

# Water matters

A newsletter from  
the Black Mountain  
Irrigation District

Issue Number 5  
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## Vehicle ban affects Graystokes Watershed

**E**ffective July 1st, the Graystokes Plateau will be off limits to motorized recreational vehicles such as 4 x 4s, motor cycles, and all-terrain vehicles. Introduced by the Ministry of Forests to protect sensitive sub-alpine areas, wet meadows, and water resources supplying Black Mountain Irrigation District (BMID), the vehicle ban includes about 90 square kilometres around Graystokes Lake, which is located approximately 30 kilometres east of Kelowna. Affected lakes include St. Margaret, Fish Hawk and Mission, as well as Loch Katrine and Loch Long.

Although the ban is not total — visitors to the area will still be able to drive along one trail linking the major lakes — some off-roaders aren't happy with the restrictions. They feel they're being singled out for blame, and that the damage being done by motorized vehicles is exaggerated.

Not so, according to BMID administrator, Phil Ruskowsky. "Our watersheds are experiencing increasing pressures from



*Because of the environmental damage caused by careless off-roaders, all motorized vehicles except snowmobiles will be banned from the Graystokes Plateau starting July 1st.*

recreational activities, which includes off-road vehicles destroying sensitive sub-alpine areas and meadows. It's unfortunate

the actions of a few have forced regulations to be imposed in the watershed, but if water quality continues to be compromised as a result of these activities, we have no choice."

Although the ban is a Ministry of Forests initiative made possible by the Forest Practices Code of B.C., policing of the area will be a combined effort of the Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Environment, and BMID. They ask that hikers and snowmobilers watch for offenders, too. If you see a vehicle being operated outside a 'designated motorized recreation access route', please note the license plate number and contact the Penticton Forest District at (250) 490-2200, the Vernon Forest District at (250) 548-1700, The Ministry of Environment at 860-6291, or BMID at 765-5169.



*Signage will clearly indicate designated access routes on Graystokes Road from the Linden Lake Road junction to Fish Hawk Lake (connecting to Buck Hills Road), Linden Lake Road from the Graystokes Road junction to Linden Lake, and the unnamed rough road from Linden Lake to Jubilee Mountain and Loch Larsen (connecting to Haggart Creek Road).*

See page 2 for a map of the designated routes.

# Annual Report from BMID Trustees

## Meetings/Elections

BMID's Board of Trustees met 33 times during 1996. Gord Ivans was elected board chairman, and Jim Kitaura was re-elected to a three-year term as trustee. The terms of office for trustees Gord Ivans and Alf Kempf expire in 1997; both will seek re-election.

## Finances

The district had a successful year financially, transferring \$450,000 to the Capital Works Renewal Reserve Fund to help finance the Black Mountain Reservoir project. To maintain this sound financial position, domestic tolls and irrigation taxes were raised slightly to meet the cost of inflation and other increasing operating costs.

## Capital Expenditures

Capital expenditures in 1996 included a power supply upgrade from one phase to three phases at the Mission Creek intake, the purchase of additional water quality monitoring equipment, a renovation of the office complex, and the addition of a storage shelter to the existing warehouse complex.

## Ten-Year Capital Works Plan and Charge Rate

A comprehensive capital works report was prepared by Reid Crowther & Partners Ltd. to distinguish between work required because of development and routine improvements by BMID. The district can now plan capital works effectively for the next ten years and set a capital expenditure charge rate which reflects growth rates, interest and inflation rates, the effect of growth on the water supply system, and the resulting capital projects and their timing.

## Development

The 1996 growth rate in BMID's service area continued at 2.9 percent. This resulted in 177 new hook-ups, bringing the total number of serviced units to 6,282. According to Kelowna's Official Community Plan, a growth rate of 1.5 percent is expected for the BMID area over the next ten years, which computes to an additional 1060 residential units.

## Vehicle Ban in Graystokes Watershed

BMID has long been concerned about increasing damage from off-road vehicles disturbing wetlands and meadows in the Graystokes Plateau. The Ministry of Forests proposed a ban on all motorized recreational vehicles (except snowmobiles) on all area roads except the main Graystoke Road and the Linden Lake Road to Jubilee Mountain and Loch Larson. This order will take effect July 1st, 1997. More information is available at the BMID office or the Vernon or Penticton Forest District offices.

## Forest Renewal BC Watershed Assessment

The Ministry of Environment — with funding from Forest Renewal BC — will help clean up past environmental damage in the Mission Creek Watershed. Stream and road assessments are complete, and continuous monitoring sensors and data logging equipment to record temperature, specific conductance, turbidity, and Mission Creek flow have been installed. 'Deactivation' or rehabilitation of roads will be carried out within the next year. This program will improve the effectiveness of BMID's ongoing water quality monitoring program.

## Timber Harvesting Management

A detailed survey of all BMID-owned properties was conducted in 1996. Boundaries and tree inventories were examined to establish age, disease, and the net value of timber. This information will help the district establish a timber harvesting program.

## Water Quality (Cryptosporidium)

Because crypto and other pathogens are commonly found in drinking water from surface sources, they are the target of stricter regulations and treatment guidelines. To minimize the risks associated with crypto and giardia, BMID's ongoing prevention program includes settling, monitoring for contamination, watershed management, and system maintenance. A watershed watch program was initiated in response to increased vandalism and abuse in the watershed.

## Designated vehicle routes



Cards are now placed on vehicles seen in the watershed reminding users they are in a community watershed, and that obvious abuse and questionable activities should be reported.

## Thank You to BMID Staff

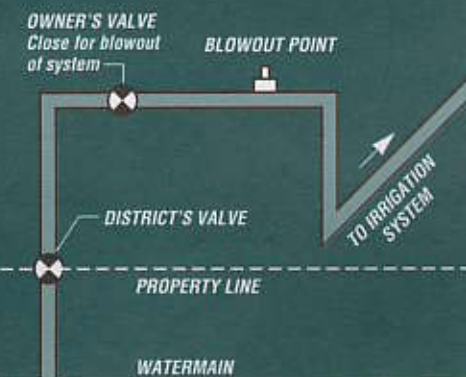
On behalf of all BMID water users, the trustees thank district staff for their continued cooperation and dedication to their responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Gord Ivans, Jim Kitaura, Alf Kempf, Heinz Koetz, and Lawrence Petch

## Blow-out specifications

BMID workers have noticed that some growers have the blow-out points in their sprinkler systems incorrectly installed. The fitting for an air hose attachment should be upstream of the grower's shut-off valve so BMID's valve won't be damaged by air pressure blowing through the drain orifice. Having the blow-out point upstream of the owner's valve also enables winterization without waiting for the district to shut off its valve. Please ensure your system fits this specification.



## 'Showers' not in your financial forecast!

BMID has been reminded by other authorities that water spraying onto roadways from irrigation systems is unacceptable. Apart from the waste issue, a sudden shower onto a windshield or cyclist could cause an accident with potentially serious legal (and therefore financial) implications.

BMID bylaws state water must be contained on the owner's land. Please ensure your roadside sprinkler heads are fitted with suitable screens to prevent water spraying onto roadways.