

# Area “E” Director Newsletter

## Information from the desk of Adrienne Fedrigo

### June 2026

#### SOFI Report

The 2025 Statement of Financial Information (SOFI) provides transparency on the remuneration and expenses associated with my role as Electoral Area “E” Director. It includes costs related to meetings, travel, and conferences that support advocacy, funding opportunities, professional development, and informed decision-making, helping deliver value and benefits to Area “E” residents.

A significant portion of these expenses relates to attending conferences, conventions, and training opportunities such as Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), and sector-specific forums. These events provide valuable opportunities to advocate for local priorities, secure provincial and federal investment, learn best practices from other communities, and build relationships with decision-makers that benefit Naramata and the broader RDOS.

#### June Board Meeting Highlights

The Regional District Okanagan Similameen (RDOS) Board of Directors received updates from local RCMP detachments, highlighting continued efforts to combat organized crime, support victims of intimate partner violence, improve traffic safety, and address property crimes such as thefts of agricultural irrigation equipment and vehicles. Residents were encouraged to report incidents to help support investigations and prevention efforts.

Several planning and development applications were approved, including short-term rental permits, building and zoning matters, and referrals related to land use and resource extraction. Naramata was specifically discussed through water system planning initiatives, a North Naramata building bylaw matter, and a significant short-term rental permit application in the Indian Rock area.

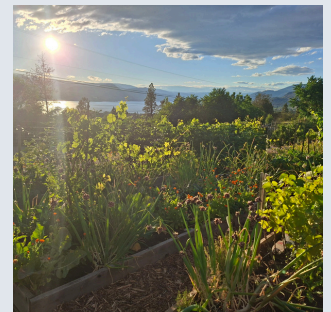
Directors also approved a new regional economic development partnership with the City of Penticton, aimed at improving collaboration, attracting investment, and supporting economic growth throughout the South Okanagan-Similkameen. Discussions emphasized the importance of ensuring strong representation for rural communities as the initiative evolves.

Emergency preparedness remained a priority, with support for enhanced provincial emergency management funding and updates on the Grasshopper Wildfire near Princeton. The Board also received presentations on water security, drought conditions, physician recruitment, and renewable energy opportunities, all of which will play important roles in the region's future resilience and sustainability.

#### Fence at Spirit Park

Fence installation around the playground at Spirit Park in Naramata.

- Install week of July 13 – 17, 2026.
- The playground will be closed and not available for use during the above time.
- Spirit Park washrooms, sports court, gazebo, tennis and pickleball courts will not be affected.



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Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

*One Region Working Together*

## June Conferences & Workshops

## Destination BC: Valleys & Vineyards

In June, I had the opportunity to attend both the Planning Institute of BC (PIBC) Annual Conference and the Keeping It Rural Conference. These events provided valuable opportunities to learn, connect, and explore ideas focused on supporting the long-term success and sustainability of communities across British Columbia.

The PIBC Conference brought together planners, local government leaders, and industry professionals to discuss housing, climate resilience, growth management, transportation, and community design. Sessions explored how communities can balance growth while protecting the unique character, environmental values, and livability that residents cherish.

The Keeping It Rural Conference focused specifically on the opportunities and challenges facing rural communities. Topics included economic development, emergency preparedness, housing affordability, infrastructure funding, agricultural sustainability, and innovative approaches to maintaining services in smaller communities.

Both conferences reinforced the importance of collaboration, long-term planning, and advocating for rural voices at the provincial level. The knowledge gained, along with conversations with local government leaders from across BC, will help inform decision-making and strengthen our ability to address local priorities in Naramata and Electoral Area E while preparing for future opportunities and challenges.

The TOTA Workshop/Roundtable provided an abundance of information regarding Destination BC's "Iconic" branding. Destination BC's Iconic Branding initiative is a province-wide tourism strategy that creates globally recognizable destination brands to showcase BC's most distinctive landscapes, cultures, and visitor experiences while strengthening the province's appeal to international travellers. The program combines destination marketing and development to attract high-value visitors, encourage travel throughout the province and all seasons, and increase tourism benefits for local communities. Area "E" is situated in the Valleys & Vineyards branding. The second part of the workshop included how tourism businesses can utilize Artificial Intelligence (AI) to promote their business to those who utilize the platform for suggestions and travel tips. AI is helping tourism organizations and businesses work more effectively by enhancing marketing, customer service, data analysis, and visitor engagement. AI can help identify emerging trends, personalized visitor experiences, and support informed decision-making, enabling businesses to adapt and remain competitive in an evolving tourism market.

## Okanagan Basin Water Board

<https://obwb.ca>

Water conservation and drought preparedness remained key priorities at the June Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) meeting. As drought conditions continue across the Okanagan, the Board highlighted the importance of the Make Water Work campaign, which encourages residents to reduce outdoor water use through water-wise landscaping and efficient irrigation practices.

The OBWB Board also discussed its advocacy for a review of provincial septic system regulations to address the one-hectare rule that is limiting in housing option expansion in rural areas. In addition, ongoing efforts to prevent invasive mussels and protect water quality remain a major focus. If you own a dock, please take a few moments to check for invasive mussels. If we all work together, we can be extra diligent in helping to prevent them from coming into our watershed.

The meeting reinforced the need for proactive planning, conservation, and regional cooperation to ensure a secure and sustainable water future for communities throughout the Okanagan Basin.

## SILGA Board of Directors Meeting Update

The Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) Board met to discuss advocacy priorities, governance, convention planning, and collaboration with other local government associations across British Columbia.

A key discussion focused on lessons learned from attending the North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) conference. SILGA representatives reported that the organization is performing well compared to other area associations but identified opportunities to strengthen regional advocacy. Directors agreed that rural and interior communities often face challenges that differ from those in larger urban centres and expressed interest in working more closely with the North Central and Kootenay associations to amplify shared priorities at the provincial level. A motion was passed to convene an advocacy meeting with these associations and invite the BC Rural Centre as an observer.

The SILGA Board also began planning for UBCM Minister meetings, identifying priority topics including wildfire mitigation and FireSmart funding, emergency management, health-care recruitment, RCMP contract negotiations, trails and recreation infrastructure, and challenges related to encampments on Crown land.

Other business included approval of funding to undertake a comprehensive review of SILGA's bylaws, committee assignments for 2026–27, and continued planning for the 2027 SILGA Convention in Penticton. Directors discussed improvements to communications, member engagement, advocacy efforts, and training opportunities to ensure SILGA remains an effective voice for local governments throughout the Southern Interior.

I have been appointed to the 2026 SILGA Convention Committee, which is especially meaningful as the conference will be hosted in Penticton. I look forward to helping showcase our region, encouraging delegates to support local businesses, and attractions, while experiencing the breathtaking landscapes, and hospitality that make our area such a remarkable place to live, work, and visit.

## Bat Count

On June 6 2026, community members gathered at the Naramata Museum for an annual bat count. Lead by Paula Rodriguez de la Vega from BC Community Bat Program who delivered a very informative education session followed by an attempt to count bats. Counting the bats helps monitor local bat populations and contribute valuable data to conservation efforts.

In 2025, more than 150 bats were found dead inside the upper level of the Museum. This year's count was to see if any bats survived. Although only one bat was counted on June 6<sup>th</sup> (it too was rainy and cold for the bats) a second count night was scheduled for June 20<sup>th</sup> when 120 bats were counted.



Paula had a bat detector out and recorded:

California Myotis - from the bat boxes

Little Brown Myotis - from the bat boxes

Western Small-footed Myotis - likely roosting in the clay cliffs above the resort.

Long-legged Myotis - also roosts in cliffs

Silver-haired Bat - roosts in trees and snags (cottonwood)