From: ***PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS REMOVED***
Sent: April-28-10 8:05 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Act Modernization Submission
Attachments: Water Act Modernization Submission _3_.pdf

Here is our submission.

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Water Act Modernization Submission

Goal One
Protect stream health and aquatic environments

We support the objectives for this goal. However, we strongly believe that watersheds should be protected at their source, that there should be a moratorium on logging watersheds, and that the Water Act as it relates to water should supersede the legislation of Forestry, Mining, and other ministries. Furthermore we believe the Site C Clean Energy Project should not be built. B.C. does not need more hydroelectric power. Find alternate means of power generation that does not affect water.

Goal Two
Improving governance

We believe that whichever model is adapted, it should include mandatory community consultation and local decision making on matters that directly affect domestic water supplies. Knowing so little about the eventual funding mechanisms for each governance model makes it difficult for us to know which model to favor. We do believe that the governance model should be adequately funded with sufficient resources to carry out its mandate without downloading costs on local government or water licensees.

Goal Three
Introduce more flexibility and efficiency in the water allocation system

We support the four stated objectives for meeting this goal. However, we believe that the current allocation system (FIRFIT) is working fine and does not need to be changed. We very strongly believe that existing domestic water licenses should be retained and not converted to ‘permitted use.’ Improved efficiencies are possible in the administration of these licenses. For example, license renewal could be extended to five or ten years to reduce the cost and paperwork of their administration.

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Goal Four
Regulate groundwater extraction and use

We agree with the overall objective that groundwater resources in British Columbia be sustained in perpetuity. Given that domestic water licenses only account for .2% of the surface water allocation in B.C., it seems obvious that safeguarding this water resource requires a more pronounced focus on the major users: Conservation and Land Improvement, Industrial and Commercial, Waterworks, and Aquaculture. Clearly more data is required regarding stream flows so that this resource can be monitored and protected. Projects like Alberta's Oil Sands which use huge amounts of water and pollute the rest should not be allowed.

Proposed Principles

We feel that the proposed principles are fine. However, we believe that the overriding principle should be to safeguard B.C.'s water resources for perpetuity. To achieve this will require a significant shift in water use priorities, better control of the impact on water from resource extraction, and water act legislation that supersedes any conflicting legislation.

We believe that Phase Two of the modernization should begin immediately.

Submitters:

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