

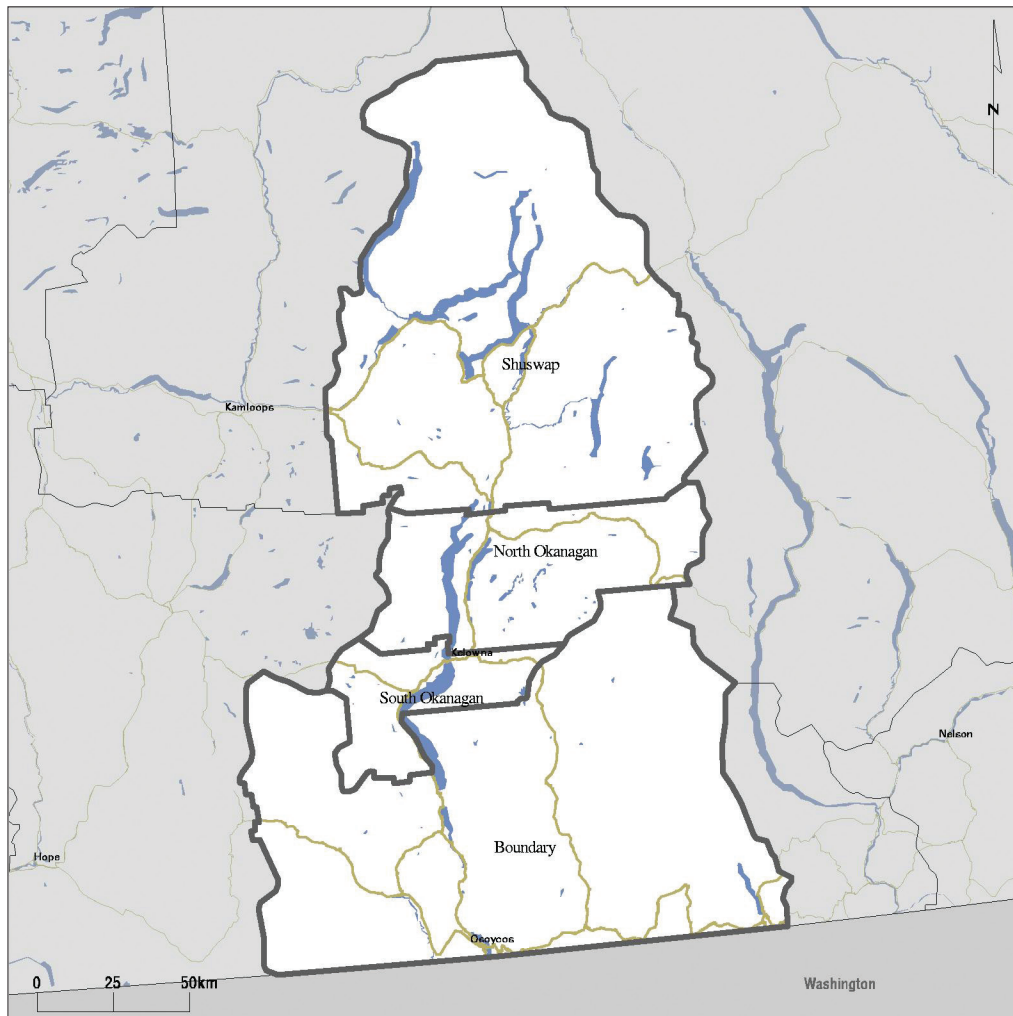
## *E. The Okanagan*

### 1. Evolution of the Okanagan electoral districts

Immediately prior to the work of the 1966 Angus Commission, there were four electoral districts in the Okanagan (see Okanagan, Map 1). Moving from north to south, they were Salmon Arm, North Okanagan, South Okanagan and Similkameen.



*Okanagan, Map 1*



*Okanagan, Map 2*

*a. The Angus Commission (1966)*

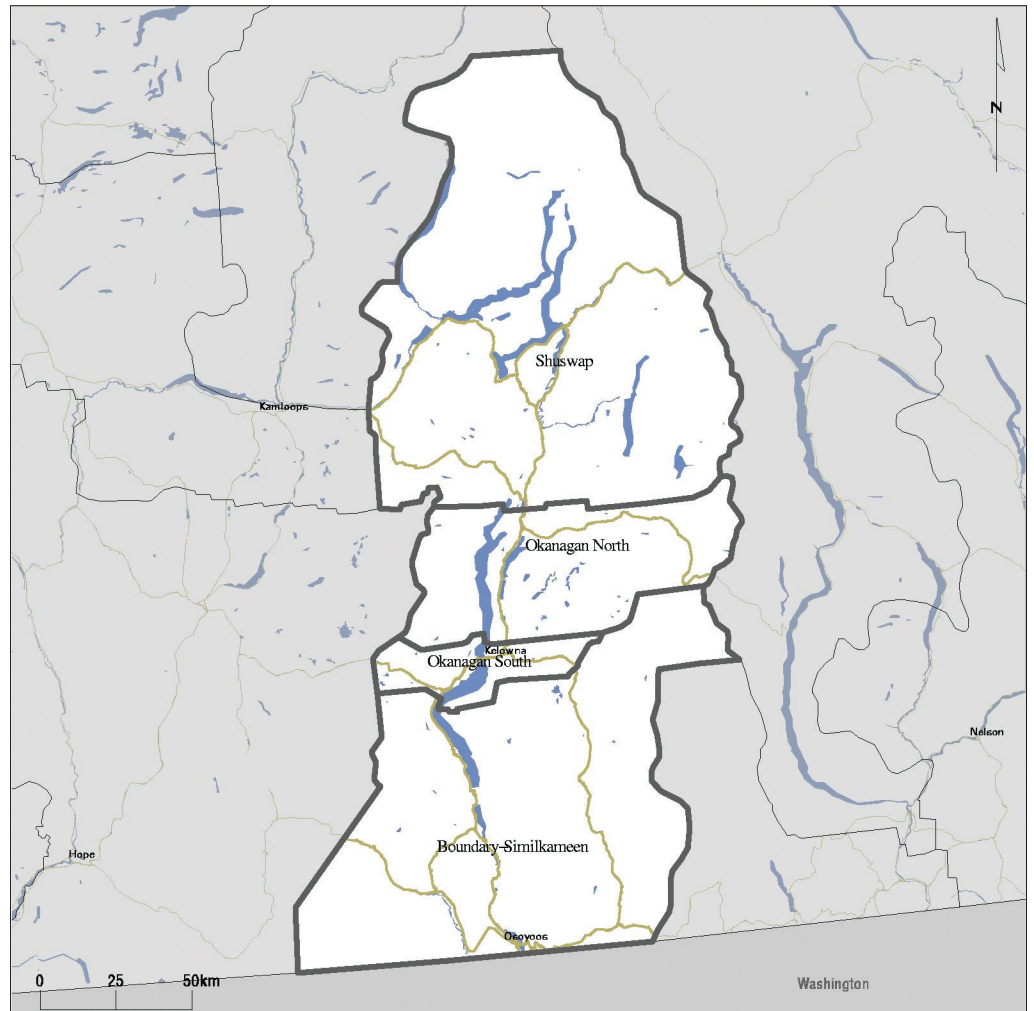
The Angus Commission concluded that the proper and effective representation of this region in the Legislative Assembly required four members. It made several changes to the existing electoral districts (see Okanagan, Map 2). It expanded the Salmon Arm district farther south to include Enderby and Armstrong and recommended that the district be renamed Shuswap. In Similkameen it moved the southwest boundary farther east so that Princeton became part of Yale-Lillooet, and extended the southeast boundary farther east to include Greenwood, Grand Forks and the area west of lower Arrow Lake.

The Legislative Assembly adopted these recommendations, changing the name of the Similkameen district to Boundary-Similkameen.

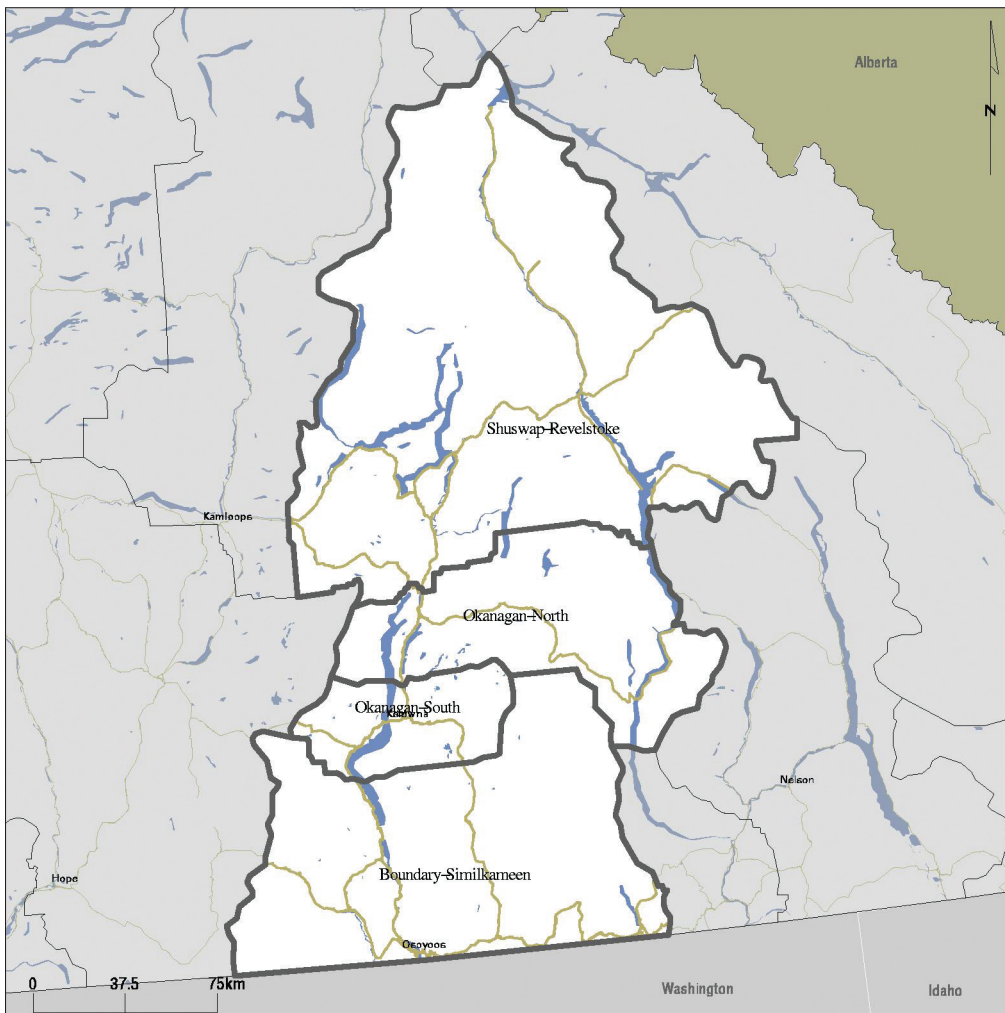
***b. The Norris Commission (1975)***

The Norris Commission also recommended the retention of four Okanagan electoral districts. In Boundary-Similkameen, it proposed moving the northern boundary farther north to include Summerland and Peachland, and moving the southeastern boundary farther west, so that Midway, Greenwood and Grand Forks would become part of the Rossland-Trail electoral district (see Okanagan, Map 3).

The Legislative Assembly did not adopt any of the Norris Commission's recommendations.



*Okanagan, Map 3*



Okanagan, Map 4

*c. The Eckardt Commission (1978)*

Judge Eckardt recommended the continuation of four electoral districts, but with several significant changes (Okanagan, Map 4). He proposed that Shuswap be expanded eastward to include Revelstoke and part of Glacier National Park, and that the electoral district be renamed Shuswap-Revelstoke. In North Okanagan (which he proposed be renamed Okanagan-North), he recommended that the resort area of Silver Star, Mabel Lake and Sugar Lake be transferred from Shuswap to North Okanagan (due to transportation and other links to Vernon) and that the three Lower Arrow Lake communities of Burton, Fauquier and Edgewood be transferred from Revelstoke-Slocan into North Okanagan.

In South Okanagan (which he proposed be renamed Okanagan-South), he recommended that the northern boundary be extended farther north to include the entire City of Kelowna, and that the Big White Mountain resort area be transferred from Boundary-Similkameen to this district. In Boundary-Similkameen, he recommended that Summerland be transferred from South Okanagan to this electoral district, “due to the strong ties between that area and Penticton.”

The Legislative Assembly adopted all of Judge Eckardt’s recommendations.



**d. *The Warren Commission (1982)***

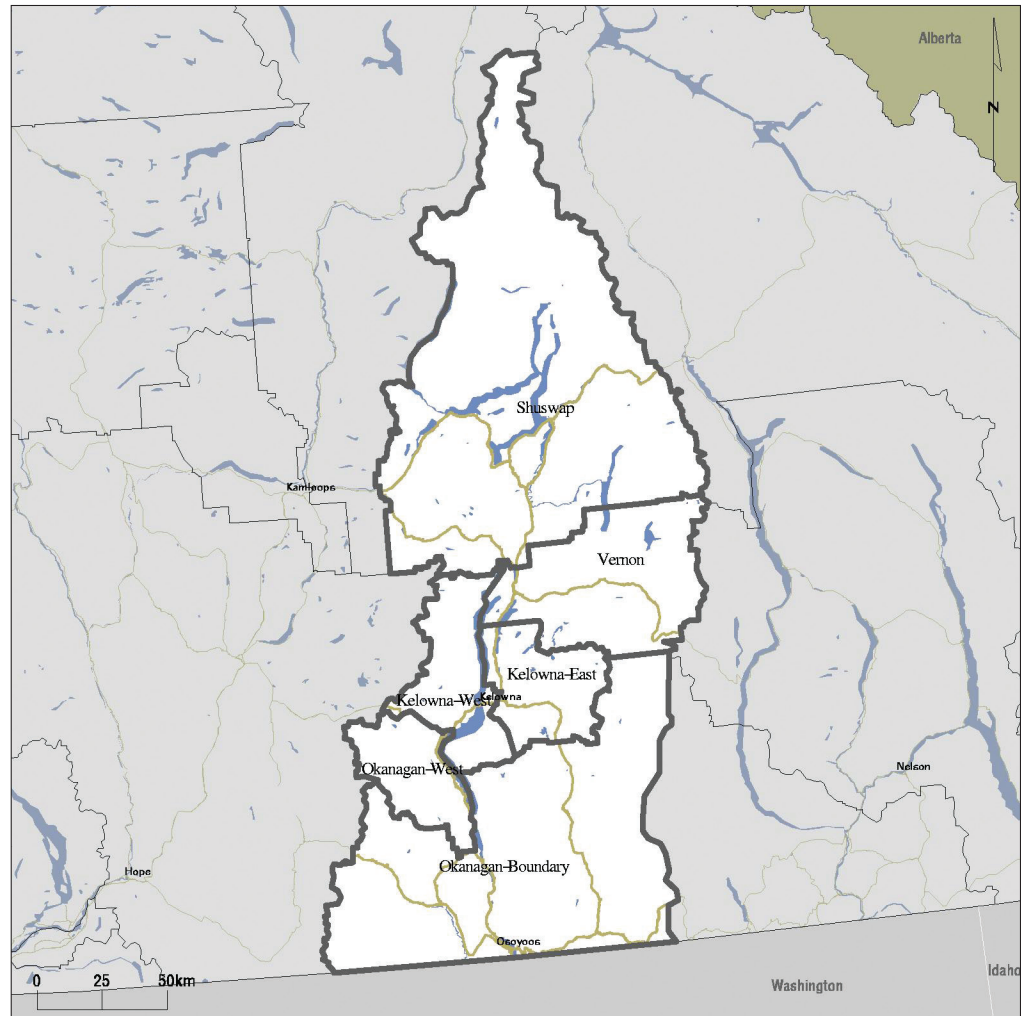
Mr. Warren recommended that a second MLA be added to seven electoral districts, including Okanagan South, but the Legislative Assembly did not adopt this recommendation.

**e. *The McAdam Commission (1984)***

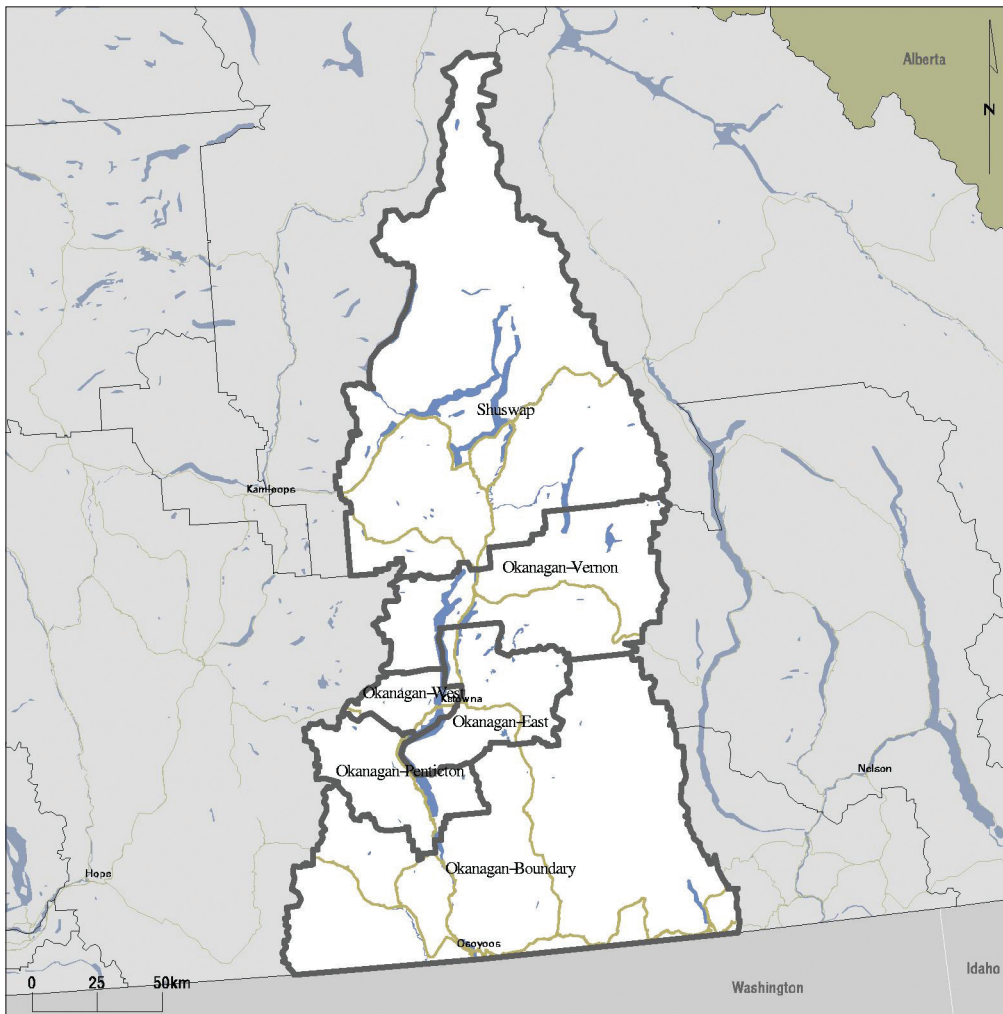
The McAdam Commission recommended that a second MLA be added to 11 one-member districts, including Okanagan South and Boundary-Similkameen. The Legislative Assembly adopted these recommendations, giving the Okanagan six MLAs.

**f. *The Fisher Commission (1988)***

Judge Fisher was required to eliminate the two-member ridings of Okanagan South and Boundary-Similkameen. In his interim report, he recommended that the number of Okanagan districts be increased from four to six (see Okanagan, Map 5), including the transfer of Revelstoke back to his proposed new Columbia River–Revelstoke district. He also divided Penticton down Main Street and Skaha Lake Road, and transferred Greenwood and Grand Forks into the proposed new Kootenay district of Grand Forks–Trail.



*Okanagan, Map 5*



Okanagan, Map 6

In his final report, Judge Fisher continued to recommend six electoral districts, but with some substantial revisions. For example, Kelowna West would span the lake, including the city's downtown core and Westbank. Penticton would no longer be split between two electoral districts, and Okanagan-Boundary would extend from Hedley in the west to Christina Lake in the east. The Legislative Assembly adopted all of Judge Fisher's recommendations, changing the names of Kelowna East and Kelowna West to Okanagan East and Okanagan West, respectively (see Okanagan, Map 6).

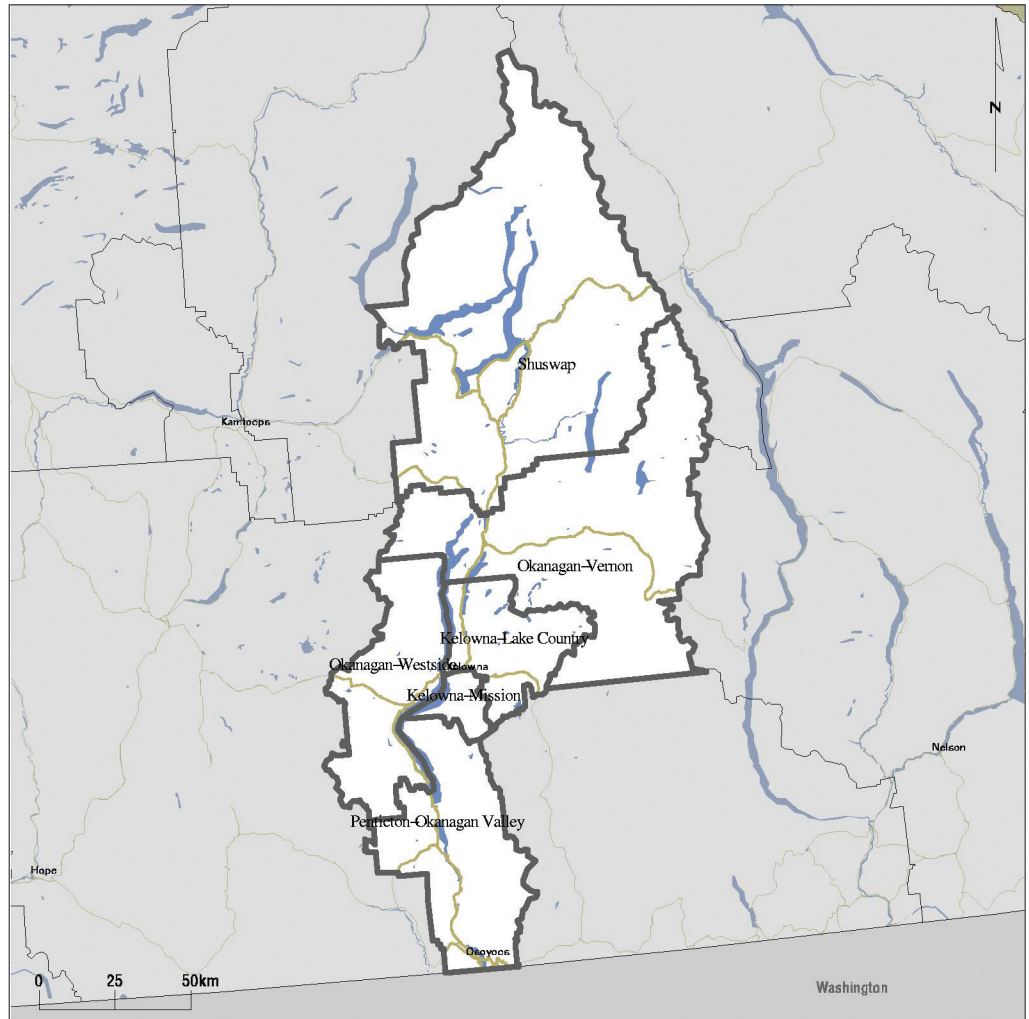
*g. The Wood Commission (1999)*

In its interim report, the Wood Commission observed that the deviations in six Okanagan electoral districts ranged from plus 54 percent to minus 21 percent, but was satisfied that these disparities could be addressed through rebalancing the existing electoral districts rather than adding a seventh (see Okanagan, Map 7). The commission created a new electoral district exclusively west of Lake Okanagan (Okanagan-Westside), stretching from

Killeney Beach in the north to Summerland in the south. A new Penticton–Okanagan Valley district would now include Penticton and Naramata, but would lose communities to the southeast (Bridesville, Rock Creek, Greenwood and Grand Forks) to the proposed new West Kootenay–Boundary district, and would lose communities to the southwest (Cawston, Keremeos and Hedley) to the proposed Yale–Similkameen district.

In its final report, the Wood Commission acknowledged strong public support for a seventh Okanagan district, but was not persuaded that the population warranted this step, and was not willing to recommend an even number (80) of electoral districts. Besides, it was necessary to transfer population from the southwest and southeast quadrants of Penticton–Okanagan Valley into Yale–Lillooet and West Kootenay–Boundary, respectively, to address serious under-population problems in those areas. Finally, the commission was unable to accede to the request that the District of Summerland be included in Penticton–Okanagan Valley, as it would produce a deviation well above plus 25 percent.

The Legislative Assembly adopted all of the Wood Commission’s recommendations.



*Okanagan, Map 7*

## 2. Our analysis of the Okanagan electoral districts

The geographical area that we define as the Okanagan region currently has six electoral districts (see map, page 124). Commencing in the north they are Shuswap, Okanagan-Vernon, Kelowna–Lake Country, Kelowna-Mission, Okanagan-Westside and Penticton–Okanagan Valley. These electoral districts, with their deviations at the time of the 1996 census, and now, are as follows (see Table 11):

**TABLE 11: CURRENT SMP ELECTORAL DISTRICTS IN THE OKANAGAN**

Electoral District	1996 deviation*	2006 deviation**
Shuswap	+2.6%	-0.7%
Okanagan-Vernon	+17.4%	+16.9%
Kelowna–Lake Country	+8.8%	+18%
Kelowna-Mission	+11.3%	+16.7%
Okanagan-Westside	-7.2%	-1.5%
Penticton–Okanagan Valley	+18.2%	+12.4%

\* based on 1996 census data, and assuming 79 electoral districts

\*\* based on 2006 census data, and assuming 79 electoral districts

These six electoral districts have a total population of 344,623. If we were to rebalance the population among all six electoral districts so that each district had the same population, it would produce an average deviation of plus 10.3 percent (based on 79 electoral dis-

tricts). In our view, that would be too high for such a fast-growing area. It would also result in the arbitrary carving up of many communities sharing long-standing interests, a result that we should avoid.

Given this region’s population growth and our desire to respect community interests, we concluded the Okanagan’s representation should be increased from six to seven electoral districts.

We began by reviewing what people had told us during the public consultation, and what anomalies had been identified in the 1999 Wood Commission report – areas that should have been put into one electoral district, but were put into another for overriding population reasons. For example:

- Summerland and Penticton are neighbours but were, for population-balancing reasons, placed into different electoral districts.
- Keremeos and other southern Similkameen communities have a natural affinity to Oliver and Osoyoos, and should be in an Okanagan based district.
- For the reasons discussed earlier in this part of the report (see “Cariboo-Thompson”), we are of the view that Princeton should be in the same electoral district as Keremeos.

- The electoral districts centred around Penticton, Kelowna and Vernon have grown dramatically since the 1996 census, with continued growth anticipated.

Having redefined our outer boundaries for the Okanagan region, we began reconfiguring electoral districts, with the goal of having seven electoral districts that would, as much as possible, preserve the integrity of municipal boundaries and that would respect other important community interests.

Beginning in the north, our proposed Shuswap electoral district (see map of proposed Shuswap electoral district page 126) is very similar to the current district. It will include Sicamous, Salmon Arm, Enderby, Armstrong and Spallumcheen. It will have a deviation of plus 5.7 percent based on 81 electoral districts.

Moving southward, we have been able to create an electoral district that is quite similar to the current Okanagan-Vernon electoral district, except that it does not extend west of Lake Okanagan. It will include all of Vernon (pop. 35,944), Coldstream (pop. 9,471) and Lumby (pop. 1,634), as well as rural areas farther east along Highway 6. This electoral district, which we pro-



pose be named Vernon-Monashee (see map of proposed Vernon-Monashee electoral district, page 127), will have a deviation of plus 15.3 percent. Although this deviation is higher than we would have liked, there is no way to reduce it without separating part of the Vernon population into an adjacent electoral district. In our view, preserving Vernon's municipal integrity should take priority over population parity.

Moving farther southward, the District Municipality of Lake Country (pop. 9,606) extends from the southern boundary of Vernon to the northern boundary of Kelowna. We decided to preserve the current electoral district that joins Lake Country with the northern part of Kelowna (see map of proposed Kelowna-Lake Country electoral district, page 128), and preserve the current Kelowna-Mission electoral district (see map of proposed Kelowna-Mission electoral district, page 129), using Highways 97 and 33 as the divider between them. They will have deviations of plus 2.3 percent and plus 4.8 percent, respectively.

Given Kelowna's population (pop. 106,707) and the fact that it is growing, we found it necessary to include the balance of its residents (pop. 17,015) with those living across the bridge on the west side of Lake Okanagan. In 1988 Judge Fisher had

recommended an electoral district spanning the lake, which the Legislative Assembly adopted. There are, we were told, strong community ties between Kelowna and adjacent residential areas west of the lake, evidenced by the current amalgamation discussions and the new Bennett Bridge. On the west side of the lake, this district would extend northward to Killeney Beach (the current boundary), and would extend southward to Highway 97C, just south of Westbank (see map of proposed Kelowna-Westside electoral district, page 130). We propose that this district be named Kelowna-Westside. It would have a deviation of plus 2.1 percent.

From Highway 97C south, there is now sufficient population to create two electoral districts. We are proposing that the District Municipalities of Peachland (pop. 4,883) and Summerland (pop. 10,828) be combined with the City of Penticton (pop. 31,909) and the unincorporated community of Naramata to form a new electoral district that we propose be named Penticton (see map of proposed Penticton electoral district, page 131). It will extend as far south as the southern boundaries of the City of Penticton and the Penticton Indian reserve. It will have a deviation of plus 5.9 percent.

Having already decided that Princeton, Hedley and Keremeos should

be included in an Okanagan-oriented electoral district, we have created a new district (that we propose be named Boundary-Similkameen – see map, page 132), which would extend from Princeton in the west, to Christina Lake in the east, and to Okanagan Falls and Kaleden in the north. It will also include Grand Forks, Rock Creek, Midway, Greenwood and Bridesville. The Similkameen communities to the west of Osoyoos and the Boundary communities to its east are all connected by Highway 3, and are similar rural, agricultural communities. The Boundary communities were part of an Okanagan based electoral district between 1966 and 1999. Our proposed Boundary-Similkameen district will have a deviation of minus 15.2 percent. Although this deviation is larger than we would have liked, the only options for reducing it were to encroach into the municipality of Penticton, move farther north from Princeton to Merritt, or extend the eastern boundary farther east to Rossland. In our view, all of those options would result in violations of community interests.

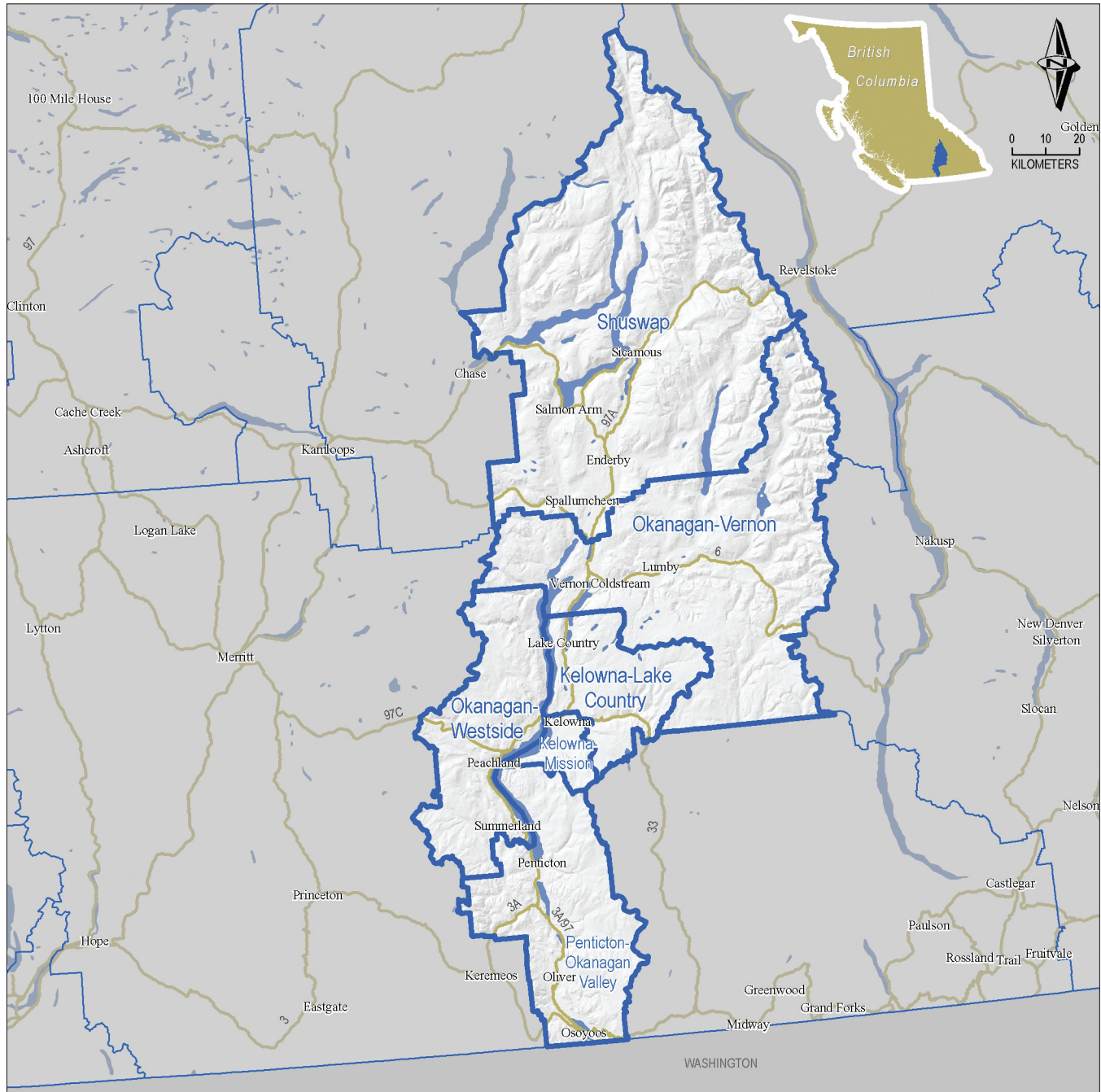
### 3. Conclusion

Accordingly, we propose that there be seven electoral districts in the Okanagan, as follows:

TABLE 12: PROPOSED SMP ELECTORAL DISTRICTS IN THE OKANAGAN

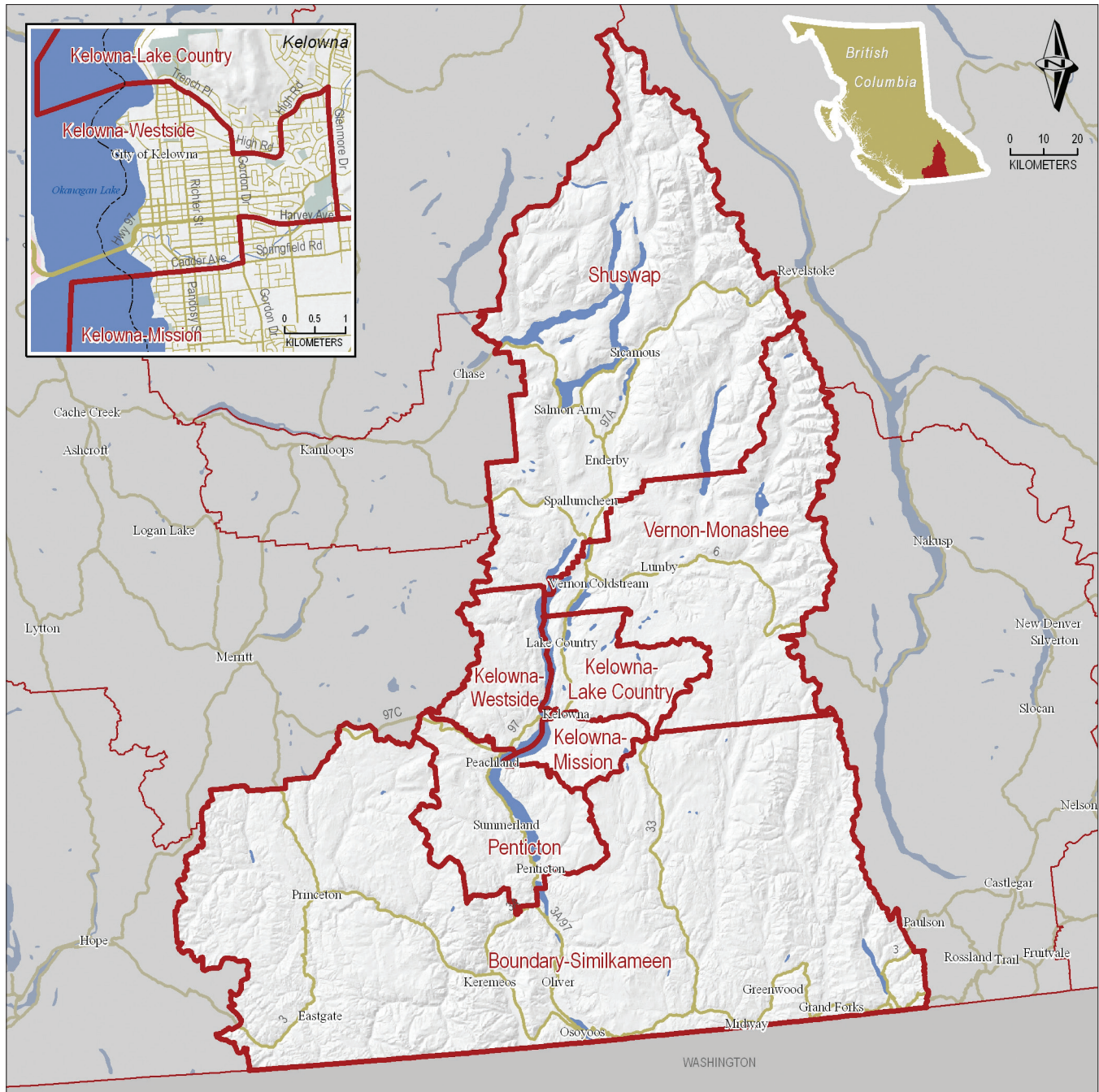
Electoral District	Sq. Km.	Population	Deviation*
Shuswap	8,626	53,658	+5.7%
Vernon-Monashee	5,016	58,538	+15.3%
Kelowna–Lake Country	1,181	51,968	+2.3%
Kelowna-Mission	564	53,231	+4.8%
Kelowna-Westside	1,140	51,850	+2.1%
Penticton	1,919	53,777	+5.9%
Boundary-Similkameen	15,954	43,052	-15.2%
* based on 81 electoral districts, with a provincial electoral quotient of 50,784			

### Region: Okanagan – Current Electoral Districts



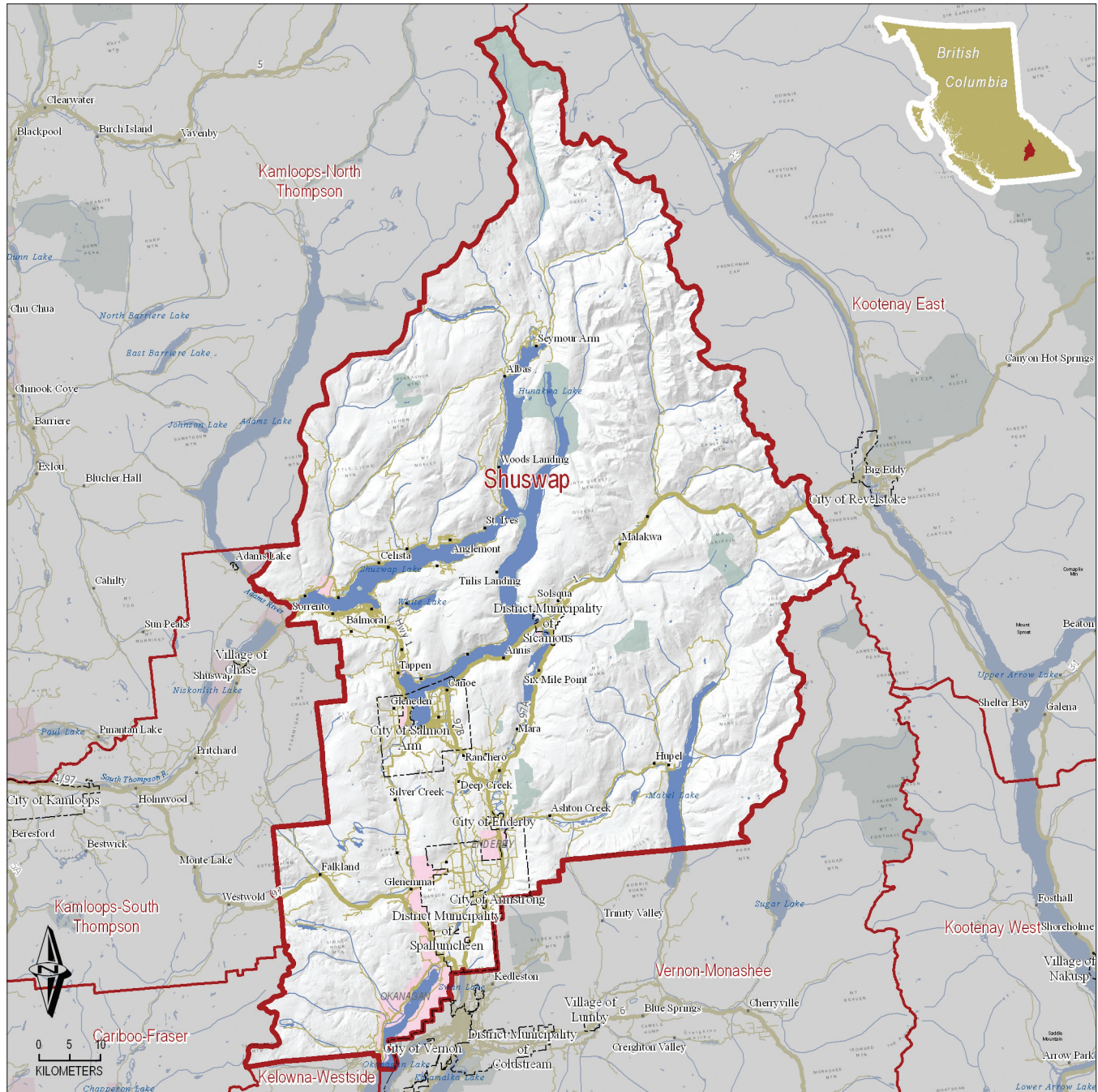


*Region: Okanagan – Proposed Electoral Districts*

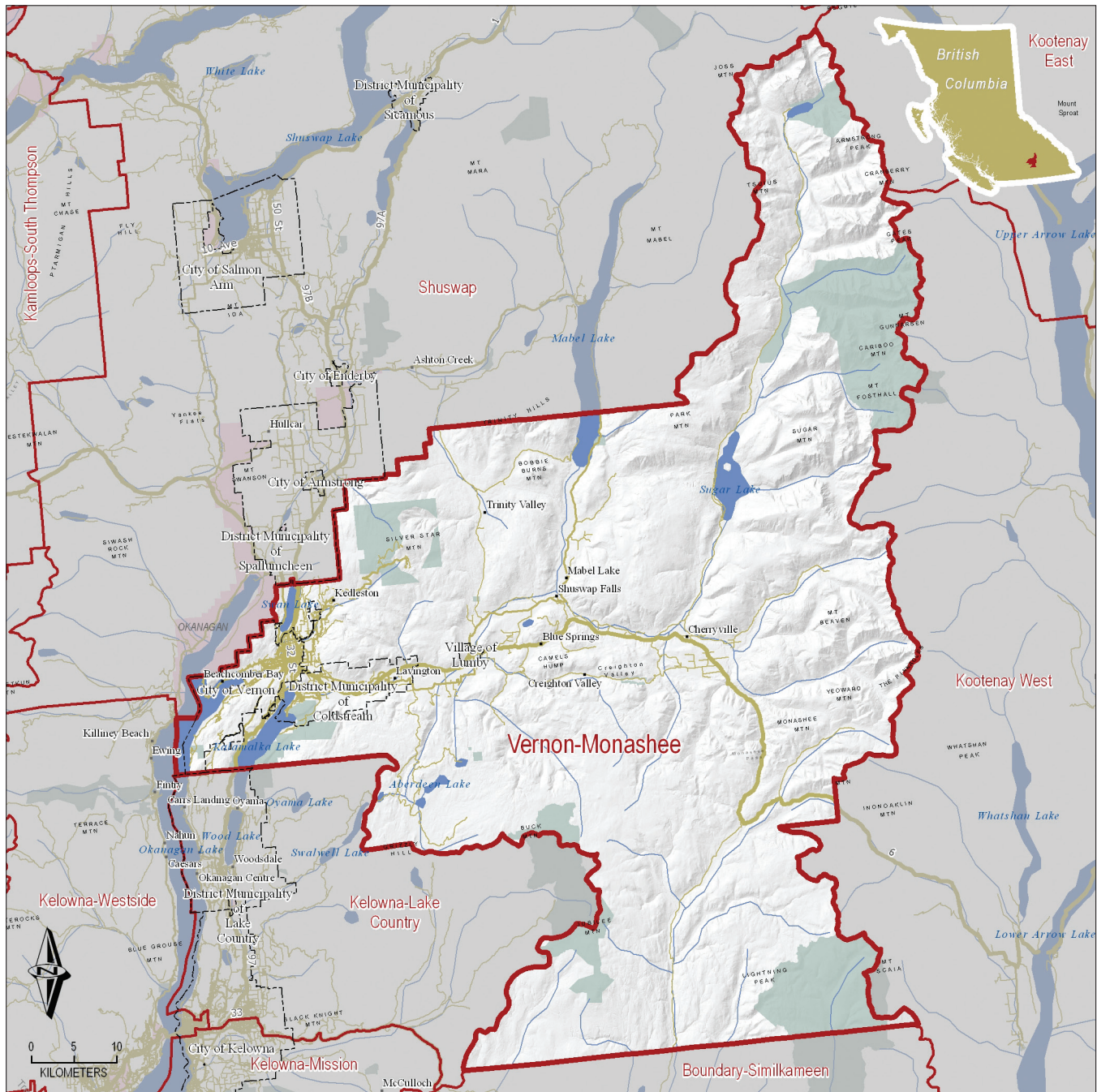




Region: Okanagan – Proposed Shuswap Electoral District

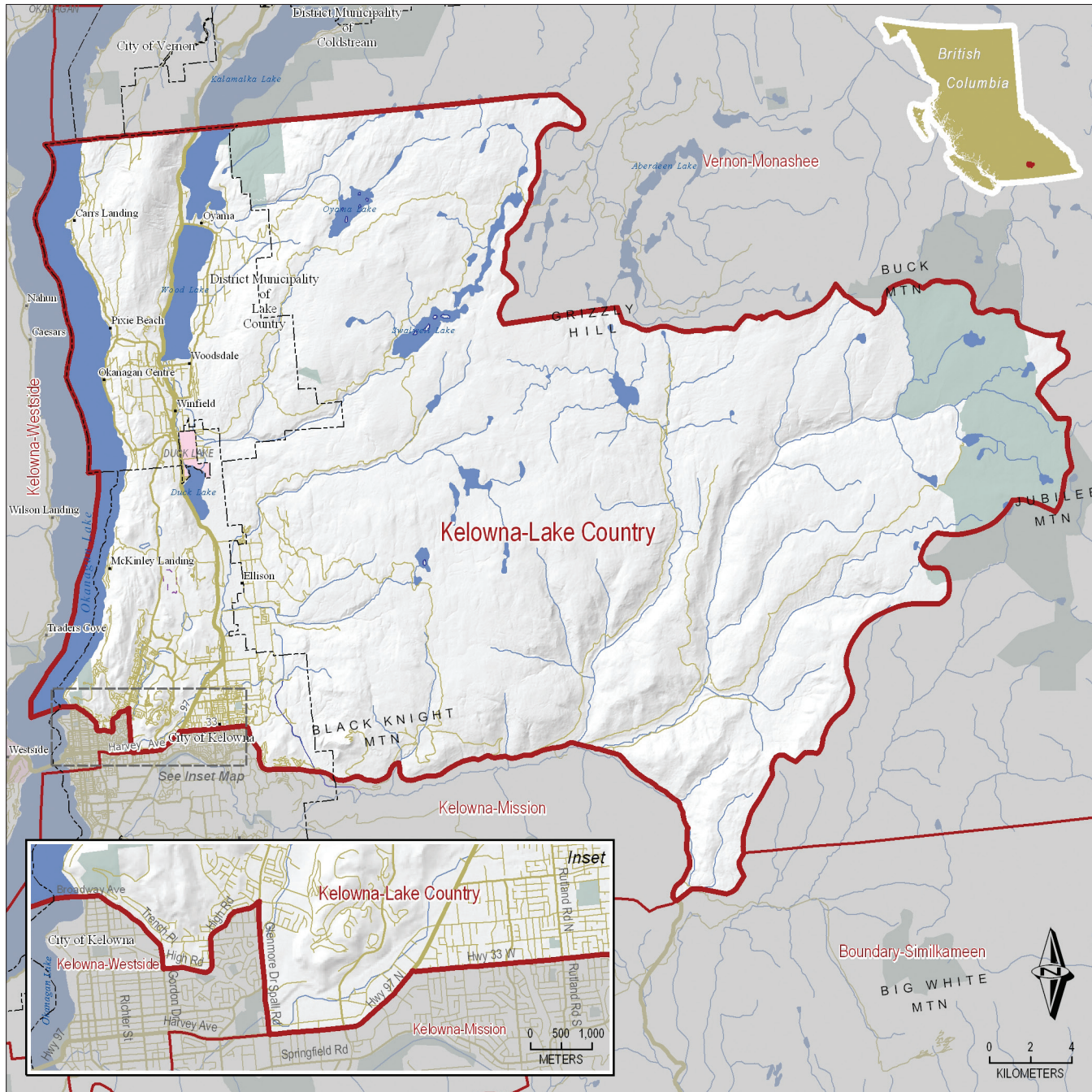


Region: Okanagan – Proposed Vernon-Monashee Electoral District

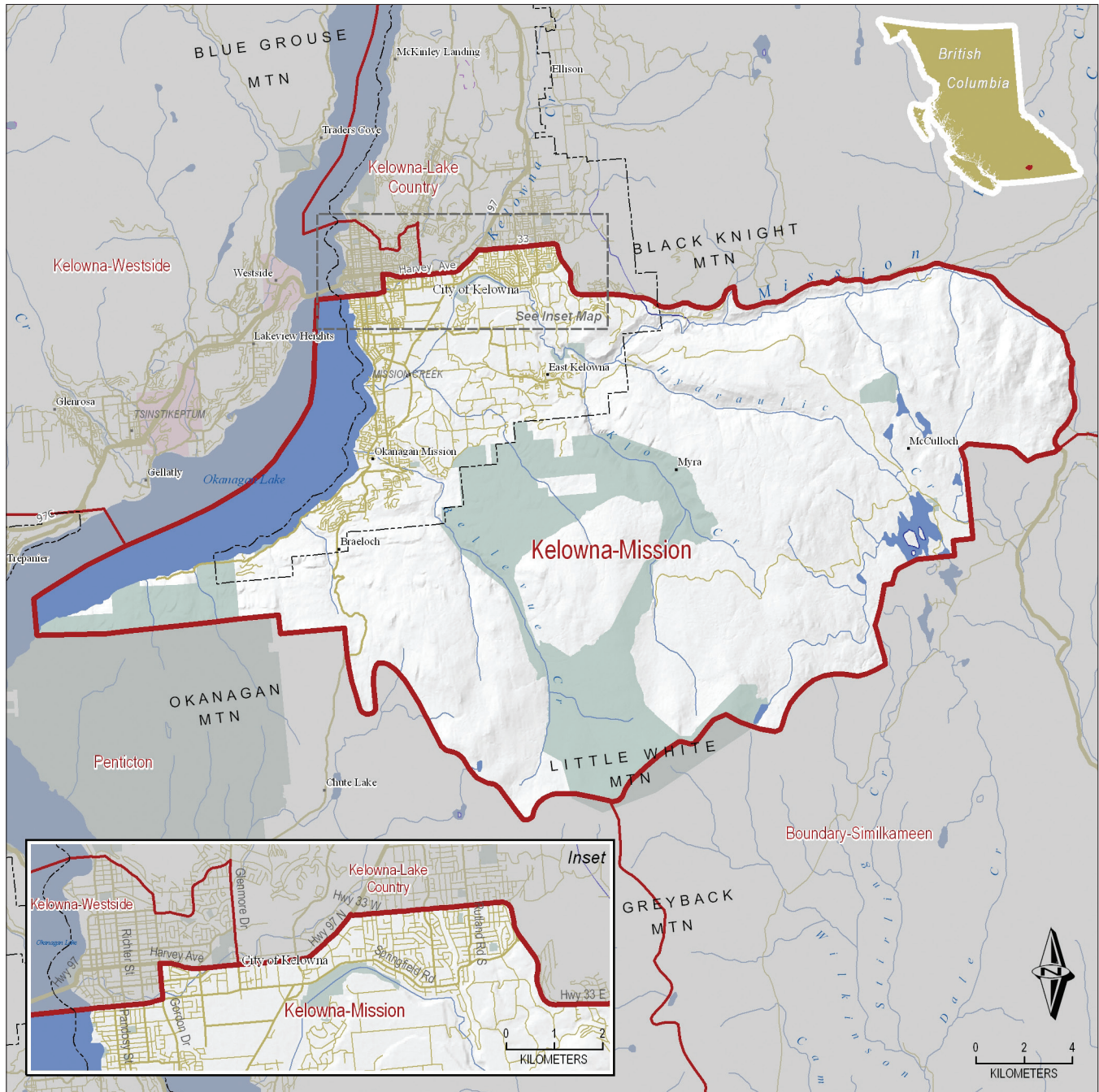




### Region: Okanagan – Proposed Kelowna–Lake Country Electoral District

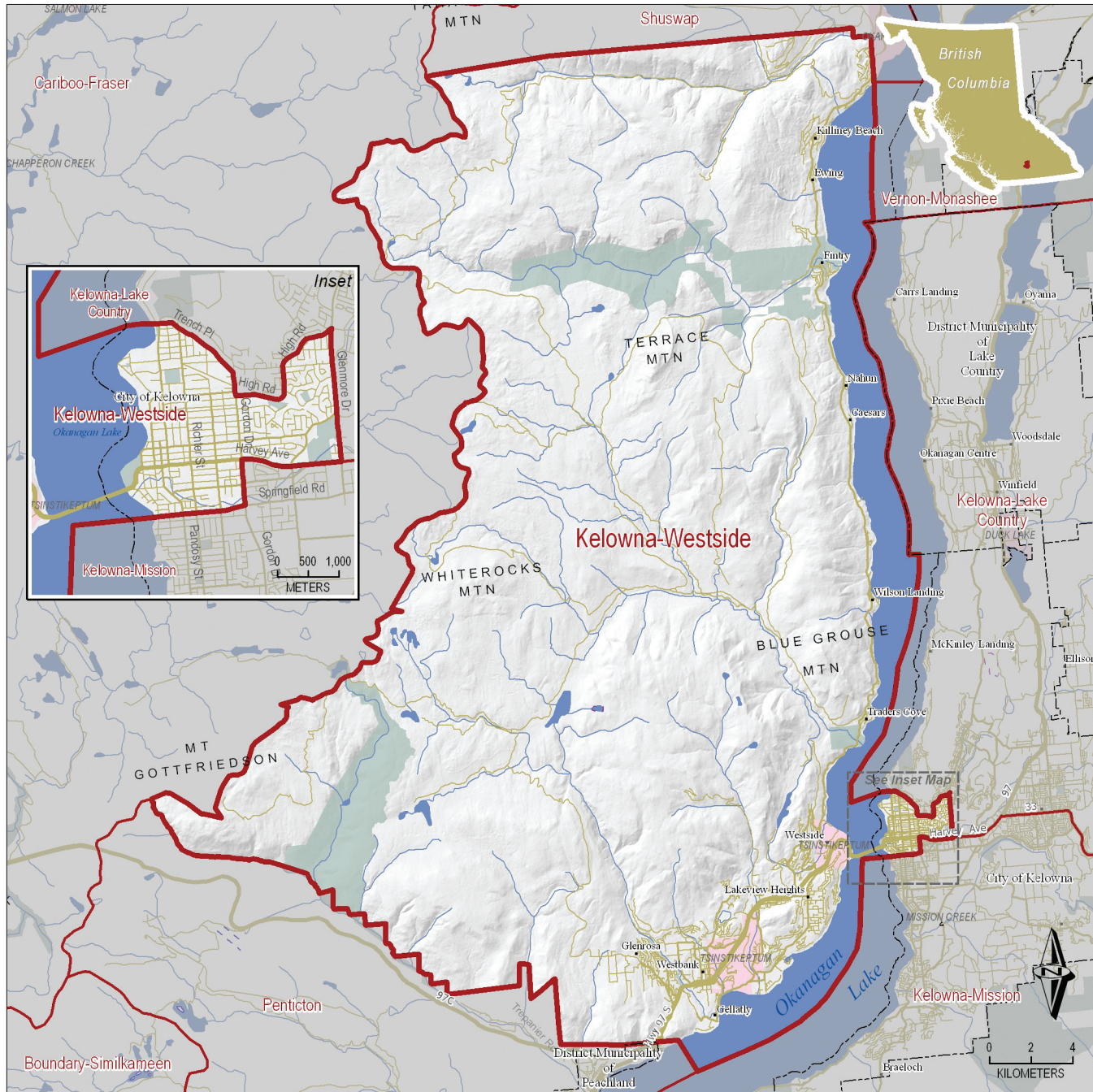


*Region: Okanagan – Proposed Kelowna-Mission Electoral District*





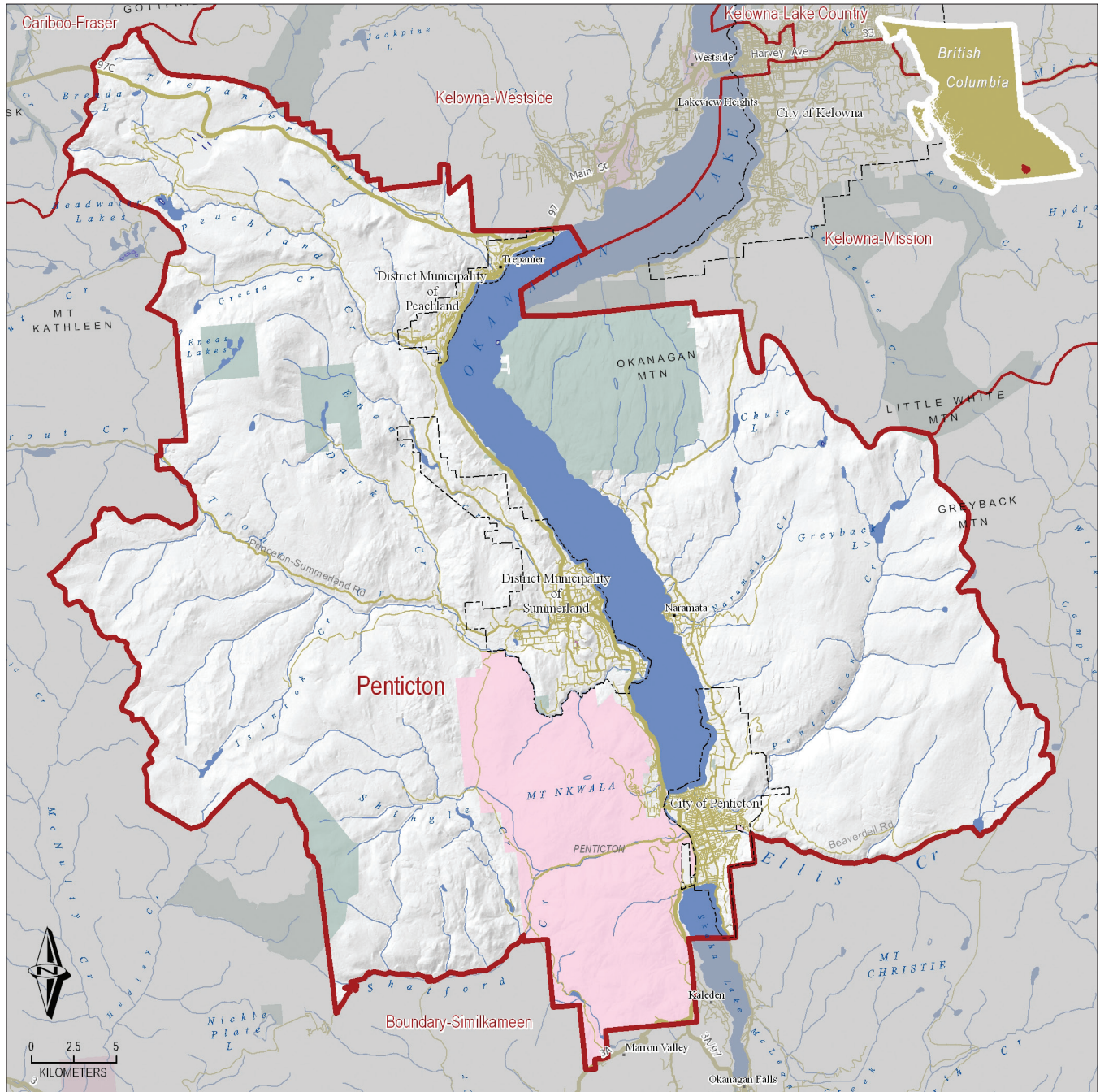
### Region: Okanagan – Proposed Kelowna-Westside Electoral District



PART 9 – PROPOSED SINGLE MEMBER PLURALITY BOUNDARIES



Region: Okanagan – Proposed Penticton Electoral District



### Region: Okanagan – Proposed Boundary-Similkameen Electoral District

