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RDNO Continues Response to Agricultural Water Supply Challenges

The Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) is continuing to respond to ongoing drought conditions and limited water supplies affecting agricultural users of Greater Vernon Water (GVW).

Some agricultural users have now reached their full seasonal water allocation, and the RDNO is working to implement orderly agricultural water service shut-offs in accordance with GVW's agricultural water allocation requirements.

The RDNO is also encouraging the agricultural community to explore water allocation transfers. Farm-classified properties may transfer all or part of their remaining allocation to another farm-classified property. Partial transfers are permitted, and allocations may be divided between one or more eligible properties.

"Farmers who exceed their allocation are not drawing from a separate reserve", said Bob Fleming, Chair of the Greater Vernon Advisory Committee. "The water available in the reservoir has already been allocated among agricultural users. When one user exceeds their allocation, it directly affects what remains available to others. Given the limited supply, it is absolutely essential that all users stay within their allocated volumes."

In addition to the start of agricultural water shut-offs, the Chair of the RDNO Greater Vernon Advisory Committee has contacted Harwinder Sandhu, MLA for Vernon-Lumby, to seek assistance in organizing an urgent meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Water, Land, and Natural Resources, which are responsible for water management. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss immediate and long-term solutions to regional water supply challenges, including opportunities to access additional water sources for emergency purposes. Confirmation from Provincial partners is pending.

The RDNO remains committed to investigating all available solutions and advocating for support for the agricultural community during these challenging conditions. The RDNO thanks agricultural producers, residents, and businesses for their continued conservation efforts, patience, and understanding as the region navigates ongoing drought conditions.

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