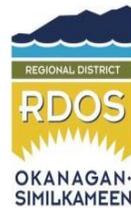


Agricultural Plan – Discussion Paper

Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Electoral Area 'A' & the Town of Osoyoos



Funding provided by:



June 2011

Project No. 308-161

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Appendix A – Farm Survey

1.0 Introduction

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) and the Town of Osoyoos have initiated the planning process for an Agricultural Plan (AP) for Electoral Area 'A' (RDOS) and the Town of Osoyoos. As stated in the RFP the primary objective of this planning process is to deliver to the RDOS Board and the Town of Osoyoos Mayor and Council a draft AP that has been vetted through public process. The AP will focus on developing implementable land-based recommendations that address local issues. Land-based strategies will be those strategies that can be implemented through amendments to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws. Non land-based strategies may also be identified through this process and will be documented but may not be part of the implementation strategy.

The goal of agricultural planning is to provide clear, innovative and creative strategies to direct efficient, dynamic and ecologically balanced use of agricultural lands that contributes both economically and culturally to the community. The plan area, like much of the Okanagan/Similkameen, has significant agricultural resources which may not be contributing their full potential, given the challenges of competing in a production chain model in a global market with relatively small parcel production units and associated high land values in comparison to other production regions.^{1 2} The Agricultural Plan is intended to focus attention on strong local policies and priorities that support suitable, realistic opportunities to enhance economic viability and address the associated issues of agricultural revitalisation, succession and regional food security. The plan will focus on land-based strategies through Official Community Plan and Zoning By-law amendments but may also present additional directions that are realistically within the realm of local government.

The AP was launched with the preparation of this Discussion Paper. This document examines research that is currently available (Canada Census of Agriculture, 2006) and research that was conducted specifically for this project (Survey of Class 9 farms, 2011), as well as data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Agricultural Land Inventory. This document has been amended and updated throughout the plan process as new information is collected.

¹ *Protecting Specialty Cropland from Urban Development, The Case of the Okanagan Valley, B.C.*, Ralph R. Krueger and N. Garth Maguire, *Geoforum*, Vol 16, Issue 3, 1985

² *Innovation in Enterprises in a Non-Metropolitan Area, Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives*, Adam Holbrook, Tim Padmore, Lindsay Hughes, Judith Finch, Simon Fraser Centre for Policy Research on Science and Technology, May 17, 1999

2.0 Census of Agriculture, 2006

2.1 Farm and Farm Operator Statistics

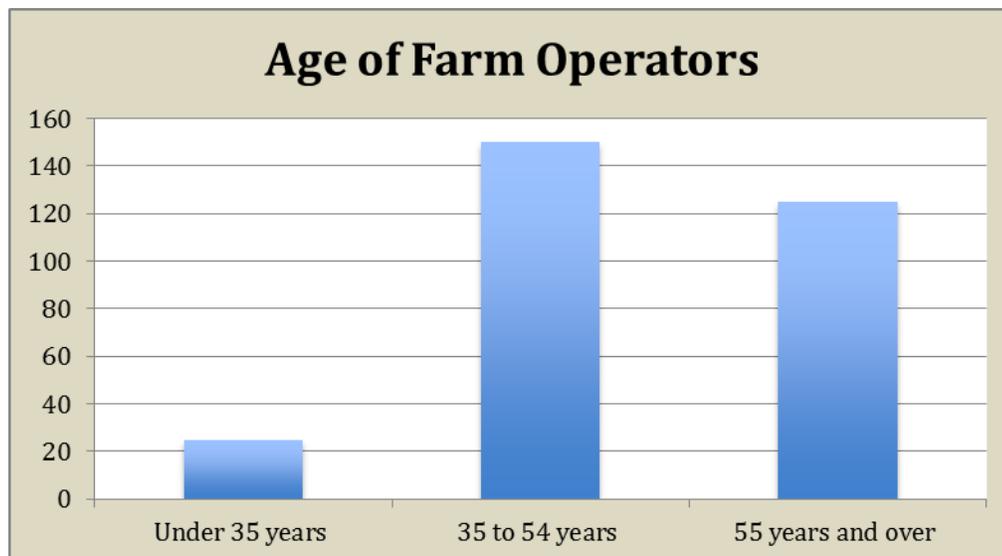
Plan Area

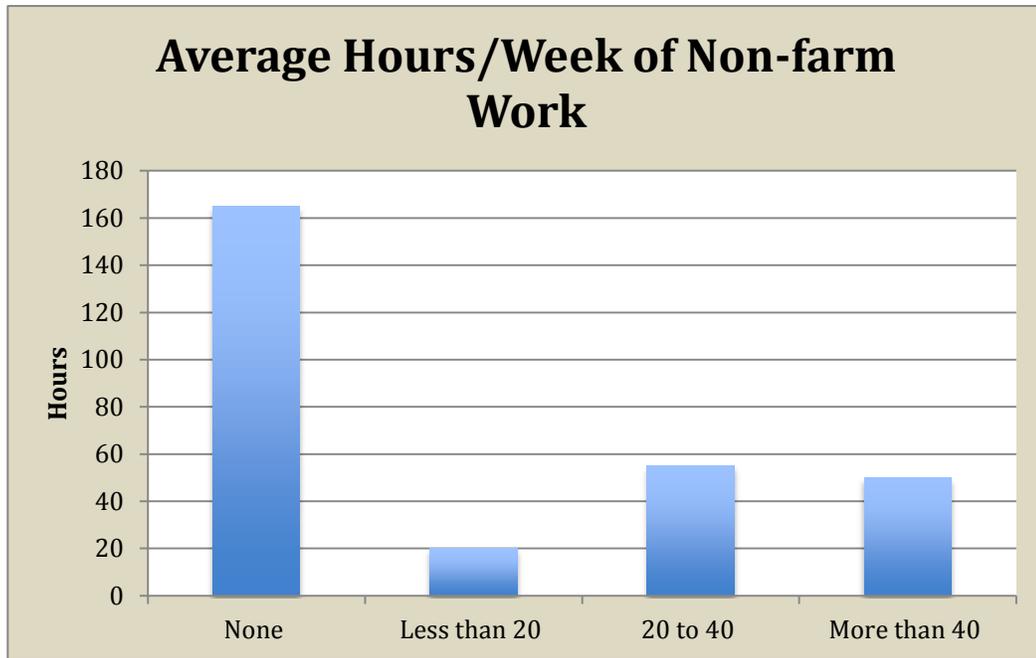
Osoyoos & RDOS

Total population in 2006	6,673 persons
Total number of operators	295 persons
Average age of operators	52.3 years
Total male operators	190 operators
Total female operators	100 operators
Total number of farms	184 farms

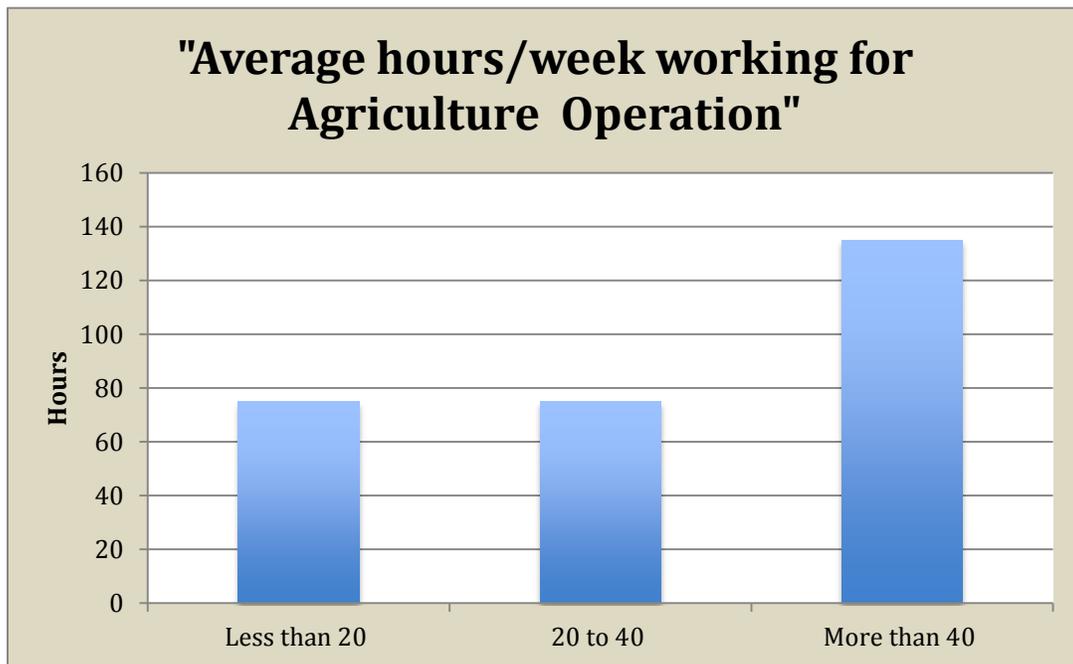
Average farm size (producing and non-producing) with fruit, nuts, & berries

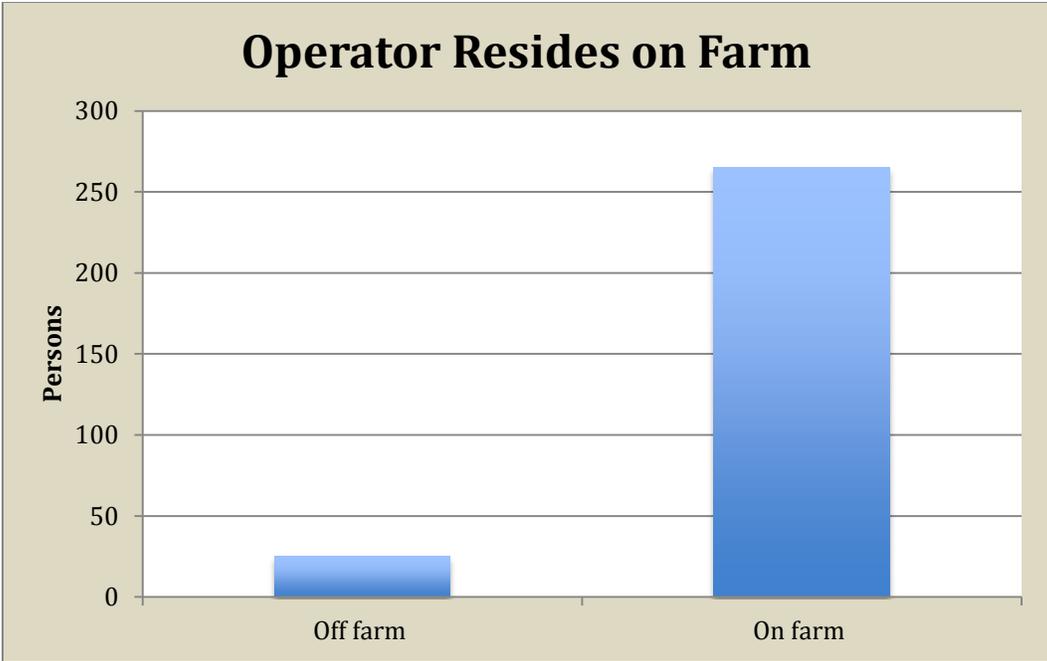
- Plan area	4.9 ha
- Thompson - Okanagan	4.7 ha
- British Columbia	4.7 ha
- Canada	8.8 ha





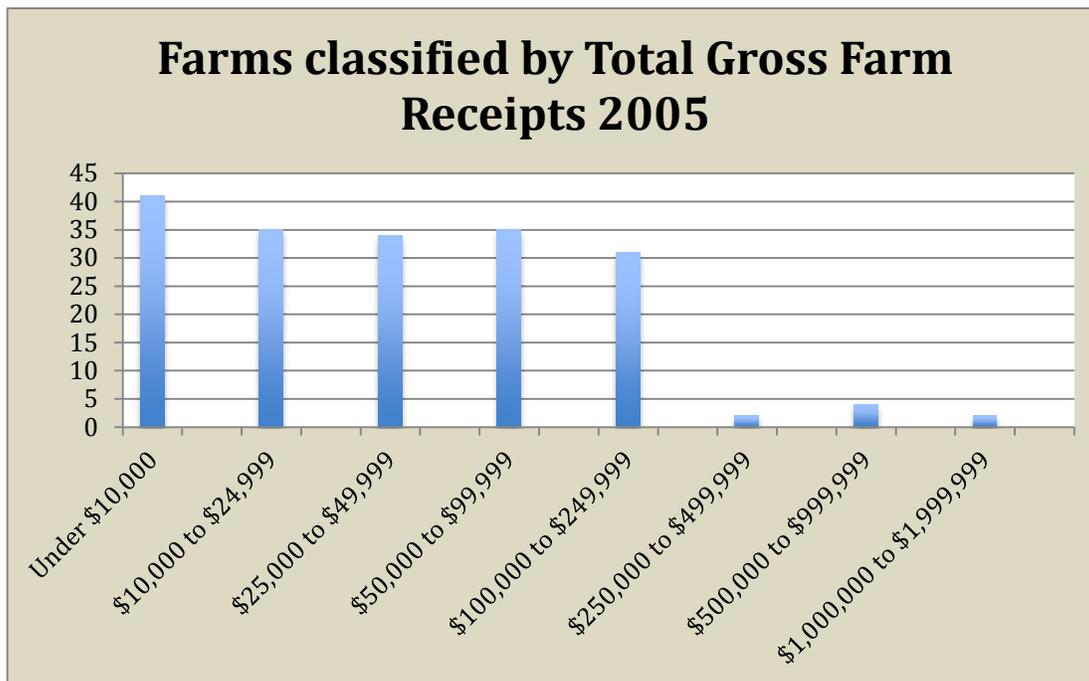
Note: Members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) questioned the high number of persons who did not report non-farm work. Based on their personal experiences, AAC members suggested that many farmers had income from other sources, including non-farm work. Often farmers work on other people's farms and packinghouses and they may not have recognized these activities as non-farm work.





2.2 Farm Finance Statistics

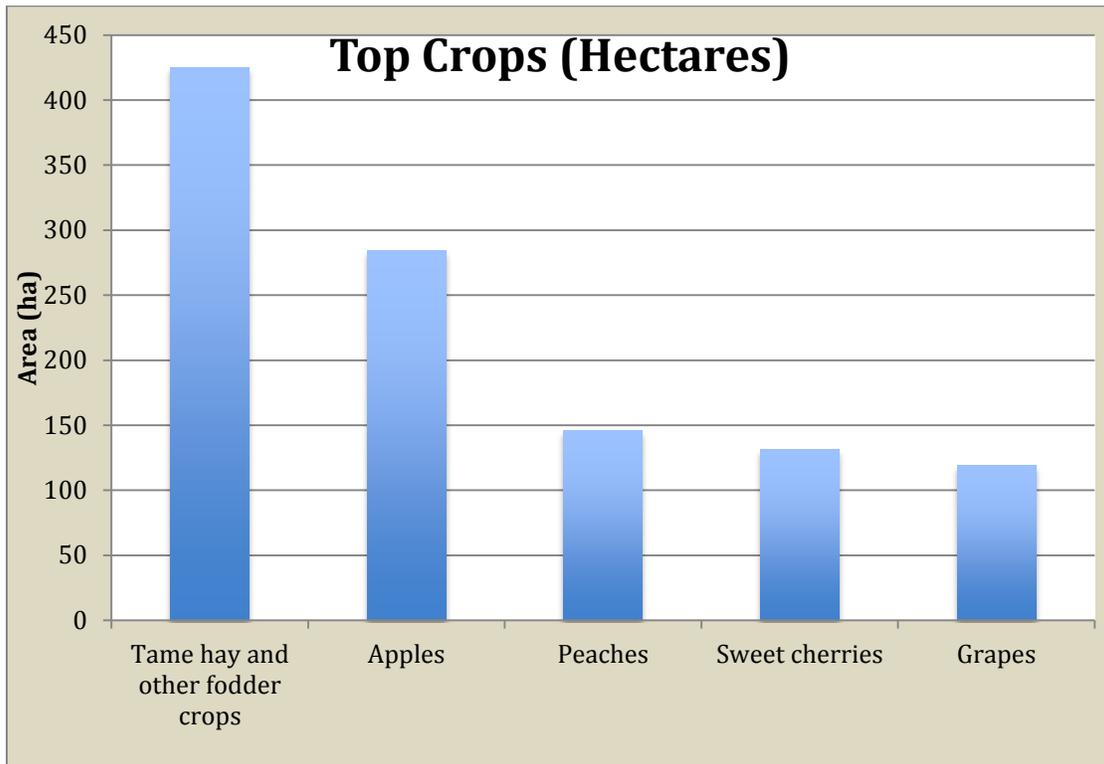
Total gross farm receipts (excluding forest products sold) (dollars) **\$14,674,724**
Total farm capital (market value in dollars) **\$234,961,078**



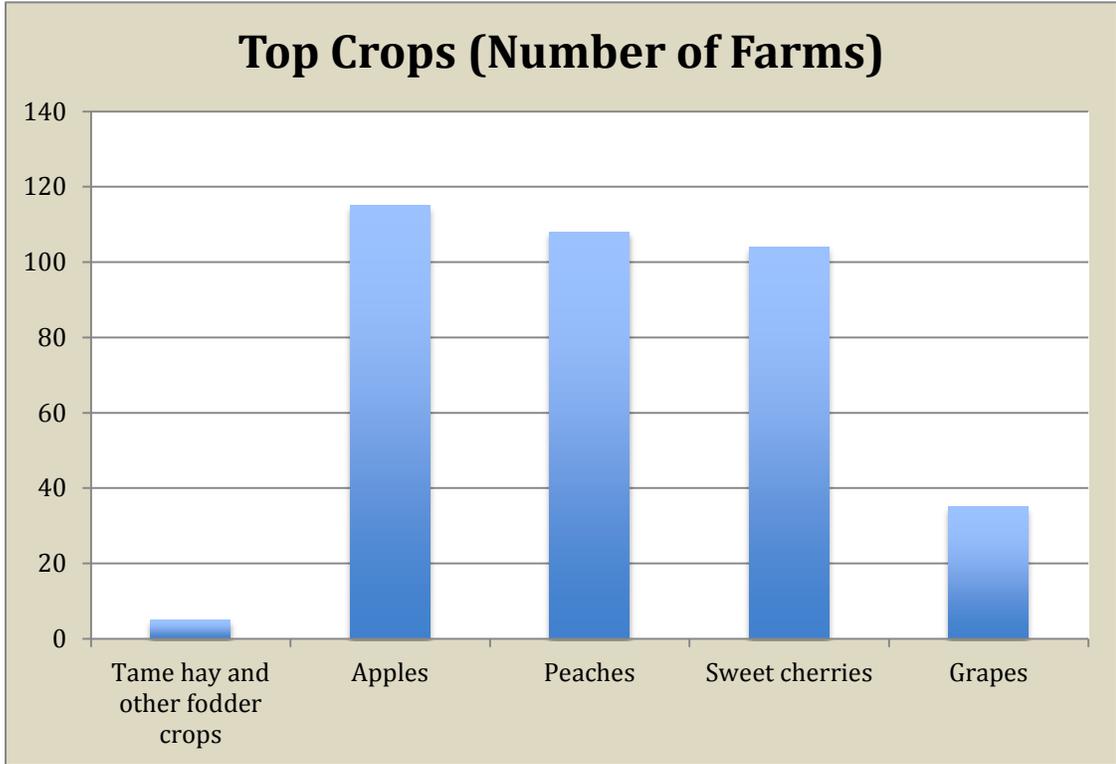
Note: It appears that 8 of 184 farms account for approximately 30% of Gross Farm Receipts). AAC members suggested that greenhouse and grape farms were likely associated with the incidents of high farm receipts.

2.3 Crop Statistics

The Census of Agriculture data indicates that orchard operations often grow more than one tree fruit, particularly for orchards of larger size. Grape and forage production is often exclusive to individual farm operations.



Note: AAC members suggested that the size of the area shown for tame hay and other fodder crops may be over represented. The large amount of land in the hay and fodder crops category may be due to Stats Canada policy of attributing farm areas to the census area where the farm/ranch headquarters is located.



Note: AAC members indicated that there have been significant changes in the distribution of these crops over the last 5 years. Particularly, farmers have been shifting from apples to grapes and ACC numbers starting to reverse

3.0 Farm Property Owner Survey

A survey of owners of farm property (BC Assessment Class 9 lots) was conducted in the spring 2011. The survey is included as *Appendix A*.

- survey was completed by 29 owners of 184 farms or 15%.
- orchardists were under-represented in the survey responses (ranches 2 of 5 or 40%; grapes: 10 of 35 or 29%; orchards: 16 of 149 or 11%).

3.1 Key Points from Respondents

The Agriculture Industry in the plan area:

- the grape/winery industry is perceived to be strong and robust with strong integration with tourism
- there is excellent soil and micro-climate for grapes
- orchard industry is in decline, particularly apples
- concentration of packing facilities, low prices, import policies, and global competition results in orchards not being economically viable
- high costs of orchard land is causing the land to be neglected and attracting pressure for conversion to housing

Protecting the Agricultural Land Reserve

- strong support for maintaining ALR from majority of respondents
- concerns that good ALR land has been excluded for development, particularly within Town of Osoyoos
- concerns regarding spot zoning for non-agricultural uses and impact on adjacent ALR lands

Top Constraints Currently facing Agricultural Sector

- markets - including import policies, marketing practices and pricing of products (*note: not sure if this applies to the wine industry as well as the orchard industry*)
- urban expansion and development pressure
- over-regulation by local governments and the Agricultural Land Commission

Top Constraints Predicted for the next 10 -15 years

- labour availability and costs
- water
- urban expansion and development pressure

3.2 Farm Property Owner Survey Results

1. Location of farm:

Town of Osoyoos	7
RDOS	21
No response	<u>1</u>
Total	29

2. Property Area and type of Farm:

	No. of Farms	Area (acres) owned	Area (acres) leased	Total Area
Grapes	10	140	56	196
Fruit	16	213	334	547
Ranching	2	6040	10450	16490
Total	28	6393	10840	17233

3. How long have you been farming?

less than 5 years	2
5-10 years	5
10-20 years	4
more than 20 years	17
Total	28

4. Farm work status:

Full-Time Farm	24
Part-Time Farm	4
Total	28

5. Other farm related activities:

- cherry packing house
- repair shop
- vegetables
- farm gate sales
- wine
- bed and breakfast

6. Description of the overall agricultural sector in Osoyoos and Area 'A'.

Responses		Comments
Very Strong & Growing	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent soil and micro climate • fruit grapes and wineries
Somewhat Strong	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong agri-tourism sector • some sectors doing well others not • holding but no overall strategy regarding crops and marketability • wine industry is robust - tree fruit industry is a sunset industry
Declining	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land being neglected due to very poor prices • pressure for housing • excess of vineyards • no money • not economically viable • fruit prices decreasing and higher cost and expenses • poor prices, free trade, global market • not enough money to live • because of the weather, the age of the farmers and the very high price of the farm
No Opinion	1	
Total	28	

7. Importance of protecting the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)?

Responses	Concerns about land in the ALR
Very Important	<p>16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encroachment of urban expansion (2) • orchards which produce codling moth and cherry fruit fly and spread to other orchards close by • concerned that packing plants force sales at a loss • pressure from real estate industry and town elected officials to remove prime agricultural land from ALR thus diminishing farm productions base • preserving orchards in Osoyoos • to many low areas planted to grapes when fruit wouldn't grow • to easily taken out • why the town can take it out of the ALR for any use but some farmland that is not good for farming can't be taken out of the ALR • spot zoning for activities other than agriculture

	Responses	Concerns about land in the ALR
Somewhat Important	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not all ALR properties are fit to farm It is a joke - prime farm land is removed - marginal cannot be removed - home site severance cuts from 10 acres to 9 acres and a new home cuts it to 8 acres or more. Have a policy or don't have one. regulations too restrictive Not all lands in the ALR are the same. We now spray toxic chemicals very close or even beside residential areas.
Not at All Important	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no ALR Subsidize farming to the point of profitability if you remove ALR more farms will be reduced and we cannot live off of 2 months of revenue from tourists. it's undemocratic
No Opinion	3	
Total	28	

8. What are the top 3 constraints (or risks) for the agricultural sector?

- Markets: including import policies, marketing practices & pricing of products (21)
- Urban expansion and development pressure (13)
- Too much Management of ALR & government (9)
- Climate (7)
- Economics of farming (high cost and low return on investment) (5)
- Water (5)
- New pests (4)
- Labour (4)
- decreased government support (3)
- large amount of land converted to grapes (1)
- Need to embrace new partnerships (e.g. tourism) (1)
- centralization of packing facilities, slaughter facilities (1)

9. In the next 10-15 years what will be the top 3 constraints for the agricultural sector?

- labour availability and costs (7)
- water (5)
- urban expansion & development pressure (5)
- setting reasonable pricing (4)
- pests (2)
- reducing government and government assistance (2)
- more government grants and financial assistance (2)

- sustainable farm practices (1)
- wine industry will bottom out (1)
- land owners will want out of ALR (1)
- lack co-ordination and co-operation between farm groups (1)
- weather (1)
- keeping farmers farming in the face of declining profits (1)
- wholesalers playing games with returns to growers (1)
- price of land to high and price of fruit to low (1)

10. In the past five years, farmers have consulted the RDOS or the Town of Osoyoos regarding local bylaws or regulations as follows:

RDOS	Osoyoos		RDOS	Osoyoos	
3	1	Zoning Bylaw	3	1	Building Permit
2		Subdivision Servicing Bylaw	2	1	ALR application
2	1	Official Community Plan	0		Noise Bylaw
3		Riparian Area Regulations	5		Open Burning Permit
2		Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area			Other – please specify

Descriptions of experience:

- separated house from farm
- RDOS easy to work with Osoyoos backward and unprofessional
- RDOS official/ bureaucrats are too restrictive in their outlook and seem not to understand private enterprise/business principles well.
- fine
- RDOS money grabbers
- they were often deficient in information required

11. Other Comments

- can't sell farm property.
- apple growing not viable.
- things are going to heat up with the development pressures mounting and more people looking to the south Okanagan for a home. I hope the ALR see the future need to protect lands for ground based farming, encourages tourism and makes it an enjoyable place for people to live.

- the farming industry used to provide many good jobs to our community (packing house, John Deere agency, irrigation supply etc.) that have been lost by reducing the farm base, thoughtlessly trading good professional employment for part time tourist jobs.
- competition between RDOS and ALC on who can have the strongest regulations to squeeze the farmers.
- send copies in Portuguese as well as Punjabi.

4.0 Agriculture Advisory Committee Input

The Agricultural Advisory Committee was consulted to obtain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the community that could be addressed in the Agricultural Plan.

Planning

- The current OCP policies address agriculture very broadly and do not provide sufficient direction for the Board and community to build and sustain the agricultural sector. Areas where more specific direction is required include:
 - greenhouses and packinghouses are limited through restrictions on site coverage (maximum 15%) but should be supported.
 - home site severances fragment farmland and may not be meeting regulatory agency comments.
 - more farms may develop packing plants and will require special site coverage consideration. Maybe they could be allowed subject to soil quality considerations.
 - may need farm use restrictions next to municipal areas.
 - a rural equivalent to the municipality's Growth Management Area would help manage development.
 - need to consider future land use options for the Monashee Packing Plant.
 - integrate ALR agri-tourism (10 RV units) accommodation policies.

Other

- Few farmers recognize “pests” as a major challenge, likely because of successful management of the coddling moth and cherry fly, however, there should be more attention to new pests (such as the spotted wing drosophila that will be a big challenge in the future).
- Signage is required where public right-of-ways are next to farmland. The signage can educate trail or corridor users about farming activities including spraying and mowing (gyro mowers and their tendency to spray rocks and sticks).
- The PMRA Pest Management Regulatory Inventory can be promoted to farmers as an effective tool.

Marketing

- Farming can be most (only) sustainable when high quality fruit is directly marketed by grower to niche market.

Servicing

- Water and sewer servicing extensions may create more pressure for the agricultural land for development.
- Home-site severances may be on small lots where septic disposal systems can be compromised.
- need to raise awareness about water stewardship practices (e.g. irrigation scheduling; fire protection).
- develop structure for irrigation managers to collaborate with the implementation of water management strategies.

Labour

- Farmers need assistance with farm labour in terms of:
 - providing housing for farm workers.
 - negotiating through farm worker programs for foreign workers.
 - new uses such as greenhouse will require more farm help that will need to be housed.

5.0 Farm Area Mapping

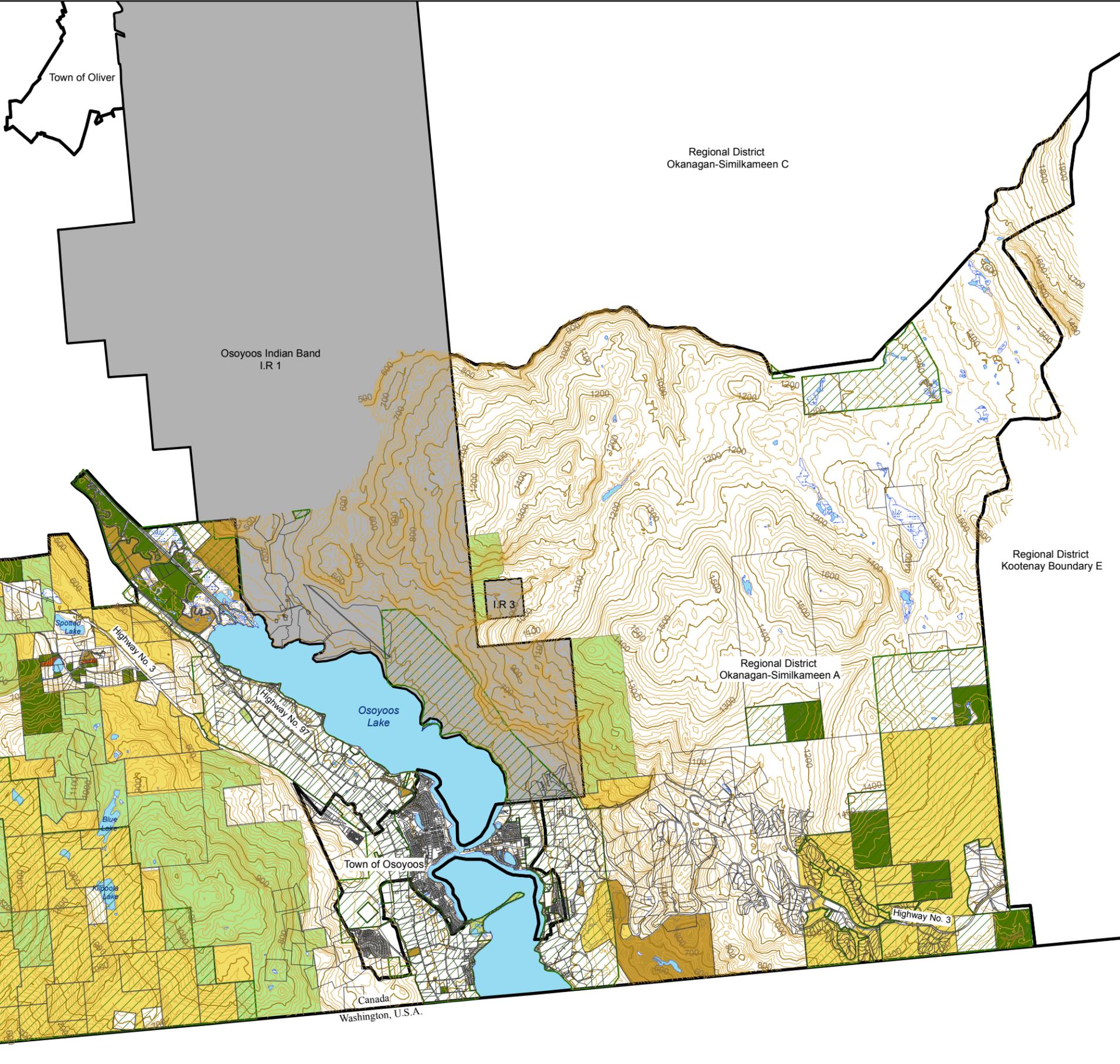
Figure 1 – Agricultural Land Use – Part A – Livestock

Figure 2 – Agricultural Land Use – Part B – Orchards, Vineyards and Cultivated Crops

Figure 3 – Agricultural Zoning & Land Use

M:\My Documents\308\308-161\05 Reports\Agricultural Plan Discussion Paper.docx

X:\LandProjects\2009\308-16103-Drafting\GIS\Draft-2011-06-09\Fig. 1 - Agricultural Land Use - Part A.mxd



REGIONAL DISTRICT
OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
ELECTORAL AREA 'A'
AND
TOWN OF OSOYOOS

AGRICULTURAL PLAN

Figure 1
Agricultural Land Use - Part A
Agricultural Activity - Livestock

LEGEND

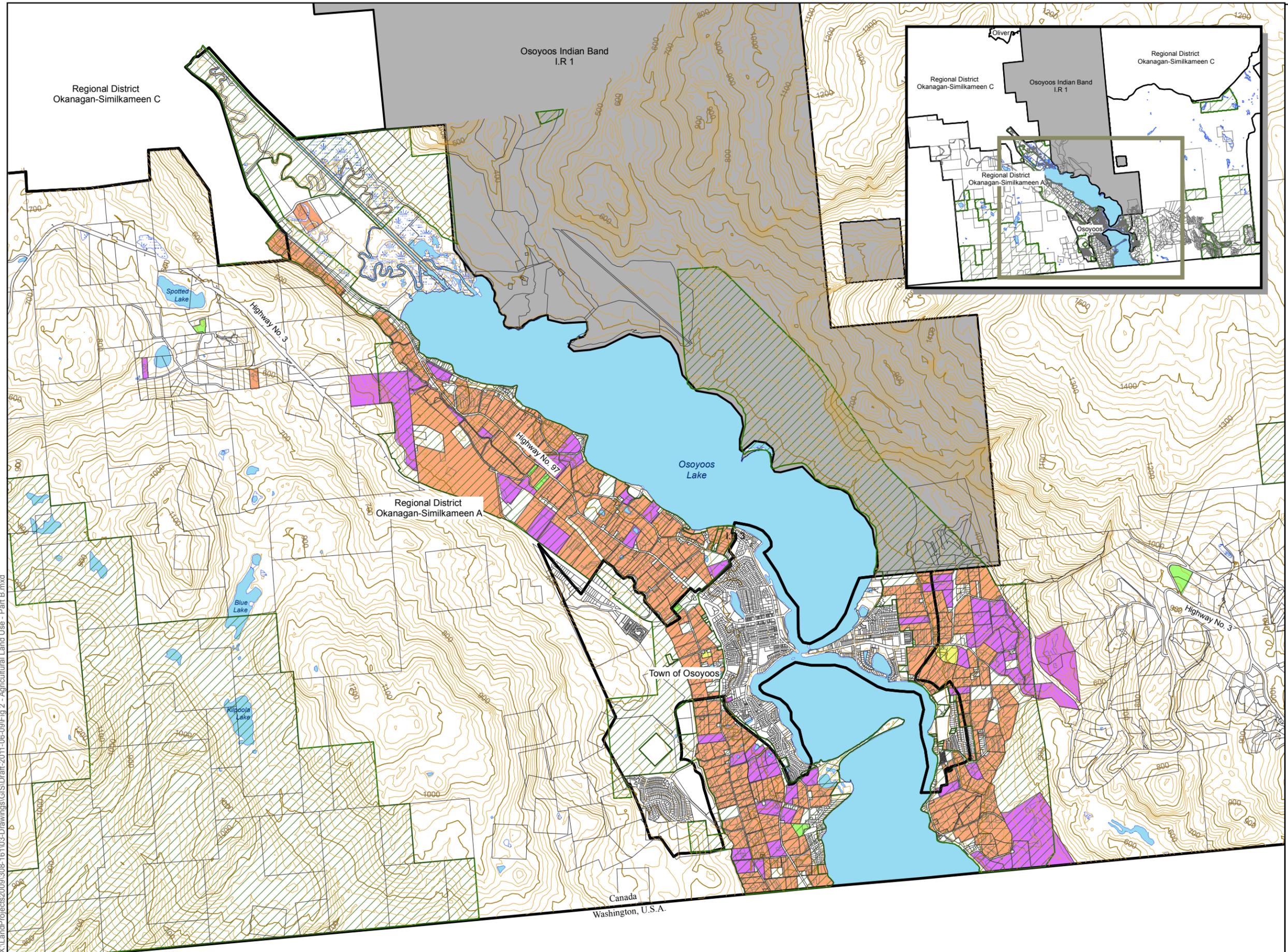
-  Agricultural Land Reserve
-  Park
- Ministry of Agricultural Land Use Survey**
 -  Beef Cattle Farm
 -  Equestrian Facility
 -  Forage Operation
 -  Pasture

Note: This figure provides a general representation of parcels in the ALR. For exact boundaries consult the maps retained by the Agricultural Land Commission



1:90,000

Map Produced : June 09, 2011



**REGIONAL DISTRICT
OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
ELECTORAL AREA 'A'
AND
TOWN OF OSOYOOS
AGRICULTURAL PLAN**

Figure 2
Agricultural Land Use - Part B
Agricultural Activity - Orchards,
Vineyards, and Cultivated Crops

- LEGEND**
-  Agricultural Land Reserve
 - Ministry of Agricultural Land Use Survey**
 -  Field Vegetable Farm
 -  Greenhouse Operation
 -  Orchard
 -  Vineyard

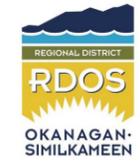
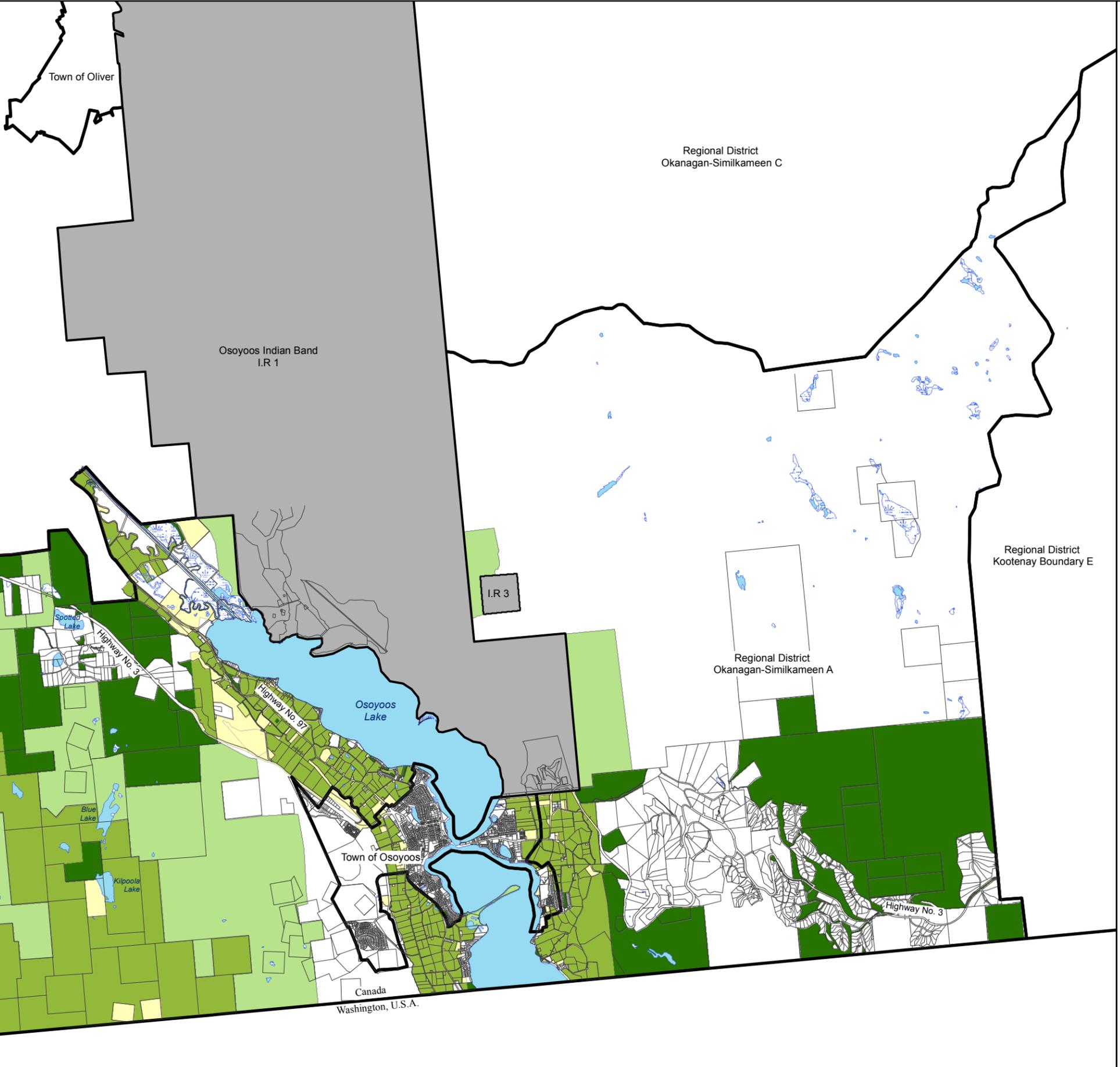
Note: This figure provides a general representation of parcels in the ALR. For exact boundaries consult the maps retained by the Agricultural Land Commission



1:50,000
Map Produced : June 09, 2011

X:\LandProjects\2009\308-161103-Drawings\GIS\Draft-2011-06-09\Fig 2 - Agricultural Land Use - Part B.mxd

X:\LandProjects\2009\308-16103-Drafting\GIS\Draft-2011-06-09\Fig 3 - Agricultural Zoning and Land Use.mxd



REGIONAL DISTRICT
OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN
ELECTORAL AREA 'A'
AND
TOWN OF OSOYOOS
AGRICULTURAL PLAN

Figure 3
Agricultural Zoning and Land Use

LEGEND

- Park
- Class 9 Farm Assessment and Agricultural Zoning Designation
- Agricultural Zoning Designation only
- Class 9 Farm Assessment only



1:90,000

Map Produced : June 09, 2011



Canada
Washington, U.S.A.

APPENDIX A

FARM SURVEY



RDOS Area 'A' & Town of Osoyoos Agricultural Area Plan Farm Property Owner Survey

March 2011



The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) and the Town of Osoyoos initiated a planning process for the preparation of the RDOS Area 'A' and Town of Osoyoos Agricultural Area Plan. As part of this process we would like to hear from the owners of farm properties about the issues and opportunities facing agriculture. Please assist the planning process by providing comments to the following questions. Thank you for your participation in this important project.

Note: All survey information is confidential. Information will be reported so the identity of individual respondents is not disclosed.

1. Street Name/Address: _____
 Town of Osoyoos RDOS
2. Size of property: _____
3. Do you own or lease other property.
 No Yes Size of Property _____
4. How long have you been farming?
 less than 5 years 5-10 years 10-20 years more than 20 years
5. Is your farm: Full-Time Farm Part-Time Farm
6. What are your main crops: _____
 What is your main livestock: _____
7. Do you have other farm related activities (e.g. Bed & Breakfast; tractor repairs; farmgate sales):

Survey Questions:

8. How would you describe the overall agricultural sector in Osoyoos and Area 'A'?
 Very Strong & Growing Somewhat Strong Declining No Opinion
 Why _____
9. How important is it to you to protect the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)?
 Very Somewhat Not at All No Opinion
10. Please indicate any concerns you may have about lands in the ALR.
 • _____
 • _____
 • _____

Funding provided by:



11. What are the top 3 constraints (or risks) for the agricultural sector?

- _____
- _____
- _____

12. In the next 10-15 years what will be the top 3 constraints for the agricultural sector?

- _____
- _____
- _____

13. In the past five years, as part of your agricultural activities, have you had to consult the RDOS or the Town of Osoyoos regarding any local bylaws or regulations?

Yes No , If "Yes", please check all applicable:

RDOS	Osoyoos
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Zoning Bylaw
- Subdivision Servicing Bylaw
- Official Community Plan
- Riparian Area Regulations
- Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area

RDOS	Osoyoos
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Building Permit
- ALR application
- Noise Bylaw
- Open Burning Permit
- Other - please specify _____

Please outline your experience: _____

14. Other Comments

15. Please provide your email address if you would like to receive further information about the Agricultural Area Plan or wish to participate in the planning process.

email: _____ or contact information: _____

Please return survey by **March 28, 2011** in the enclosed envelope to:

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
101 Martin Street, Penticton, B.C.
V2A 5J9

Tel: 250-490-4204 or 1-877-610-3735

Fax:250-492-0063

email:eriechert@rdos.bc.ca