



# Dock Design Criteria for Okanagan Large Lakes

## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

In order to construct, modify, repair or remove a dock in British Columbia, the proponent must first apply to FrontCounter BC for authorization to do so under the *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA). A *Land Act* authorization may also be required if the dock does not meet the provincial [General Permission](#) for the use of crown land for private moorage. The design criteria provided here are conditions for authorization of dock construction for private residential moorage purposes on the large lakes (i.e., Sugar, Mabel, Wood, Kalamalka, Okanagan, Skaha, Vaseux, Osoyoos) of the Okanagan area of B.C. These criteria vary depending on the foreshore sensitivity zone of the location where the dock is proposed. Consult the [Okanagan Large Lakes Foreshore Protocol](#) for how to determine the foreshore sensitivity zone of your site for each of three values: Shore Spawning Kokanee, Freshwater Mussels and Foreshore Plants. Contact [FrontCounter BC](#) if you are not clear on the requirements for your property.

## DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

### General Requirements

The following criteria are requirements for all dock authorizations in all foreshore sensitivity zones:

- The dock must be located to avoid areas of known fish spawning habitat and native aquatic vegetation
- The walkway must be no more than 1.5 m wide and must extend to a minimum depth of 0.8 m at low water level
- The area of the dock beyond the end of the walkway (i.e., the platform) must be no larger than 24 m<sup>2</sup>; this includes all areas of the dock that are wider than 1.5 m, including dock “fingers”
- Boat lifts must be located at a minimum depth of 0.8 m (No Colour, Yellow and Freshwater Mussels Red Zone) or 1.5 m (Shore Spawning Kokanee Red Zone) at low water level (see next page)
- Floating docks must not ground and must have discontinuous floats spaced a minimum of 1 m apart so that a minimum of 1/3 of the dock is free of floats
- Untreated materials must be used where they will be submerged in water
- The use of rubber tires filled with foam (e.g., for floats or batter boards) is not accepted
- If a concrete abutment is needed to secure the dock to land it must be installed entirely on private land above the present natural boundary of the lake
- The [Fisheries Timing Windows](#) must be followed for all works (see next page)

**Exception:** *To deviate from these requirements in a No Colour or Yellow Zone you must engage a qualified professional (QP) to assist in your design and construction to ensure that a contravention of the federal Fisheries Act does not occur. The QP must complete the checklist found in the [Okanagan Large Lake Foreshore Protocol](#) and submit it with the WSA application. A full Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.*

### Red Zones

In addition to the General Requirements, the following requirements also apply in Kokanee Red Zones:

- A QP with expertise in kokanee biology is required to assess the site to ensure piles are not placed within known or potential spawning substrate
- The walkway must be constructed using light penetrating material where spanning potential spawning substrate
- The bottom of the dock must be located at least 0.5 m above the high water level (see next page)
- Batter boards must follow the approved Ministry design [Guidance Document](#)
- Floating structures are not permitted

If your site is within a Red Zone for Freshwater Mussels or Foreshore Plants you must follow the [Guidance Documents](#) prepared for these species and engage a QP to assist with this process.

### Black Zones

No new structures permitted in Black Zones. Repairs to grandfathered structures are permitted following the Red Zone criteria above. Contact the Ecosystems Section Head before proceeding in a Black Zone.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES



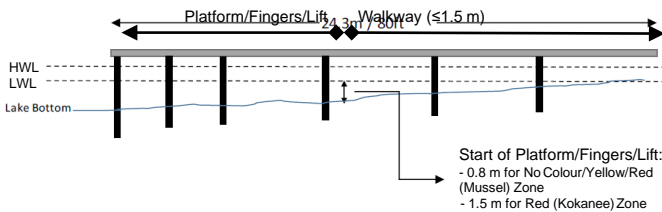
In addition to Shore Spawning Kokanee, Freshwater Mussels and Foreshore Plant Species at Risk must be considered

## DETERMINING HIGH AND LOW WATER LEVELS

Use the following elevations (metres above sea level) to meet the criteria specified on the previous page:

Lake	High Water Level	Low Water Level
Okanagan	342.48	341.34
Kalamalka	391.67	391.20
Wood	391.67	391.20
Skaha	337.90	337.80
Vaseux	327.60	237.35
Osoyoos	278.28	277.30

The following diagram identifies how to measure the minimum water depths based on the low water level



Example of Dock delineating Walkway, Platform and Lift

## TIMING WINDOWS

The [Fisheries Timing Windows](#) for the Okanagan large lakes were revised in 2018. All dock projects must be completed within these work windows:

### Sugar/Mabel

- <50 m from spawning stream: Nov 1 to Apr 1
- All other areas: no restrictions

### Okanagan/Wood/Kalamalka

- <50 m from spawning stream: Nov 1 to Apr 1
- Black, Red or Yellow Zone: Jun 1 to Sep 30
- No Colour Zone: no restrictions

**Exception:** Works involving only decking/re-decking can occur in a Black, Red or Yellow Zone between Jan 15 and Sep 30 if all works are accessed from shore, completed above the water and no significant vibration occurs

### Skaha/Osoyoos

- <50 m from spawning stream: Nov 15 to Apr 1
- All other areas: no restrictions

### Vaseux

- All areas: Nov 15 to Apr 1



Dock in Red Zone constructed with Light Penetrating Decking

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

FrontCounter BC Vernon Office  
 2501 – 14 Avenue  
 Vernon, BC V1T 8Z1  
 (250) 558-1700  
[FrontCounterBC@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FrontCounterBC@gov.bc.ca)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/laws-policies-standards-guidance/best-management-practices/okanagan-large-lakes-foreshore-protocol>