

From: Rick Avis
Sent: April-09-10 2:22 PM
To: Slater.MLA, John LASS:EX; Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Cc: Fraser.MLA, Scott LASS:EX; j.bond@ducks.ca; Dave Chitty
Subject: WATER Act Amendments & Provincial Wetlands Policy

Categories: First Nations

Mr. John Slater
MLA Boundary-Similkameen
Parliamentary Secretary for Water Supply and Allocation

Dear Mr. Slater:

Wetland inventories indicate as much as 85 per cent of freshwater and 80 per cent of tidal wetlands have disappeared in settled areas of British Columbia. This loss cannot continue. Wetlands provide crucial ecosystem services, including buffering developed areas from flood damage, filtering toxins in the environment and serving as habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

In the existing *Water Act*, there is no mention of wetlands (only swamps); in the new legislation all classifications of wetlands must be included so that generations of British Columbians can continue to enjoy the many social, economic and environmental services wetlands provide.

The government has set four goals for the *Water Act* modernization. To achieve these, an integrated watershed management approach *needs* to have wetland ecosystem protection as a cornerstone principle.

In *Living Water Smart*, the B.C. government committed to:

- Legislation recognizing water flow requirements for ecosystems and species.
- Wetland and waterway function will be protected and rehabilitated.

I want to ensure these commitments are upheld. I want ecosystem protection for wetlands in the *Water Act* modernization.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dave Chitty,
Secretary-Treasurer,
Alberni Valley Enhancement Association

cc. Scott Fraser, MLA Alberni-Pacific Rim