

# Centennial Environmental Projects

## Health of Watershed

While many of the Centennial projects to date have focused on heritage, entertainment or celebrations, an important environmental learning opportunity is also planned for this Centennial summer.

Our watersheds have played an important role in the history of land use in Naramata. Understanding our watersheds—and maintaining their health—are key to the long term quality of life in our community. Long-time environmental practitioner Rob Hawes is coordinating a Centennial project called “The Health of Our Watersheds.” Hawes says there are three primary objectives: “Provide an education opportunity to the community to learn about our watersheds and their health; collect scientific data to allow us to compare the health of our watersheds with other Okanagan watersheds; and provide a baseline of data to monitor changes in our watersheds over time.” On **August 24th** and –if required—the 25<sup>th</sup>—interested people can participate in taking stream samples from the community creeks.

“We will sample creeks collecting the ‘bugs’ from the rocks and do some identification of the main species, such as mayflies, caddisflies, etc. A measure of watershed health can be made by assessing the diversity and numbers of benthic invertebrates.

By measuring the benthic invertebrates, a calibration of a Benthic Index of Biological Integrity can be developed and used for measuring the health of our watersheds and for comparison with other Okanagan streams.”

Hawes says the team of volunteers lead by a Ministry of the Environment biologist will sample N a r a m a t a , Robinson and Chute creeks.

The project is being run by the N a r a m a t a Environmental Action Team and is supported financially by the Naramata Creek Committee and the N a r a m a t a Conservation Initiative. For more information, contact Rob Hawes at 496-4374.

## Centennial Watershed Day

While one Centennial project will scientifically measure the health of Naramata’s watershed, another project will give the public an overview of the geography, ecology and multitude of uses of our watersheds.

The public is invited to an event on **September 8<sup>th</sup>** that will feature a video ‘travelogue’ of the Naramata landscape—from Okanagan Lake to the Okanagan Highlands. The audience will see aerial video coverage of the region, and learn about various uses of the watershed, such as forestry and grazing. The presentation will start with a historic look at the watershed, such as how the early settlers worked to move water from the hillside creeks to the new orchards.

The morning event will also include a presentation on the work of the Naramata Creek Committee in restoring kokanee spawning beds.

The video presentations on the watersheds and their uses, on the history of irrigation in Naramata, and on the work of the Naramata Creek Committee will make for an important Centennial video legacy.

It is also hoped that there can be public tours of the new community water treatment facility, although that has not been confirmed as of press time.

The Centennial Watershed Day begins at 9 AM at The Loft, Naramata Centre. There is no charge for the event. Seating is limited to 80 people. For more info, call Craig Henderson, 496-5222.

Catching kokanee in the early years of Naramata

