From: ***PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS REMOVED***
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2010 6:20:27 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX; OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Minister, ENV ENV:EX; Mungall.MLA, Michelle LASS:EX; Conroy.MLA, Katrine LASS:EX; Bennett.MLA, Bill LASS:EX; john.staler.mla@leg.bc.ca; Atamanenko.A@parl.gc.ca
Subject: WAM comment submission

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express my objection to implementation of the new BC Water Act as currently proposed. Too little time has been allowed for consideration of public input. A great many concerns have been raised and too little time has been allowed for citizens to grasp the full ramifications of changes to the Act or for the Government to fully hear the concerns the people have put forward. Existing legislation surrounding water issues must be maintained until such time as this matter may be properly and democratically placed before the public and their input fully heard and incorporated into any proposed new legislation. The new draft Act should be placed before the public for comment and amendment prior to passage and the new Act must consider the following issues raised by the public:

· We want strong standards in place established through a transparent public process, which are also enforced, for protecting water, stream health, wetlands and watersheds;

* The scope of the Water Act needs to be broadened to include land use (for instance resource extraction activities) since you can't protect the water without considering the land.

The Water Act must be the overriding piece of legislation that determines what is able to occur in watersheds. Currently the Act does not protect stream, ecosystem or watershed health.

* The Water Act should not devolve uses and protections to other acts (Section 9 of the Water Act devolves water protection to various other Ministries Acts (Forestry, Mining, Gas & Oil)

* The province needs to put a priority on water conservation rather than allocation and supply management and climate change projections must be incorporated into water allocation decisions.

* Community water needs must take first precedence over corporate interests and the FITFIR priority system must not be abandoned.

* Watershed Reserves must be re-established for source protection from forestry and other resource extraction activities. Watershed reserves would protect our drinking water supplies.

* Collaborative science, traditional knowledge and local history should inform all allocation decisions. The precautionary principle should be functioning at all times

(no harm proof prior to new uses, not mitigation after damage). First Nations social and cultural practices associated with water must be respected and accommodated.

* The Water Act needs to recognize the critical contribution wetlands provide to the wider environment.
* If the Act requires communities to take action, funding must be provided by the Province.

Yours truly,
PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS REMOVED