elevation within the Town's boundaries did not result in any additional parcels being included within the floodplain for Osoyoos Lake.

Analysis:

As a matter of consistency, Administration supports amending the floodplain elevation of Osoyoos Lake from 280.70 metres GSC datum to 280.80 metres GSC datum.

This is in recognition that property owners, developers, and professional consultants may have interests and undertake work on parcels within both the Town of Osoyoos and Electoral Area "A" and a consistent approach to flood hazard regulations demonstrates a commitment to regional best practices.

Unlike the current floodplain maps prepared by the province in the 1980s, Administration understands that the increase from 280.70 to 280.80 metres GSC datum is based on advanced Lidar mapping completed by the OBWB.

Should the Board be supportive of this proposed amendment, updated mapping incorporating the new datum will need to be prepared, likely under contract, and used to replace the existing provincial floodplain mapping. In addition, a minor textual amendment to Section 10.1.2(g) of the Okanagan Valley Zoning Bylaw will be required.

Should the Board resolve to initiate an amendment, it is proposed that consultation with affected property owners in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act* and the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw be undertaken.

In addition, if a change is implemented, all new development within the floodplain will be required to meet the 280.80 metre elevation, while existing development will enjoy non-conforming siting rights under Section 529 of the *Local Government Act* (if lawfully established prior to any bylaw change).

Alternative:

Conversely, the option of maintaining the existing floodplain elevation of 280.70 metres GSC datum for Osoyoos Lake is available to the Board.

Summary:

For the reasons outlined above, Administration supports the initiation of an amendment bylaw in order to update the floodplain elevation of Osoyoos Lake to 280.80 metres GSC datum.

Financial Implications:

Financial implications have been considered, and it is likely that a financial cost will be incurred in order to have new floodplain mapping for Osoyoos Lake prepared by a qualified consulting firm. Funds are available in the Electoral Area Planning budget to address this.

Communication Strategy:

The proposed bylaw amendment(s) have been notified in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act* as well as the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw No. 2500, 2011.

Alternatives:

1. Status quo.

Will a PowerPoint presentation be presented at the meeting? Yes

Respectfully submitted:



C. Garrish, Senior Manager of Planning

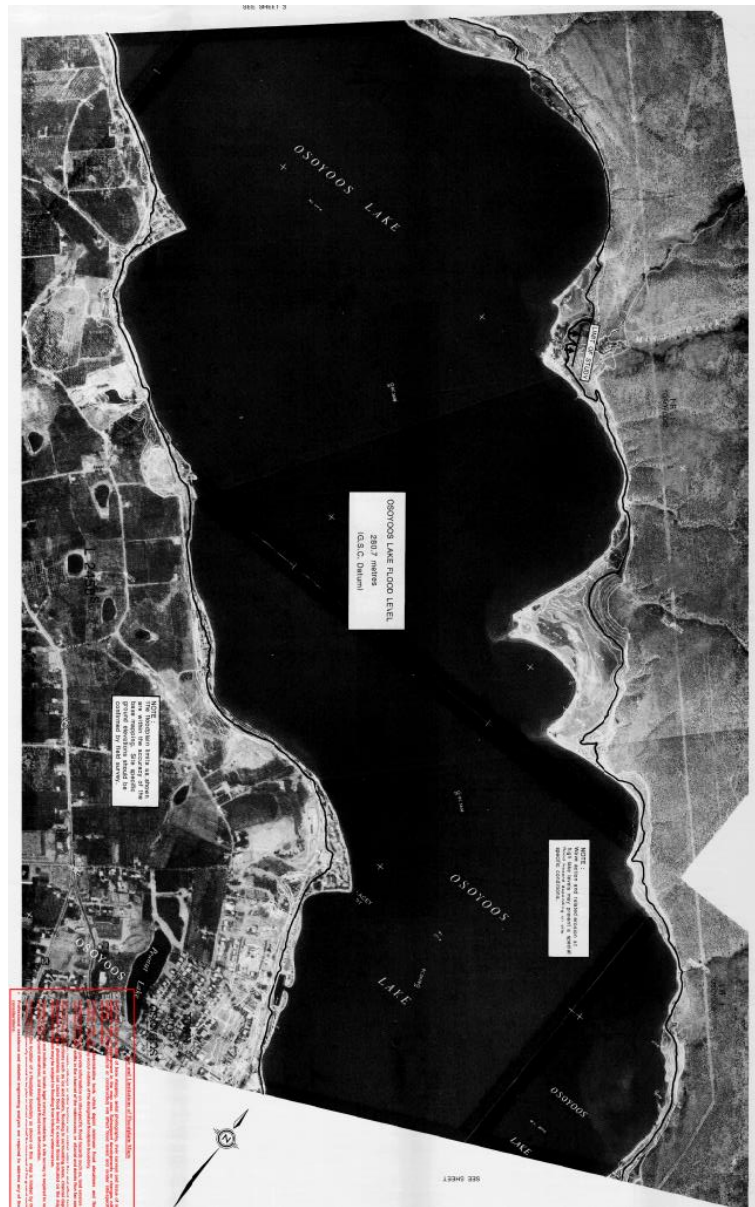
Endorsed By:



A. Fillion, Managing Director, Dev. & Infrastructure

Attachments: No. 1 – Osoyoos Lake Provincial Floodplain Maps (1989)

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Review of Osoyoos Lake Floodplain (Electoral Area "A")