From: ***PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS REMOVED***
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2010 1:38:04 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Act Modernization

Dear Minister Penner and the Living Water Smart Team,

I support the following principles regarding the modernization of the water act:

conservation of the environment

* The precautionary principle must be applied to the Water Act to protect ecosystem and watershed health.
* Riparian Area Regulation (RAR) assessments must be conducted under regional or municipal legislation.
* The Water Act needs to recognize wetlands and their critical processes.

participatory governance

* The Act needs to be built around logical watershed boundaries, not political boundaries. Management and planning needs to happen closer to where the water is actually being used, with meaningful community involvement in the decision making process.
* Bill 30 rulings need to be reversed, allowing local governmental bodies to have meaningful input.

rational allocation

* Water license applications need to have an expiry date, so that private industry can’t hold onto water rights.
* We must have a licensing/permitting system that prioritizes water uses, such as ecosystem and domestic uses above irrigation uses for golf courses and lawns.
* First in Time, First in Rights system needs to have restrictions under low flow conditions and this must be enforced. Ideally, it would be phased out and replaced with a "First in priority, First in Rights" system that recognizes the overarching imperative of ecological integrity
* The impacts of climate change must be taken into consideration, including an assessment of how it will impact the ability to meet ecosystem and domestic needs.

regulation of industrial groundwater extraction

* Groundwater extraction and use must be regulated for all large withdrawals and the word ‘large’ must be clearly defined.
* Of particular importance, Oil and Gas exploration companies must have to pay for all water uses and must be responsible for tracking how much groundwater they extract and use.

In addition, it is essential that the public be involved at all levels for this modernization process as it moves forward. Currently, there is a lack of public input opportunities beyond this initial comment period.

Sincerely,

PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS REMOVED