

From: sarah newton
Sent: May-01-10 9:54 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: North Columbia Environmental Society WAM submission
Attachments: Water Act Moderization 28 April 2010 _2_.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Please see the attached document, thank you.

Sarah Newton

Box 1197, 204 Seventh St E
Revelstoke BC V0E 2S0
250-837-4290



P.O. Box 3116, Revelstoke, British Columbia V0E 2S0
EMAIL: ncesociety@gmail.com WEBSITE: www.northcolumbia.org

28 April 2010

livingwatersmart@gov.bc.ca

Water Act Modernization Submission
Ministry of Environment
Water Stewardship Division
PO Box 9362
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9M2

We would like to provide the following input into the modernization of the Water Act.

As the province transitions from a resource based economy to that of a tourism based economy we feel it is important that the Water Act recognize the potential for impacts to the water resources from not only resource extraction and project work but also from general public use and recreational activities.

We can look to California to see the future of BC with respect to demands on water, conflicting uses of water, and water resource competition and scarcity which is causing the destruction of the water resource.

We can also learn from California that water allocation needs to first and foremost consider the natural ecosystem and to provide adequate allocation to this resource in advance of any and all other resource use.

We feel the province should not allocate water use and not allow public use of water until a detailed allocation system has been developed for the entire watershed. The precautionary principle should apply to all decision making.

We believe the definition of "stream" needs to be expanded to include non-natural water bodies, including reservoirs that provide for seasonal aquatic habitat or the nutrients and life needs of downstream aquatic habitats. The "stream" definition for reservoirs should include all areas of the reservoir whether flooded or de-water.

The Definition of "Work in and About A Stream" should be expanded to not only include development and project type work but also activities of the public and groups involved in any activity in and about a stream.

While it is important to protect "streams" from construction and development related activities we believe with the onset of tourism and recreation that these sorts of public and commercial uses of water can have greater and everlasting impacts on the water resources.

These sorts of impacts already exist in highly developed waterways with loss of habitat due to recreational use of waterways by boats and recreational use of shorelines, beaches, and the drawdown zones of reservoirs.

We believe that water use such as boating, especially recreational boating has the potential to severely and permanently destroy the aquatic ecosystem through wave and wake action, through noise and displacement of aquatic organism, through deposition of fuels and exhaust, and through the displacement of fish and other aquatic and terrestrial animals that depend upon the aquatic environment.

Regulating boat use on all bodies of water must occur to insure the health and long term viability of the aquatic ecosystem. Managing boating type, periods of use, and location of use will be necessary to protect the aquatic environment.

Regulation of other terrestrial based recreational activities must also be included in the modernization of the Water Act to insure these activities do not impact on the aquatic environment...

Activities that cause the introduction of deleterious substances are prohibited at this time however these activities are only considered in association with specific events and instantaneous releases. The introduction of deleterious substances needs to be expanded to include the cumulative impacts of such events as the increased volume of boating, the increased volume of snowmobiling (with subsequent snow melt and release of contaminated water from exhaust) and the increased volume of motorized recreational use of shorelines, beaches, and drawdown zones.

Thank you for including our input into the modernization of the Water Act.

Sincerely,

Sarah Newton, President

North Columbia Environmental Society