



Advance Nursery Co. Ltd.

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November 15, 2013

The Honourable Mary Polak
Minister of Environment
Government of British Columbia
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E2

By email: ENV.minister@gov.bc.ca

Submission regarding Water Sustainability Act

I am a member of the British Columbia Landscape & Nursery Association (BCLNA) and have had an opportunity to review its submission with respect to the proposed Water Sustainability Act. Although I agree with that submission, I did want to raise one further point.

While I support the creation of regional Water Sustainability Plans, care needs to be taken to ensure that these WSP operate under very clear terms of reference specifically in reference to jurisdiction and that the committees implementing these plans are properly comprised.

As an example of what not to do, over the past two years, the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary has created the Kettle River Watershed Stakeholder Advisory Group, largely a local government initiative. A full time project coordinator on a multi-year contract was hired and the group comprised of at least 30 people has travelled around the regional district holding meetings with the tab for lunch, dinner and travel often being picked up. These meetings and the resulting work product have had little focus and no statutory mandate. Sadly, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent to date with little meaningful progress. Talk is cheap and there is no end to those with opinions on how best to manage water as a resource especially when a free lunch or dinner is involved.

As a farmer and businessman who relies on the Kettle River for irrigation clearly I have an interest in the proper management of water as a resource. However, the last thing we need is to place the responsibility of a WSP in the hands of an organization like the Kettle River Watershed Stakeholder Advisory Group. Given that the costs of operating the WSP would likely fall to water users, I have a considerable stake in ensuring that those who are charged with implementing the WSP do so not only from a position of knowledge and experience but also with an eye to administrative efficiency. Rural areas like ours have Irrigation Districts which have been managing domestic and irrigation water supplies for years. I would suggest that those bodies may be an appropriate place to look for people who are not only experienced in water management but administrative efficiency as well.

I thank you for this opportunity to provide input into this long overdue update to the legislation. If you require any further information, feel free to contact me at 250-442-5291.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fred Elsaesser', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fred Elsaesser
President,
Advance Nursery Co. Ltd.