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**Submission to Living Water Smart – Water Act Modernization
February, 2011**

The South Kamloops Stockmen's Association represents ranchers operating in the area immediately south of the City of Kamloops down to the Nicola Valley. This area experiences little moisture throughout the year and has suffered many years of drought in years past, so having sufficient water for their forage and livestock operations is their prime concern.

We wish to emphasize the following issues in drafting and implementing a modernization of the Water Act:

- Agriculture and local food production must be considered a primary priority over other uses. Water rights and allocation must be linked to lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve but priced so that the resulting food production is economically viable and sustainable into the future.
- Additional water storage is needed for balanced management of agricultural needs, fish habitat and general ecological concerns. However government and the public must acknowledge some recognition and compensation for the rancher built and maintained storage infrastructure that currently exists.
- Water currently allocated to agriculture must remain tied to agriculture.
- Incentives should be made available for water development and for implementation of new technology and conservation measures.
- New groundwater wells that reduce or eliminate existing above ground water rights must be controlled.
- Recognition of historic in-stream livestock watering on crown range and private lands is mandatory. Incentives for off-stream livestock watering without encumbering existing water allocation should be made available.

Food production has become a global priority and government along with the public has an obligation to promote and assist in maintaining agriculture in the province of BC.

SOUTH KAMLOOPS STOCKMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Lucille Dempsey,
Secretary