

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 1:14 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Safe Drinking Water for ALL British Columbians should not be left to individual rural communities to fund, while city dwellers enjoy government funded systems. Upgrade grants should be made to ALL citizens- including Improvement districts.

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From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 11:30 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX; OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; WWW ENVMail ENV:EX; Simpson.MLA, Shane L LASS:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act Feedback

Dear WSA Creators and Reviewers,

CC: Hon. Christy Clark, Hon. Mary Polak, Shane Simpson MLA

Thank you for reviewing and updating BC's Water Act. Thank you for consulting with the general public. I believe it is also important to consult and collaborate with First Nations communities.

Aspects I would like to see in BC's Water Sustainability Act are:

1. Public water stays public. The term "Beneficial Use" can use clarity as it is not clear if the beneficiaries can claim property rights to the water.
2. Public costs and regulations apply to all users. Specifically, not making exceptions for industries, such as mining, forestry and bottled water, that would compromise the integrity of ecosystems.

We need fresh air, water, and food to live and thrive. Water is such an important life-giving resource not just for us but for all species that help to keep the larger ecosystems healthy including us.

Thank you,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Vancouver

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 11:30 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: WSA Comments

Citizen Comments on
Water Sustainability Act for BC Legislative Proposal

I live in a community of 9,000 people on the east coast of Vancouver Island and am concerned about our region's water resources and the management of those resources. I am not a member of any organization.

The October 2013 legislative proposals still require changes in order to improve protections of B.C.'s water.

If the purpose of the new water act is to protect water resources and provide a clean, sustainable water supply for all users for generations to come, then protection of environmental services must be the foundation of the new water act. The proposed legislation falls short in providing these protections.

To protect stream health in perpetuity, environmental flow needs will require higher standards than those in the proposed legislation. Decision makers for water allocations and licences need to ensure that a minimum EFN of the water source are sufficient to maintain the health of that ecosystem. When reviewing water licence applications, just 'considering' EFN is not enough. The decision makers should be required to familiarize themselves with the area being affected by the water licence and be aware of other activities in the area that are impacting the ecosystem and surrounding environment.

The WSA proposal for protecting stream health demonstrates minimal concerns for streams health. It is more about work-arounds to avoid requirements and regulations. The WSA draft states that more "transparency and consistency in determining and considering EFNs" is needed, but much more than that is needed. Proposed legislation continues with - "most", (**not all**), new water licence applications would consider EFNs ; and RWMs would complete a "**simplified (?)** EFN assessment"; and EFN considerations in low-risk areas are "**discretionary**" (**?**); and in some cases, **no consideration at all** of EFNs; and EFNs for existing licencees would be **exempt**. All of these proposals contradict transparency and consistency. I do not see how this proposal is going to protect stream health.

I strongly disagree that the RWM is a staff person within the Oil and Gas Commission, for obvious reasons. Comments from this industry such as, "The oil and gas industry would like to see the Oil and Gas Commission as the single regulator for water," should not surprise anyone. But I am surprised the the Ministry is giving into this industry on this point. The Ministry of Environment loses credibility when they position oil and gas development the priority above water protection.

The WSA should take precedence over other statutes regarding protection of water resources, that is of course, if the WSA actually includes strong water protection regulations. Currently, the proposed legislation does not.

Another issue of great concern and skepticism, is measuring and reporting. This is most important with industrial and commercial users. Monitoring these users and holding them accountable to regulations and requirements is an integral part of the implementation and success or failure of the WSA.

The hydro electric industry is one example of abuses by industry and non-compliance to regulations, that frequently go unnoticed and are not penalized. In 2010, there were 749 non-compliance incidents from 16 hydro plants in southern BC and 43 of these related to not maintaining instream flow rates. A study done by the Pacific Salmon Foundation found that of 44 run-of-river projects, "73% have the potential to affect fish in the upper reaches and closer to 88% in the lower reaches." Almost all the private run-of-river projects studied in BC are located where they could affect fish. The study also showed that monitoring was of poor quality and the reports aren't being read and processed.

The Ts'elxweyeqw Tribe has a grant to assess small-scale hydro projects in the Chilliwack River Valley. "The problem with the current government evaluation and approval process of run-of-river projects, says Ts'elxweyeqw Tribe chief operating officer Matt Wealick, is that projects are evaluated independently of each other. Another problem with the review process is that it fails to consider the cumulative effects."

The serious business of oversight and monitoring (or lack thereof) of licences and permits of industry - which is the responsibility of government, but by default has landed in the laps of citizens - was demonstrated today with a lawsuit against the Oil and Gas Commission for the exploitation of fresh water. I would expect this will give the Ministry of Environment hesitation to designate water regulators who are staff members of Oil and Gas Commission. A decision maker or water regulator and the monitoring of water users must be from an independent agency unconnected to industry.

I don't expect the WSA to solve these kinds of systemic problems between government and industry, but I do expect the WSA to be more progressive and comprehensive in their commitment to protect our water resources now and into the future. Therefore, I support

raising water fees for industry, to help fund the costs for implementing stronger regulations and monitoring licences.

For the WSA to ensure the security of our water resources for environmental protection and for human consumption, simple logic dictates that large water users for non-consumptive use who make profits from their use of water should be the ones who pay for that privilege and be rigidly regulated and monitored.

Many watersheds on the east coast of Vancouver Island are highly populated and developed. This is exacerbated by the fact that two major timber companies own about 1.4 million acres of what used to be forested land on the east coast of the island. These forests have been harvested several times not allowing the land to recover and to regenerate; allowing encroachment of invasive species; the disappearance of the endangered Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystem; fragmented wildlife habitats; and threatened watersheds that supply our communities' drinking water. In 2007, The Private Managed Forest Land Act deregulated privately owned forest resource land increasing the threats and stresses on community watersheds.

It is my understanding that the Forest and Range Activities Act does not apply to privately owned land, therefore, the WSA must address water protection regarding the forestry industry on private land. If, as the forest industry and Ministry of Environment state - water protection is already adequate under other statutes - then logging in community watersheds, along riparian zone boundaries and old growth forests would not be taking place.

The Ministry has received thousands of citizen comments pointing out the supremacy of environmental needs over any other water use. I believe that those in government given the responsibility to protect our water resources understand this truth. But other considerations, such as economic development, have weakened the resolve of the Ministry to follow through on the legislation needed to secure and protect B.C.'s water resources.

The WSA has the potential to provide this province with a sustainable, essential natural resource if they make the recommended and necessary changes offered by the citizenry.

Respectively,

Personal Identifiers RemovedQualicum Beach, ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 5:14 AM

To: livingwatersmart.gov.bc.ca

Subject: FW: wsa comment revised

Greetings, folks--

I am travelling out of the country at the moment, so have not been able to participate in the discussion of the proposed WSA. But I did want to get a few comments in, so have prepared the attached hasty note.

Good luck with all your ongoing work.

Cheers,

Personal Identifiers Removed

The consultation process leading up to the draft Water Sustainability Act has been exemplary, and the resulting draft legislation offers several important amendments to the existing out-dated Water Act. But in some fundamental respects the present proposal falls far short of the potential transformation essential at this time. It fails to take advantage of the present opportunity for British Columbia to lead the world in stewardship of water resources as it has done with the example of the carbon tax.

To do so demands that the legislation start from recognition of the changing and uncertain world in which stewardship responsibilities must be undertaken. It is now widely recognized that this world is characterized by profound uncertainty and deep complexity. The presence of water resources and the dynamics of water cycles form crucial core features of the complex social-ecological systems within which we all live, at global and local scale. The goal of legislation and policy in these circumstances must be to build and ensure continuing adaptive capacity and resilient, equitable response to unexpected change in both resource needs and potential supplies. It is not possible to promise certainty of claims or outcomes in such changing ecosystems. What must be assured is clarity and certainty of voice for all—including voice for the rights of Nature and future generations—within legitimate processes for achieving equitable adjustment of claims and allocations in the face of changing resource supplies and dynamics.

In these circumstances, the ancient FITFIR system must be replaced by something more responsive to changing balances of needs and resource availabilities. The new WSA ought to provide overall principles and guidelines within which decisions on plans and allocations can be made through inclusive mechanisms for governance at watershed and more local scales. In

earlier days, FITFIR may have served well; in current settings of scarcity and uncertainty, it no longer can. It must go.

Appropriate watershed governance mechanisms must in turn be informed by effective pricing mechanisms. Price systems and economic mechanisms can only work to achieve appropriate allocation of resources if the values of those resources are properly reflected in appropriate prices to guide decentralized individual decisions.

In particular, entrepreneurs and corporations can only be permitted licensed access to water resources, and encouraged to make a profit on their associated activities, if they are paying full value for the ecological resources withdrawn or consumed from the pools and systems that are a common heritage for all the community. Firms should make profits on the value they add through their operations; the speculative increases in the scarcity value of ecological resources belong to the community. Corporations and other users should not continue to be permitted to achieve assured access to scarce ecological resources—water in particular—through the administrative stroke of a pen by which the public is led to surrender its legitimate interest in the increasing value of ecosystem goods and services. Full value pricing is essential, though a reasonable period of transition may be necessary.

Above all, responsibility to ensure these features in the continuing adaptation of access to water must be entrenched and ensured through embedding within the new WSA of a strong expression of a public trust doctrine. The public trust doctrine is sufficiently known and tested that British Columbia can confidently seize this opportunity to take the lead in giving it clear and effective expression to ensure the accountability of governments and other institutions for responsible stewardship of community resources.

BC has broken new ground in opening up exemplary consultation in preparation of fundamentally new, path-breaking legislation to adapt public policy to the realities of a profoundly changing world. BC should follow through with the vision of transformative legislation that has emerged from that public deliberation and interaction.

It is in this way that British Columbia can make good on its promise of a green economy and leadership in the world in responsible stewardship of irreplaceable ecological resources, with water principal among these.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 11:19 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Have just read some of the emails to you, with many intelligent comments and recommendations. Please remember that this issue of water is far more important and has far more future implications than any other of our natural resources, and as such needs to be considered in that light. Thus it is all important that no political ideologies get in the way of your decision making process. Water is far too precious and fragile a commodity to be sullied by the internecine war of politics.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 11:14 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Ministry of Environment:

November 14th 2013

I consider water to be our Province's most precious resource. Do we or do we not have the least progressive water laws in North America?

Legislation, regulation and policy must meet the following criteria.

1) Clear priority of environmental flows over other non-essential human uses.

-The Water Shed Act has to define the term 'environmental flow' and the government must make environmental flows a clear obligation for licensees and must be a part of licence reviews.

-establish province-wide standards in the Act or regionally specific standards to each division of rivers in a particular class.

- The granting to decision makers the power to suspend a water licensed for aquatic ecosystem purposes.

- Public consultation on the development of regulations and policy to creating a framework for minimum flows.

- a definite and unreserved statement that decision makers may refuse to issue a licence if it would negatively affect an aquatic ecosystem.

2) Groundwater assessment, location and the health of current groundwater reserves are to be more thoroughly reported and tracked. If current levels are not sustainable, licences must be adjusted to ensure that use rates are sustainable and do not negatively influence and affect the health of nearby streams.

- Applications for new licences be made public and members of the public are allowed to object to water licences or appeal licences to the Environmental Appeal Board (with leave)

Ownership of water under the Water Shed Act must safeguard that **private rights to use water**

do not impact public resources. Amending section 2 of the Water Act to state:

‘The property in and the right to the use and flow of all the water at any time in a stream in British Columbia are for all purposes vested in the government, and any private rights established under licences issued or approvals given under this or a former Act are subject to be managed in the interest of present and future generations.’

- The Water Sustainability Act must , at a minimum, define environmental flows and essential household needs as being a pre-requisite to beneficial use.

- The government will establish proper pricing on the industrial use and extraction of water consistent with the value that British Columbians place on this resource. It should reflect recent science on measurable ecological, health and well being benefits of intact ecosystem services.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

North Vancouver, BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 10:58 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: McRae.MLA, Don LASS:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Water Sustainability Act. I am, however, very concerned about the short time frame allowed for public comment on such an important issue. I join with countless other voices requesting an extension of the comment period to March 1, 2013.

It is vital that the protection of source water be enshrined in the new Act. The WSA should take precedence over all other land uses and related acts. No exemptions from the WSA should be given to any industrial sector, including the oil, gas, mining and forestry sectors.

Local communities must have local control to protect and manage their drinking water supplies. Environmental flows must be included in the Provincial Water Objectives and ground and surface water must be treated as one.

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Personal Identifiers Removed

Courtenay, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 10:56 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Dear Honourable Minister of Environment Mary Polak

I am writing to you as I have concerns about the management of the province's water with the proposed Water Sustainability Act. This new act is a good start but to achieve further transparency, accountability and strong governance is to incorporate the Public Trust Doctrine as a core guiding principle. This is not something new; numerous other jurisdictions that regard water as precious public natural resource have such a doctrine in place. The public needs to be part of the decision-making process in light of climate change where precipitation and temperature may scarcely resemble the past, in light of industrial abuse of water, specifically the oil and gas industry and in light of the increase in commercial use of fresh water. Monitoring and reporting water use and water quality is a must to ensure that our most important public natural resource, water, is protected for all and for its use in the future. Thank you for the input and I am hoping that public input will be part of the process that protects our precious natural resource.

Sincerely, ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Kamloops

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 10:46 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I know there is a desire to get this legislation to the house however I not sure that the implications are fully understood.

For example:

For house construction and utility construction there is often a need to pump to keep excavations dry. Will the act provide an exemption where water is being pumped in the course of normal construction activities. Or will there be a flow rate below which a permit will not be required? We do not want to see routine construction have to go through a rigorous permitting process.

Please take the time to get it right.

Yours truly,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Sent from my iPad

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From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 10:06 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Comments re Water Act changes

I have been engaged in the matter of water for a number of years. I first became aware of how much we need water when my surface well was contaminated in 1977. We got a new surface well which went dry most years. It was essential that we had water because we had a farm with animals - we could go to do laundry or to have showers but the animals needed water to live and thrive.

I also lived on the Southern Gulf Islands where water is scarce in the fall. Our water system was one of many that practised conservation. It worked. The average consumption was 80 gallons per day.

Personal Identifiers Removed I became very concerned about the impact on the Abbotsford-Mission water system due to plans for two very large residential developments.

Personal Identifiers Removed Water Watch Mission-Abbotsford www.waterwatchma.ca in opposing the Stave Lake P3 water project. Opponents asserted (correctly) that we did not need a \$300 million / 300 mega litre / day privatized water system and that we could make our current system work with conservation - we have reduced consumption by up to 33% in the drier months of the year and 25% in the wetter months. We do NOT want our water privatized via a P3 or the new act to allow for water marketing. We believe that for profit water bottling is not an enterprise that the government should be subsidizing by low rates or by licensing whatsoever.

NAFTA will come into play if a given amount of water is promised to a corporation. See the AbitibiBowater case if you need an example <http://www.thecourt.ca/2010/08/27/canada-settles-abitibibowaters-nafta-claim/>

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 10:15 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Sustainability

Hello,

Water is so much more important than British Columbia seems to think. It is time to put in place a public protection system for our water resources. Many other areas have done just this. Our people of British Columbia should be protected from water contamination, along with the streams of our salmon, and other wildlife. Contamination from fracking is a huge issue looming in this province as well. This should not be something we play with, it must be taken seriously.

Recommendation #1: Protect the public trust

Recommendation #2: Give the public a voice

Recommendation #3: Establish fair return on water

These three points are brought up on the Tye article, and I believe they should be taken into account.

Please read the blog here:

http://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2013/11/13/Water-in-BC-Three-Ways-to-Fix-Outdated-Law/?utm_source=daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=131113

I hope you will consider amending the water sustainability act to afford British Columbians more control of this valuable resource.

Thank you,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 10:09 AM
To: Minister, ENV ENV:EX; Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: RE: Review of BC Water Sustainability Act

Dear Living Water Smart Team,

RE: Review of BC Water Sustainability Act

The role of environmental legislation in retaining community wellbeing and responsible governance

Back in 2009, Lakes 'Windermere' on the Canadian Columbia river system and 'Windermere' in the Lake District England twinned. The event took place at a turning point conference and showcased not only the importance of lakes per-se, but how they act as measures of our corporate efforts in watershed –wide management. The conference also re-kindled the idea of how important it was to have strength in all the tools at our disposal from local custody of our waters by communities, right up to legislative control at Government level. They are all part of the armoury necessary to protect the environment as a whole but through that, create a sustainable landscape capable of providing for our people in a sustainable way. There are, world-wide, just too many cases where the wisdom of hindsight has demonstrated the real cost of quick-win exploitation of natural resources.

I'm sure the objectives of the legislative review you have underway are to ensure the environmental legislation has both a future focus and also plays its appropriate part in contributing to the various methods needed to maximise yet protect National natural resources and assets.

Personal Identifiers Removed I would like to offer my personal thoughts as you prepare to develop legislation fit for the 21st C and draw on my learnings from the past. I***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Some thoughts.

1. Environmental Objectives and commensurate Standards: - One of the great values, especially for surface waters, in our recent Water Framework Directive, (EU) is the need for all water-bodies to have 'appropriate' standards applied to them. This process included

wide public participation and although protracted, started that long process of community engagement and responsibility. It was always anticipated that water quality restoration, addressing both point source and diffuse pollution, would be both expensive and take time. Resources are, and will be progressively, limited and starting the process of public participation was the first step in community custody and stewardship. A hitherto unquantified part of the overall resource needed. An immediate example is the part the public can play in the fundamental role of monitoring and data collection. With developing apparatus and techniques becoming ever-more usable by trained members of the public, local enthusiasts are able to capture important data on which sound decisions can be made. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) also has the flexibility of member states being able to set their own standards and therefore offers the opportunity to develop objectives and associated standards with the community at large rather than impose them unilaterally. This has proved to generate much more community involvement.

2. A watershed integrated approach to Water Resources. Even before WFD came onto the statutes the domestic UK legislation for water Resources has been effective, requiring policing through a self-monitoring / auditing approach and careful consideration of the watershed –wide needs both now and into the future. Quite new into the approach is the importance of integrated approach to catchment management which needed to take account of not only the natural water abstractions such as surface (river and lake) and ground water and its geological drivers, but also land use management. In sensitive areas, the impact on both water quality and quantity through insensitive, uncontrolled and sometimes ignorance of the impacts, have led to catastrophic effects. Industries with a large area impact such as farming and forestry have in particular been responsible for adverse effects. Weather patterns associated with climate change have served to exacerbate these problems. Ironically the same industries in the ‘big picture’ context also have capacity to mitigate some of these impacts. E.g. soil structure, land run-off etc. Excessive abstraction to the detriment of downstream users has only occasionally been a major problem because of the quality of the legislation but with changing situations (political, commercial and climatic) over time, there needs to be perhaps greater opportunity to adjust and revise licences and conditions more regularly now.
3. The cost of Water. The whole question of costs is complex in the UK where public water supply and waste water collection / treatment is run by private companies with restrictions on revenue collection overseen by a public watchdog. This has recently evolved so that water companies can now collect and spend public moneys on protection of watersheds, thus promoting the ‘precautionary approach’ principle rather than incur extreme costs in water treatment down the line. The approach is almost visionary when considering the extra longevity of reservoirs which have been prone to excessive sedimentation through poor land management and the potential future capital costs of reservoir construction.
4. Corporate responsibility. Major industries are now under ‘IPPC’ (Integrated Pollution Prevention Control) which squarely puts the onus on major industries to take responsibility

for all their proximal and distant environments and to have in place sophisticated processes and procedures that ensure not only licence compliance but also protection of environments beyond their business sight. A reward based auditing system by the legislators ensures the development of a cultural shift in corporate behaviour which is often supported by the marketing advantage of operating in this 'environmentally sensitive' way. Monitoring costs and the return of quality data which becomes 'public information' is now the norm.

5. The Public. The Community from individual to country. Historically, the community has been excluded and even recently public participation was been more to do with the public being 'spoken to' rather than 'involved in'. However this is a really important part of the future resource needed to protect, enhance the natural environment from which most of our future *sustainable* wealth will come from. It is also part of the very ethos of the Water Framework Directive. Recently here in the UK, the National Lottery supported landscape scale projects in England and Ireland, showing that true involvement brings with it a change in local attitude from "that's local government's responsibility" to "it's our duty." These are isolated pockets and even there, there needs to be continuity from strong local leaders over time to shift the paradigm. Nevertheless, it provides some early case studies to demonstrate how local people are able to put watershed management onto the agenda of living and working in their locality. Communities have been found to be a latent resource with groups and individuals wishing to physically put things right, change behaviour and work in different ways. Perhaps most importantly, they are the obvious source of well briefed, committed and motivated leaders who will ensure continuity of local energy and commitment over time, not just for a here and now campaign.

I do hope these few short and unqualified comments are of help in this impressive and important initiative to overhaul domestic Canadian environmental legislation. At a time when the short term values of natural resource exploitation can sometimes smokescreen the importance of long term values and holistic watersheds, it is sometimes challenging to commit to protection now and avoid a more costly restoration programme in the future. Your reviewed environmental legislative framework, based on the learnings from others, will, I am sure, serve you well into the future.

Very best wishes *****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:53 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I would like to add my voice to the many who are concerned that industrial and commercial users of our precious water resources are not being sufficiently regulated or required to pay a fair price. The bottled water industry has done a brilliant job of persuading the public that we need their product, in spite of the fact that we have some of the best and safest tap water in the world. Their enormous profits simply cannot be justified and a new Water Act should ensure that they pay adequate fees. But what disturbs me still more are the industries (in particular oil and gas) that not only use huge quantities of water but pollute the environment from which it is taken or in which contaminated waste water is disposed of. We CANNOT and MUST NOT exempt them from regulation. I want to see a new Water Act based on the best scientific studies of the environmental impact of these industries, with provisions for regular monitoring and reexamination of licences.

Living in a province with heavy rainfall and abundant rivers and lakes, we are inclined to take our water for granted, but we all need to think very seriously about the impact of its commercial and industrial exploitation. I am delighted that the BC government is proposing a new Water Act, but I want to see strict regulation and not a rubber stamp for industrial and commercial users.

Yours sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:50 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: Simons.MLA, Nicholas LASS:EX; Minister, ENV ENV:EX

Subject: A Water Sustainability Act for BC: A Legislative Proposal

I have reviewed the proposal and wish to provide my comments regarding priorities.

The Legislative Proposal offers some good features for BC's new Water Sustainability Act, however there are some serious omissions

Environmental services must be recognized as a priority in the Water Act. Environmental flows are critical to healthy functioning watersheds and must be clearly prioritized over other non-essential human uses.

1: Inclusion of the Public Trust Doctrine: (PDT)

The new act must contain a clause which imbeds the Public Trust Doctrine into the new legislation. (PTD)

The PTD is required to protect ecological values, ensure water for future needs engage the public and protect public interests. These features are an essential part of the effort to modernize the BC Water Act.

The PTD is essential to safeguard water and associated ecological resources from sale or impairment by government or through interferences by others that would shift control to private interests for primarily private purposes.

The PTD is a fundamental tool in achieving the goal of Living Water Smart in BC.

2: Improvement of the Water Allocation System

A new allocation system is required which will provide more specific information about the volume and impact of the use of the water.

The new Water Act must require cost recovery to provide monitoring, management, and enforcement, so that those who impact water quality or quantity contribute to the costs of protection to a degree appropriate to their impact or benefit.

3: Protection of Streams, Aquifers, and Aquatic Environments must be the top priority of any new Water Act.

It is no longer acceptable to treat environmental flows as secondary priorities. Protecting water for communities and Nature, fish and other non-human values, must be defined and must be mandatory, not simply “guidelines” which may be ignored.

Progressive nations around the world are now incorporating the Precautionary Principle in all legislation which affects the Environment.

4: Local government agencies, and the public, municipal councils and Regional boards, must be included in decision making which affects their area.

5: The Water Sustainability Act must apply to all water users, and must be binding on all sectors including the Oil and Gas and Forestry sectors, with No Exceptions.

The Water Sustainability Act must state that access to clean water must be considered a public and human right which must trump any industrial or commercial usage.

The government must also recognize and respect First Nations rights and title in all aspects of drafting and implementation of the new Water Sustainability Act.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Gibsons, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:36 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: The BC Water Sustainability Act - comment today livingwatersmart@gov.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Clarke,

There is insufficient time to respond to this proposed legislation. We must all have a discussion that connects up surface water quality, ground water quality, and the trade agreements that threaten both. Victoria's publicly owned watershed puts us in much better shape than many communities on the Island whose watersheds are privately owned.

Sewage treatment is too little too late in most cases, as keeping watersheds from being polluted by logging, industrial uses like mining and car graveyards would in many cases eliminate the need for expensive water treatment. Communities are being forced to build expensive treatment plants because government won't do anything about protecting watersheds.

In this time of little money and lots of scientific information, the government has produced a very poor piece of legislation. It leaves our watersheds unprotected and open to industrial pollution from development, mining, and poor land use management. Please delay further discussion of this Act until proper public consultation has been done.

Thank you

Personal Identifiers Removed

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Victoria, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Personal Identifiers Removed

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From ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:32 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: We need to stop the sale and destruction of our water.B.C.'s water should not be for sale to anyone for any price,and polluters of our water should pay heavily for doing so.It would be nice if our government stopped catering to corporations and actuall...

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:27 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Input for the Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern:

The initiatives the British Columbia Government is taking to modernize BC's *Water Act* are laudable and timely. I am concerned about how regulations will be developed in the future. As a broad proposal outlining the general direction of proposed legislation, the proposal seems like it will help improve the management of water which is so vital to British Columbia's economy and environment, however, I am concerned about how the public, the water users, will be involved in developing concrete, certain, clear, and evidence-based regulations.

My expectations as a taxpayer is to be informed about proposed regulations because it will affect the place I work at, the British Columbian economy, and the industries in my community. Moreover, I want to be assured that environmental protections for water resources are pragmatically enforceable and clear. The language used in the proposal raises several issues surrounding the clarity and reliability of the government to protect BC's water resources and economy. Specifically, the language around "water objectives," and how this will be measured. For example, if these objectives are decided upon by stakeholders, than those in industry will be burdened with ad hoc applications to their water licences that are based on stakeholder interests than science which is measurable. Thus, I am not satisfied with this proposal as a last piece of engagement with the public on a law--for which we haven't seen yet--that can change how I live and the British Columbian economy.

Thank you for your time and work.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:21 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject:

The current water management system used in the Peace River District is incomplete and cannot be implemented or enforced until the following weaknesses are addressed:

- a written set of guidelines, requirements, and regulations are available for completing permit and license applications. Resource officers need to be trained and understand these guidelines before trying to enforce such guidelines.
- resource officers are trained and informed with all the facts they need to do their job and gain back public trust.
- single point of contact in resource building and standard time line for all permits and licenses.
- encourage the best use of water – taking snow melt run off or rain water when there is an abundance for use when there isn't water available. Quit using potable , chlorinated water for industrial uses. This is a huge cost to local government and tax payers.
- enforce water tracking and reuse and recycling of all flowback and produced water in the oil & gas industry, make users accountable. By reusing water, the demand on fresh water is lessened and injection wells will be used considerably less.
- set guidelines that make sense and are simple, eliminate needless permitting requirements. The professionals preparing permitting applications are far more knowledgeable and educated than the people processing them.
- make governing bodies accountable personally for their actions.
- set standards and policies that shape the way water is managed, aim for a common goal, and engage all parties involved and effected by the regulations.

Managing our most precious resource needs to take place in a simple and effective manner without stifling our economy or negatively effecting our environment. Setting a common goal and guiding regulations needs to take place to effectively manage or water.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:21 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: New Water Sustainability Act

Nov. 15. 2013

Following are our comments regarding the new Water Act:

It is critical and essential that First in Time, First in Right water allocation system licensing model be retained.

It is critical and essential that agriculture's water needs be given priority over oil and gas, subdivisions, and community expansion, mining and other uses.

It is critical and essential that access to drinking water sources for livestock on crown and private lands be secure. The new act must recognize and allow unrecorded water use by livestock and allow off stream watering, this is a historical use and is vital to the ranching industry.

Do not place water metering on agricultural water use.

Ensure that water that is presently allocated for agricultural use remains in agricultural use. Secure access to water for all agricultural land is essential and critical for the ranching and farming industries.

Encourage water conservation through incentives and funding for irrigation upgrades.

Government invest in water storage infrastructure.

It is critical that the ranching industry be adequately represented, by locally affected users, at any future water advisory or planning, etc. processes. Local agriculture users are most knowledgeable and understand their specific areas the best and have a vested interest as we have large investments at stake.

Under the Sustainability Water Act agriculture must be identified as a priority water user and that water that is presently allocated for agriculture use be guaranteed to remain in agriculture use. This will benefit all British Columbian's now and into the future.

These will all protect agricultural use of water and will in turn protect British Columbia's limited and valuable agricultural land and therefore our province's food production security.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and hope that you value our agriculture industries enough to incorporate these suggestions into the new Water Sustainability Act. We look forward to hearing what you do with our comments. If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me at *****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

Sincerely,

*****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

*****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

Newgate B.C.

*****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 9:18 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Re: New Water Sustainability Act

I strongly believe that we need to protect our water resources and not have them taken over by greedy corporations that do not have everyone's best interests in mind. Once they are allowed, the decision cannot be reversed. Water is absolutely essential for a healthy life, and we simply cannot allow it to be messed with in any way.

Personal Identifiers Removed Vancouver, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:54 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Some thoughts on the new Water Sustainability Act (WSA)

Environmental Flows

- must be defined; must be a clearly understood and be an obligation for all licensees; must be front and center in any allocation decisions and license reviews
- must be a commitment to public consultations during the establishment of minimum flow policy and regulations; scientifically defensible methods must be used in determining environmental flows
- the Act must clearly state that licenses can be rejected or applications suspended if they will negatively impact an aquatic ecosystem
- Standards (province-wide and regional) must appear in the Act that will apply to different river classes

Groundwater

- must receive greater consideration since water in-ground and surface flows are inextricably linked
- more research must be done on the location, amount and quality of the provincial groundwater resource
- new groundwater licenses must be conditional upon their impact on recharge rates, water quality and local streams (a period of 5 years of monitoring should be required to answer questions related to impacts)
- existing groundwater licenses must be subject to modifications should it be determined that the license is having an adverse impact on the aquifer and/or surrounding aquatic ecosystem
- the licensing relationship between domestic well owners and licensed well owners needs clarification

Public Participation

- Commitments in the proposed WSA for public involvement need to be more specifically defined so that the public will have input in all aspects of the water management and licensing process. Applications for new water licenses must be made public and the public must be allowed to approach the Environmental Appeal Board for permission to appeal applications.

Public Trust Doctrine

- A new WSA must ensure that private rights to use water do not impact public resources.

Beneficial Use

- The WSA must, at a minimum, must define environmental flows and essential household need as being a pre-requisite to beneficial use.

Water Pricing

- Government must establish proper pricing on the industrial use and extraction of water that reflects the value British Columbians place on this resource (water is currently undervalued and underpriced)

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:25 AM

To: steve.thompson.mla@leg.bc.ca; Pimm.MLA, Pat LASS:EX; bill.bennet.mla@leg.bc.ca; Polak.MLA, Mary LASS:EX; Bond.MLA, Shirley LASS:EX; deJong.MLA, Mike LASS:EX

Subject: WATER

To the Honourable Ministers, we need to take charge of the province of British Columbia's water in a number of ways as the Water Act is renewed. We need to ensure water flows are maintained for aquatic life and other environmental values. I think local residents through some governing body need to have some say in how our water is maintained. People of an area and residents of the province need to have proper access to water. It ,the water should not be controlled by private interests. We need to ensure that oil, gas, resorts and other private bodies etc. do not have exceptions to regulations at any level. Future jobs are as important as current ones in my opinion. I would like the province to be flexible in how often water use contracts and licenses are reviewed and not build in long term agreements and all users, citizens of all groups need to be recognized as having rights. No one currently pays a realistic fee for water. All users need to pay based on amount of water used. No exceptions except for irrigation for farms because they don't have access to untreated water in my area. All taxpayers need to be included in the local governance of water and granting of licences. Thank you all for taking the time to read my letter. Water is the most important resource we have in British Columbia and every decision regarding it needs to be carefully thought out.

***Personal Identifiers Removed

Creston BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:44 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Subject: Proposed Water Sustainability Act

Good morning on this last day to comment,

I have not had a chance to review the proposed act, but I will try and do so today. I do want to express my fears and wants for the act even though I am unformed at the moment. My hope is to review the act and comment again before the close of the day.

1) enforceability. There has been a trend in the Province (Gov) to using outcome based guidelines with no hard numbers, measurements or boundaries for industry to follow. Theoretically, this is a great idea. In practice, I do not believe this serves Canadians or industry well. Water and access to water are much too important to use outcome based guidelines. I am hoping to see in this act some enforceable and tangible guidelines. Something that a compliance staff, public, and industry can look at and know clearly: good/bad for water sustainability. e.g. Max % of flow taken out set by lowest volume of flow (changing for fish bearing streams).

2) Ability to rescind/alter water permits. We should not be locked into always allowing industry, individuals, governments because of past permits/allocations. Things change. Clear cuts happen. Water needs of people and animals compete.

3) Water is not solely for human consumption. Water sustainability must encompass use by all organisms.

4) I had understood that we do not sell water in Canada and that no one owns the water. We sell access to water, conveyance, treatment. It is a rental and just like any rental the water should be returning (albeit in a convoluted fashion) in the same condition it was loaned out.

5) Ground water depletion should be treated very seriously and permits should require a considerable amount of deliberation. Yes it can be tough on individuals, agriculture,... but really it is water and what is going to happen when it is depleted.

6) If an industry is going to profit from use of water, the public should have a share in that profit. On fair terms.

I look forward to reading the act. Thank you for the ability to comment.

Sincerely, ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

The BC Provincial Government must protect our water from corporate power.... and from the current federal government. Island Timberlands is destroying the water here in the Alberni Valley and nothing is being done to stop them. It is past time to step in. Show that the BC residents are at least as important to the provincial government as corporate interests.

Personal Identifiers Removed
Port Alberni

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:35 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Fwd: Water sustainability act

Hello,

I feel there has been not only a lack of consultation with the public but not enough time for an individual (1 month) to view the entire proposal/act.

I would request a few more months to engage within this democratic process,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:33 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I would like to see addressed the 3 areas in a strong governance.

1/ Domestic and corporate metering of water. This metering is essential to monitor the amount of water consumed/used and therefore gives data to decision makers and users for the awareness and ability to conserve. This is controversial and people will gripe. Hold the course!!! In spite of the individual whining it is necessary for the sake of good data for good governance.

2/ Corporate use of aquifers. Priority must be given to public domestic requirements over corporate usage. Our aquifers MUST BE owned and operated as a legacy to the citizenry and not a corporate resource to produce wealth. One cannot drink money. Companies such a Nestle have attempted in other jurisdictions to "own" the resource with disastrous results. Protection of our aquifers sustainable regeneration from corporate drainage is essential and good scientific data collection by non-biased governmental monitoring is just plain due diligence. The government of the day is the steward of this essential inheritance. It is not good enough to turn the hen-house over to the fox for monitoring. The legislation you provide must show that water is a valuable resource for all life and NOT A CORPORATE COMODITY.

3/ Absolute control over any contaminants that come from domestic and corporate activity. We need the protection from purity degradation that has strong economic and political teeth. Otherwise we will devolve into third world conditions that is not sustainable nor healthy. Don't be weak on this matter.

Be a government and civil service that honourably protects it's populace as a service and not a vehicle that can be manipulated by corporations to produce wealth for the few. Jobs are important but what good are they when the families of the workers cannot have potable, life giving water.

"Living water" is just that for each individual! Thank you for protecting it!

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:26 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Protection Legislation

Do our comments even matter? Im taking the time to write this comment because Im tired of seeing our water be controlled by predatory corporations such as Nestle's.

Water is necessary to life on this planet..for everyone.

B.C. needs water legislation that puts public interest ahead of corporate profits. That is why we pay for government...to GOVERN!!! Mr Harper if you are really a Prime Minister, please step up to the plate and start working for the public .Stop the deregulation. We need to have LAWS that give our communities and our First Nations the power to effectively steward our precious water. That should just be a given!

The media never mentions important things like this, instead preffering to feature crack head mayors that refuse to step down. Its really sad. If you cannot protect our water, please step down.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Port Alberni BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:11 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: New Water Sustainability Act

Government of British Columbia

Please be careful when writing the new Water Sustainability Act (WSA).

British Columbian's are passionate about water and expect the new WSA to be flexible, adaptable to changing environmental conditions associated with climate instability. Do not over-committ water volumes to corporate interests. Domestic/municipal needs - agriculture - miscellaneous and corporate interests is the correct priority order. Oh, corporation must also be charged full market value for water.

Once again I strongly urge the government not to under estimate the emotional attachment that British Columbian's have to 'their water'.

Personal Identifiers Removed
Port Alberni, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 8:06 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

As a rural resident we use our domestic well within our own regulations. We know how much water we have in our well and what it can provide to our household. I believe that people on city and town water should be regulated and charged for their water consumption. We here in the country do not take 30 minute showers because we cannot. We do not wash our driveways nor waste our water. Water is like gold now and everyone must participate to ensure that our water is protected. I would like to think that water for Agriculture is first on the list for protection. Without those standards we will lose our food supply. The BC Cattlemen have made huge strides in protecting streams etc. from pollution. They have worked extremely hard to change many things that have been affecting our water. Forestry Companies are also under strict guidelines on how they work around lakes and streams. I think now it is up to the folks in the cities to manage what comes into their homes and I do believe that there should be water meters.

Thank you.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Princeton, BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 7:22 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Clean Water

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to ask that the new water regulations give priority to ensuring the public availability of clean, potable water. Corporate uses of water (industrial, bulk sales) ought to be of lower priority than ensuring a safe supply of clean water in the decades to come.

Water is not free and corporations who damage (pollute) huge amounts of water in the course of their manufacturing/industrial processes ought to pay significant fees for the destruction of this irreplaceable resource.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

New Westminster, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 7:12 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Attached is my submission for the November 15th, 2013 deadline.

Thank you for having this period of time to respond.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

November 14th, 2013

Water Sustainability Act,
Ministry of Environment, Water Protection and Sustainability Branch
PO Box 9362 Stn Prov Gov,
Victoria BC,
V8W 9M2.

livingwatersmart@gov.bc.ca

Dear Mary Polak, Minister of Environment:

I am extremely pleased with this legislative proposal for the Water Sustainability Act.

I am looking forward to an implementation process that engages the public and the first nations in BC in the development of the regulations that will determine how the good intentions of the act are put into practice.

There are a few points in particular that are of concern to myself, which I shall outline below:

1. I share in the First Nations concerns that consultation has been inadequate in the development of the Water Sustainability Act to date. However, the Water Sustainability Act offers an opportunity to advance reconciliation of Aboriginal and Crown titles and jurisdictions, and to act on the new relationship's call for establishment of shared decision-making processes and institutions. We call upon the government of BC to demonstrate a commitment to upholding the honour of the Crown, and the honour of British Columbians, in the fullest sense

of the word "honour" going forward.

2. Fee schedules for groundwater and surface water must ensure that not only administrative costs are met, but that resources are made available for water management and governance-related activities. Fees should no longer go into general revenue, but should be used to create funds to enable robust monitoring, reporting, managing and enforcement of water use in the province, in addition resources for local watershed processes. Pricing should reflect the need to encourage efficiency and conservation.

3. No matter the ideology of government, the state of the economy, or the laws of the day, we will always need water. The Water sustainability Act must be explicit to ensure that license holders understand they are not gaining a "property right" and that water licenses cannot be traded. The definition of Beneficial Use must be broadened beyond the proposed requirement to use water efficiently, and must require license holders to manage water for the public benefit in the interests of both current and future generations. Beneficial use requirements with the expanded definition, should be made a core part of Water Objectives. Local tools such Area based Regulations and Water sustainability Plans must be able to over-rule the First In Time, First in Right water rights allocations where the public good would be best served by doing so.

4. Knowledge of groundwater and the intersections between ground and surface water in BC is still incomplete and jurisdiction with First Nations is not settled. The WSA proposal calls for flexibility in water licensing for the convenience and protection of certain classes of water users. For example; five year project development periods for power purpose water licenses and a three to five year transition period for groundwater users to obtain licenses based on their historic use. Similar flexibility should be made in the Act for the protection of the resource itself. New or transitioning licenses should be given an initial term of 5 years. During that time both science and traditional knowledge should be drawn upon to provide complete knowledge of the resource and to inform groundwater decisions. Given that conditions are changing and can be expected for the foreseeable future to change at an accelerating rate with climate change, the thirty and forty year license terms proposed for the WSA are too long. License periods should be no more than ten years in order to provide flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

5. Polling of British Columbians has consistently shown a very high expectation of protection of environmental and basic human needs in water use. In part, such protection in the WSA takes the form of Water Objectives. In keeping with the expectation of British Columbians that environmental values will be protected, Water Objectives must include Environmental Flow

Needs and Critical Environmental Flows, must be legally enforceable, and must apply to all water users. There should be no exemptions and where other acts contain provisions to protect water for particular sectors the WSA should be taken as a minimum standard which must be met or exceeded by the provisions of those other acts.

6. With the Water Sustainability Act, we need to continually evolve our water use practices and management systems. The province needs to conduct the scientific investigations and study of local and traditional knowledge in regions and watersheds to ensure that we do not put in place water management systems that lock in unsustainable water use. Water Licenses should undergo review every 5 years so that changing conditions can be anticipated and adapted to.

Local capacity needs to be continually strengthened to make best use of area-based regulations, Water Sustainability Plans and other water management tools. Advisory committees and other local water governance bodies must be composed with recognition of aboriginal title and to be representative of the communities within the areas they oversee. They must be sufficiently resourced with both funding and access to expertise to manage the waters within their areas. Their proceedings and decisions must be public and they must be accountable to the communities whose water they oversee.

Thank you for having this time period where people can have input and be involved in this very important Act.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Chilliwack, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 6:46 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Re: Proposed "Water Sustainability Act"

Current water fees and rentals, especially for industrial and commercial uses, have historically been virtual giveaways. Any new fee structure should reflect a much higher return to the province than the current fees and rentals.

Personal Identifiers Removed Vancouver

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 6:22 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Thank you for involving our comments.

As you know, without water, we cannot live. It is a basic, necessary, need for life. Protecting water is the most important thing we can do, other than protecting our air which effects everything including water.

I urge the Clark government to make clean water a priority above all other considerations, including economic and corporate interests in forestry, mines, etc.

Sincerely

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Port Alberni ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 6:22 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Act

HELLO,

Thank you for reviewing my input into the new Water Sustainability Act.

#1. I would encourage you to extend the deadline for submissions until March 2014. The extended deadline of March 2014 would allow all the interested parties like stream-keepers and water-user groups in B.C, to have a debate and time to comment. This deadline tomorrow is a bit hasty, as I just found out about it 2 days ago.

#2. Industry must be regulated by the new Water Act Legislation -they can't have a different set of rules with loopholes. There must be an explicit statement that any private right to use water cannot harm the public's interest in water resources. Fracking is ruining clean water permanently , which seems insane at this time in our planets' history of climate change and the forecast annual droughts we will experience in all regions of B.C. from June to October : " From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate" 2007 -report by the Federal government, available online.

#3. There must be increased public participation in the granting of our water licenses. The public deserves the right to review water licenses and monitor the impact on environmental flows.The local residents make the best water stewards.

#4. New water licenses need to be reviewed more regularly than every 30 years. We need to build in the flexibility to adapt to our changing climate. Current water licenses must undergo a review to address future water needs and First Nations rights.

#5. There must be appropriate fee schedules for groundwater and surface water that support responsible management and allow communities to engage in local watershed planning.

#6. Rural water needs are different from urban water needs. A collection tank serving 2 households does not need the same treatment as a neighborhood collection treatment system that serves 10 households. There needs to be flexibility to differing situations written into the new water act legislation laws. We need a clear mandate and the resources for local watershed groups to engage in watershed governance. Local data base collection knowledge, in this time of climate change is especially relevant.

#7. The protection of our fisheries, including the rearing habitat and the aquatic life habitat where the juvenile fish feed is critically important for the future of B.C. Whether it is the sustained fertility of the land from fish carcasses, the essential food source for the mammals and birds, the income from the commercial fisheries or the quality of protein that no fish-farm

could ever match for human consumption, the well-being of our wild fish stocks must have top priority over industries demands. There must be a scientific definition and commitment to ensuring the protection of water flows for fish and other environmental values.

#8. The new B.C. Water Act needs to build protection into its' legislation to protect B.C.s' resident users of the river, stream and lake, water licenses and municipal water systems from being sued by corporate business and industry protesting a potential loss of income.

Thank you for considering my requests.

Yours***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 6:15 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act BC

I have just finished reading the legislative proposal overview of the Water Sustainability Act for BC and am very pleased that steps are being taken to review the way our water is managed and to hopefully safeguard it for many, many generations to come. My comments are as follows:

- Access to clean, healthy drinking water is a basic human right and any steps necessary should be taken to protect this right for the people of BC.
- Our climate is rapidly changing and we need the flexibility to adapt to this. New water licences should be reviewed on a much more regular basis than the 30 years proposed in the act. Thirty years is a long time and many things could change during this period. Although it would be more of an administrative burden and more costly to implement, a review of licenses every 10 years is more appropriate in our current climate. Water licences currently in issue should be reviewed to ascertain whether they address our future water requirements and rights and to ensure the environment is protected. There should be increased public participation in the granting of water licenses and the monitoring of the impact on environmental flows.
- Industrial and agricultural water users should be required to carry out studies to assess the health of the water sources they intend to use before a license is granted. These would be used as a benchmark against which the future usage of the water could be monitored.
- Water conservation should be strongly encouraged for all users and an educational programme should be implemented to work towards this. Many people consider BC to have an over-abundance of water and do not see the requirement to be conservative in their usage.
- Water should be protected not only for human health but for the health of the environment and nature. There need to be enforceable regulations in place to ensure that our waters are healthy and remain healthy in terms of cleanliness, freedom from harmful substances, volume flow and biodiversity . There should be absolutely no exceptions for any industry whatsoever. All users should be held accountable for any detrimental impact on our water, whether that is ground or surface water and there should be enforceable and punitive penalties for any infringements. These should be both financial and the requirement to implement whatever is necessary to reverse the detrimental impact.
- The rights of people within BC to healthy and clean water and the environmental protection of waters within BC must take priority above all other demands for water, particularly in times of scarcity. This includes priority over industry needs and the exporting of valuable water resources, particularly to the USA. ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 5:59 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Dear Sir/Madam;

I just have a minute but wanted to add my 2 cents. I work in Calgary. I own property in BC - Specifically Vancouver Island where I spend 3 to 4 months a year at Horne Lake. The Water sources must be protected at all costs. The area in which I reside is laden with caves and underground aquifers. They are connected there is no disputing the value of fresh water on the island. There should never be coal mining or fracking on the island. These industries impose the greatest danger to the fresh water supply. To everything the island is in terms, agriculturally and recreationally, what makes Vancouver Island a playground and the envy to visitors from all around the world is its pristine and natural state.

Take care with the world, there is no turning back in our lifetime if we mess this up. it will take generations. Is this the legacy you want to leave behind?

Kindly,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Calgary AB ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

or

Personal Identifiers Removed

Qualicum Beach, BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 3:37 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Extention of water rights responses till March

Give the people a chance to research this bill. It's taken you 3 years, give us one to respond

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 1:43 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Response to new water act.

I live in a Residential subdivision with over 220 units. Lot sizes are from 1/2 acre to 1 acre. Food production including small farm animals is encouraged. This area is also in the hottest and driest part of the province. Rainfall averages 34 cm per year and summers such as 2009 had no precipitation for six months. Your suggestion of 1000 cu meter of water per year for domestic purposes is completely inadequate.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Lillooet BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 12:36 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Some ten years ago I had the opportunity to ask our former MP Darryl Stinson what policy he thought the government should adopt with respect to the water in Shuswap Lake. His reply: we should decide how much water we needed for ourselves, and sell the rest to the US. I had a vision of the three arms of a long, almost empty, muddy lake-bed, covering in total some 800 km, so that the wealthier people of the US southwest could import as much water as they wished for their private pools, golf courses and lakes.

In retrospect, I realize that Mr. Stinson was spelling out the two inconsistent bases on which water policy has operated. Residents should have the first claim on water in their area, a **human right of citizens** which no-one can take away, since no-one can live for more than two or three days without it. In a situation where water is plentiful, such as the Shuswap, there have been relatively few restrictions on residents' water use. In a situation where water is in short supply, they need to find ways to share, as many people in Africa do. Such people, faced with real shortages, do not look for economic solutions. Instead, they recognize that water must be shared fairly if they and their way of life are to survive. Seeing water as a human right means, then, recognizing that every citizen has the right to a fair share, regardless of their means. If water is to be seen as a good, it is emphatically not a private good, to be bought and sold. It is a common good, one which belongs to all residents.

I studied economics for several years, and found that economists love to think of everything in terms of scarcity, markets and commodities. In the past they always had trouble fitting water into their theories. They imagined water as a **commodity**, something to be bought and sold in markets, but could not make any sense of a commodity which seemed to be so plentiful in the West that no-one had to bid for it.

Non-residents, according to Mr. Stinson, have a claim only on spare water; and if their demand for water creates a shortage, the spare water should be sold to the highest bidder.

There are three problems with this way of thinking. First, it is too inflexible to allow for day-to-day and seasonal variations in the availability of water. This problem is likely to become more serious as global warming intensifies, with alternating droughts and downpours becoming more common. Second, it leads to policies which make no allowance for water conservation or the needs of wildlife. This can be seen dramatically in the US southwest: so much water is drawn from the Colorado River that today none of it reaches the sea. Third, it does not allow for shrinkage in the supply of clean, potable water as the chemicals used oil and gas firms render large amounts of water too polluted to be recycled.

How, then, should we put together a new water act, if economists cannot readily fit it into the theories that guide so much of our thinking, and if oil and gas companies are free to pollute large amounts permanently?

It is easy to find instances where corporate interests have damaged the rights of residents. In Ontario, until recently, bottled water companies were allowed to extract as much water as they

wished, even when the absence of rainfall produced a shortage for residential users. In Northern Alberta, oil companies are free to pollute the water of First Nations in the area, to the point of spreading diseases downstream from their operations. Fracking companies, too, are creating a massive amount of poisonous water, without having any safe way to dispose of it, and without revealing the chemicals which they have used. If fracking is encouraged without any limits, the impact on area residents could be terrible.

The framers of the new Water Act, which is certainly needed, should be careful not to leave major loopholes for corporations to draw and pollute water on a major scale. They should also create a system for controlling water use which makes generous allowance for local input. I therefore join with others in urging that the following seven changes be made:

1. There should be a clear commitment to ensuring the protection of water flows for fish and other creatures.
2. There should be a clear mandate and the resources for local watershed groups to engage in watershed governance.
3. There should be an explicit statement that any private right to use water cannot harm the public's interest in water resources.
4. The objectives of the Act should prioritize the protection of water for nature . The Act should guarantee that environmental flows are enforceable and apply to all sectors equally – no exceptions for forestry, oil and gas, or other industries
5. Water licenses should be reviewed much more regularly. Climate change calls for a flexible policy, in which current water licenses must be reviewed to make sure they address likely future water needs and First Nations rights.
6. Fee schedules for groundwater and surface water should be consistent with responsible management and should allow communities to engage in local watershed planning. The proposed fees are so low that they would barely cover the costs of administering the programme.
7. The public deserves more opportunities to review water licenses and to monitor their impact on environmental flows.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Salmon Arm, BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2013 12:02 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act - Comments

Good afternoon,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the new Water Sustainability Act. I feel passionately about water, considering I am a Biologist who has worked around the protection of streams, wetlands, lakes and groundwater in our province over the past 15 years (my entire professional career). Over my career, I have worked in government and in the private sector as an environmental consultant. I view this document as one of the most important Acts that will ever be drafted in our Province. Healthy water after all forms the basis of healthy life everywhere.

My Recommendations:

Currently, I feel this Water Act Modernization fails at the one essential task it is set out to achieve: protect freshwater resources with impunity. Rather, this modernization reads as an industrial stamp of approval, providing soft regulations and underpriced industrial water use fees for the Oil and Gas Sector (specifically, the hydraulic fracturing or 'Fracing' activity). I feel the document should read as an objective, scientifically-based tool to protect water, rather than as a commercial activity approval tool. As I have supported the integration of residential metering across the province (metering is known to cause decreased water use), I also support a user pay system for the industrial sector.

I would like to draw specific attention to Fracing. Fracing will permanently contaminate the water used and remove good healthy water from the clean, functioning hydrologic cycle. This is a hard fact that should in itself necessitate the highest industrial water use fee (of any BC industry) for water use and licencing. This water use fee will also have to account for the management of the waste Fracing water that will accumulate in the groundwater reservoirs and slowly crawl its way into the rest of our freshwater system, creating expensive water

management crisis for our grandchildren. We have plenty of contamination examples of 'communication events' from Wyoming and North Dakota Fracing, so contamination is inevitable if Fracing is to proceed. The fact that Fracing will destroy a significant volume of water quality is not clearly identified as a key motivation anywhere in the document, which I find subversive and purposefully deceitful considering that industry is not clearly saddled with any firm and serious consequences for negligent water use. From a scientific perspective, this is a gross misrepresentation of the reality of the Fracing risks and water management challenges that we could be facing in our province if Fracing goes ahead in full force (beyond the 7000+ wells that already have shockingly been installed in BC without a groundwater protection act already in place).

I am saddened when I read this 'Modernization' document as I do not feel it protects water in our province from the large industrial users in the Fracing sector. I would thus like to focus my feedback around fortifying the New Water Sustainability Act to protect water from one of the most significant industrial water impacts in a century - the Industrial use of water for Fracing. I have reviewed other feedback online and have read some excellent review comments from people and groups such as the Pembina Institute, among others. I would like to re-emphasize the following ten key recommendations:

1. All surface and groundwater withdrawals for oil and gas activities should be licensed. The Fracing sector will contaminate water quality and should pay the highest premium of any industry in the province for this privilege.
2. All discharges to surface and ground water for oil and gas activities should require waste discharge permits (with appropriate fees).
3. Licensed allocations and discharge permits should be set within limits that do not compromise other priorities in the local watershed (e.g., basic human and ecosystem needs). Annual allocations should be flexible to deal with season to season variability of water availability.
4. There must be monitoring/metering and public reporting of actual water withdrawals and discharges from and to surface and groundwater supplies in the oil and gas sector. This should be available online. Aquifers are complex and an effort to describe where waste water is deposited in these aquifers should be included as a first step.

5. There should be appropriate pricing and related regulation of surface water and groundwater to promote efficiency of use. Water rental costs for the petroleum sector (Fracing) should be at the highest scale for industrial use in the province. Considering that clean water is permanently contaminated by Fracing, water fees should be charged at a much greater rate as a simple measure of true cost accounting.
6. Restore the responsibility for Water Act enforcement and compliance to the Ministry of Environment, rather than the Oil and Gas Commission (which is a permitting body established specifically to promote streamlined Oil and Gas Exploration approvals).
7. Prioritize the need for adequate resources for monitoring and enforcement of Water Act provisions, particularly with respect to oil and gas activity. The Northeast needs more agents of an impartial agency like the Ministry of Environment working specifically to monitor water use.
8. Establish a clear hierarchy of administrative penalties for licence violations or harm to water resources in the Water Act offence provisions, incorporating meaningful dollar amounts that will act as a real deterrent. Currently, administrative penalties are no incentive for conservation.
9. Establish a clear capacity and framework for spot audits under the terms of the New Water Act as an additional means to secure meaningful enforcement. Combined with serious penalties for violations, enforcement will be effective.
10. Bring into force complementary legislation such as the remaining provisions of the Fish Protection Act (for protection of surface water from unreasonable seasonal withdrawals) and the Environmental Management Act (outlining detailed corporate responsibility for waste fracing water and the ongoing creation of provincial contingency funds to deal with spills and subterranean 'communication' events).

Thank you and I trust the above considerations will be taken seriously. Not even taking into account the greenhouse gas issues of processing LNG (and the inefficient fact we will likely be burning gas to power the processing of gas), the prospective impacts to ground and surface water from Fracing operations represent the most significant current tangible impact to our provincial environment we have faced in decades. If written strongly, this New Water Sustainability Act will protect our water resources, make users pay accordingly to damage our water, and will inevitably promote only those industries that use water sustainably, to move forward in our economy.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:38 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I basically support the WSA as published.

I particularly support the plan to have local advisory groups, local use plans and local audits of water as we must use our local expertise and experience as well as find out what availability there is.

In my area, I am at the bottom of a mountainside with a great well. in the last few years 10 wells have been drilled into the same aquifer above me in a corridor for 2 kilometres and only about 300M wide. How are we supposed to know what effect that will have without the above three activities.

I see a contradiction with regard to the intention to pay attention to stream flow for fish/ agriculture/ etc; my concern is that the Run of River projects disturb that stream flow.

Please tell me how that contradiction will be dealt with.

Another concern regarding the intention to look after ground water seems to run counter to the governments support for fracking for LNG.

Please tell me how that contradiction will be dealt with.

The final concern is the process by which these advisory groups will be set up / what support will be available technically / what jurisdiction they will have and what accountability will they have and to whom? Please inform me of this issue.

What provisions in terms of staff and tech support are planned. For an audit and baseline studies as well as monitoring etc. there seems to be a need for a major allocation for this.

The "outside agencies? same problem ; how set up who in them accountability jurisdiction?

So, the wrap up. I applaud the government for this effort. it was needed and will help BC a great deal.

On the other hand, more details are necessary on the implementation.

PS the cost of large volume commercial use of water MUST be raised a lot!
Agricultural land are and water for it must be maintained.

Contact me at

Personal Identifiers Removed

Nelson BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:22 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Cc: Andrew.Weaver@greenparty.bc.ca
Subject: Please extend the deadline !

TO: The Ministry of Environment, Water Protection and Sustainability Branch, Victoria BC

RE: Water Sustainability Act

Please extend the deadline for responses, because I need more than a month to thoroughly examine the proposal for a new water act. This is not enough time for a proper consultation! First Nations are suffering all across Canada because of our lack of care for their water supplies. From my own experience, I know that one month will not have been enough time for consultation with native groups in BC. This is something that we have to acknowledge and respect, if we are to have anything like a "process" that is ethical and fair. Given that the province has no sitting Legislature and that we can only hope for a week or two sitting when you expect to table this legislation, an extended deadline with extensive public advertising is imperative.

On Vancouver Island, I am very concerned about the amount of industrial activity occurring ovetop aquifers. It is of paramount importance that the Precautionary Principle be used in order, for instance, to protect carst creeks. Why are so many dumps and toxic sites draining into creeks, lakes and aquifers without any oversight by the local municipalities which depend on the affected watersheds?

We are not the only ones to use the water here. The animals and birds, plants and fish also REQUIRE water levels appropriate to sustain their own species. I don't see protection of water flows for these creatures. Is our future to repeat the crazy practice of trucking salmon up river?! Water flows should not just be at the discretion of just one interest group.

I would have hoped that water sales would have been explicitly proscribed, especially in light of the CETA agreement where we can expect all of our water to be under unrelenting attack. This is an absolute priority for your legislation! *Drinking water must be protected as one of BC's greatest treasures.*

You need to make the public's interest supercede private rights over water use. Industrial users

like frackers, oil drillers, miners and logging companies must not be allowed to make deserts out of areas which are already fragile, nor impair the few pristine areas we have left. These groups cannot be allowed to have extended licenses nor be exempt from legislation which should protecting the groundwater *which is the origin of our drinking water* as well as water for crops. To continue in this manner is to create a "scorched earth" policy, an increasing reality for many in other parts of the world. We need to regional water policies for the same reasons that we have found it useful to have regional growth policies.

We need to protect our most valuable resource and we need "water tight" legislation to do it. From what I have read, I don't believe the current proposal has begun to provide that. Apart from the "proposal," time will be needed to carefully examine the actual legislation.

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VICTORIA BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:16 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Modernizing B.C.'s Water Laws

Aa a resident of BC for 21 years I am concerned about what the present government is doing to our Water's Act. Why is there so little time for me to come to grips with this document. For example, "Make most water licences reviewable after 30 years", why wait so long? This is an eternity in this day and age of development, I mean just look around the Okanagan now compared to 30 years ago, now wait another 30 years!

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:13 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern:

I am quite disappointed to find out that I was completely unaware of the request by the BC Government for public input regarding provincial sustainable water regulation until just now, just hours prior to the close of comments. I only found out about this request through some NGOs which sent me notice today.

As a result, my comments will be somewhat hurried and perhaps less well communicated than I might have liked due to the limited time frame.

Here in British Columbia, we are often left to believe water is one of our lesser concerns. We are blessed with huge bodies of fresh water, rivers and streams, and white capped mountain tops. In many parts of BC rains fall from the skies to the point where we shake our fists at it and curse it. However, fresh, clean, uncontaminated, water is not unlimited. In many areas outside of BC water either kills due to its contamination, or due to the lack of it. Wars are engaged over water rights and water bodies.

Without fresh water, very little life on earth as we know it can survive. All plant and animal life requires it. Even in BC, there are areas which develop drought, which become tinderboxes waiting for the first lightning strike to spark massive, uncontrolled fires. And while water may be plentiful in some locations, transporting it where it may be needed is neither easy or inexpensive.

Water sustains life, but not just human life, although we may use and contaminate more of it than any other species. All life began in water, and to this day the chain of life begins there. Small one celled organisms living in water feed larger multi-celled organisms, which then feed small fish, on which larger fish feed. Those larger fish become food for a plethora of species, up to mammals in the sea and on the land. In the case of animals like salmon, they also renourish the land mass to allow plants to sustain.

Global climate change is leading to unpredictable precipitation patterns. Areas which received low rain volumes may now receive none.

Other areas get unexpected rains, leading to extensive flooding causing complete restructuring of the land mass. As a result, we need to be that much more diligent about our policies toward water use.

Population in BC continues to grow as more and more people from around the world come here to live and prosper. However, that places still further burdens on this now unpredictable water supply. Water is neither free nor unlimited.

As we look into the future, it is critical that we recognize that water cannot be wasted or abused. That means each of us must conserve it, use it with care and respect. That includes avoiding and limiting adding matter to it which contaminates it. We need to find more benign chemicals to use in our daily lives, less toxic cleaners, pharmaceuticals, paints, household materials, ways to lessen the water in our sewage systems, and ways to reclaim it, and so on. Agricultural use has to be done with more care, to lessen or avoid contaminating it with animal waste, or pesticide runoff, and using it more wisely by using better farming techniques and technology. Still more importantly, commercial enterprises and industries must be very diligent with their water use. That includes manufacturing, mining, and other enterprises. Water needs to be given a real cost within the economy so any industry using it and not returning fresh, uncontaminated water pays dearly for its use. Industry must have their water rationed when appropriate and laws must exist to implement such a process. If a company wishes to bottle and sell water, it needs to pay an appropriate amount, not just for the gallons of water it uses, but for the impact that demand has upon the ecosystem, so it can be mitigated.

Processes such as mineral, petroleum, natural gas, or other extraction which use massive amount of water and then return it contaminated must not only pay dearly for the water they do use, but be sanctioned for not returning clean water, or be limited as to how much water they may have access to. And, contamination is not only the residue of non-water elements that are left within it, but also temperature changes created or reduction of water flow that might impact on rivers or streams and negatively impact wildlife. Ground water needs to be protected, so industrial pollutants do not enter water bodies or other water sources.

We must write laws which do not take water for granted; we need to write legislation which will protect it. We must also recognize that the water system or cycle is not contained by politically created boundaries. Water interaction by ourselves alters that in other provinces and other countries and vice-versa. Water is indeed a global resource, and we need to show leadership in respecting that.

The air and water on this planet are universally shared and each interaction with it influences all others. We need to treat water with the respect it requires as one of these global resources. To do so means updating some very lacking legislation that allows for exploitation and abuse of this precious resource, and to impress upon industry its real value. We must first off make sure there is adequate amount for the natural ecosystems to support natural wildlife. That includes allowing it to flow unimpeded where required for wildlife to survive properly. Then secondly, that there is enough to support the basic needs of the population, including that of the agricultural systems which support the growth and processing of food to support the human population. Only then should we look to water for manufacturing, or energy production on a domestic level. Then finally, if we do indeed have surpluses we can consider the use of water in exportation of goods, minerals, energy, and water itself, but only after it is clear that all prior needs are well fulfilled, and without long term legal commitments which might place those more critical system in jeopardy.

Our current legislation is inadequate, and incomplete. It is antiquated and outdated and does not take into account how valuable and critical water has become. It does not take into account how exploited it can become as a resource, it does not prioritize our values well, and it doesn't take into account how unpredictable the water cycle will become as climate change becomes more entrenched.

If BC truly is endeavouring toward a sustainable water future, we have to stop taking it for granted and recognize its precious and finite nature.

Thank you for allowing me to express my concerns.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Victoria, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:03 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: comments on proposed water sustainability act

Comments on the Water Sustainability Act:

- Water governance is a crucial issue for the effective management of water. A system of basin-sized water boards or other agencies with representation from elected officials as well as from a broad spectrum of users. They must also be resourced appropriately so that they can carry out their responsibilities.
- Watershed health is crucial to the well-being of both human and non-human life and as such must be safeguarded and treated as the greatest priority. Environmental services must be regarded as a priority in the Act and minimum environmental flows established for each major river/stream.
- Watershed planning is key to good management. A common framework for the whole province should be developed so that good planning and governance is consistent across the province.
- A third party oversight body to investigate and report on the new act so that improvements can be made as problem areas are identified
- Water quality and water quantity monitoring of both large and small water systems is critical to understanding the resource, its health, its sustainability. Monitoring should be increased to get a better handle on our water resources.
- Resources should be adequate to ensure proper regulation and enforcement of water regulations.
- More flexibility and efficiency in the water allocation system should be introduced including features such as:
 - protecting environmental flows
 - ensure monitoring and public reporting of actual water use on a watershed basis
 - promote conservation and equitable sharing
 - provide mechanisms to address drought or short term water scarcity
 - harmonize surface and groundwater licensing
- Licenses should have time limits so that periodic reviews of allocation take place and allow for adaptation to future conditions

- Groundwater should be licensed, monitored and protected from degradation in quality. And, as a corollary, it should be ensured that aquifers are not withdrawn beyond their capacity to recharge.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment *****Personal Identifiers Removed***** Kimberley, BC

*****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:56 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: My feedback on the proposed Water Sustainability Act

To whom it may concern,

I would like to thank the BC government for initiating this review of the Water Act and attempting to bring a new Act up to date with modern standards and expectations of British Columbians, and hopefully bringing more environmental considerations into future water decisions.

I have some suggestions for the proposed Water Sustainability Act.

I encourage the BC government to make protection of watercourse health and support of aquatic environments, fish and wildlife of primary importance in the future Act. We should take a precautionary approach and try to avoid issues in the future of potential cumulative effects ("death of a thousand cuts") by requiring proponents of industrial or other uses of our water to demonstrate with a high degree of scientific evidence that their proposed water use will not cause adverse effects on the environment either directly or in combination with other stressors through a cumulative type of effect. If proposed water uses cannot be undertaken without harming environmental values then these should be rejected.

Under no circumstances should water user's demands be able to compromise water needed for fish and other wildlife that rely on water.

The onus should be on proposed users of water to demonstrate that their proposed water use will not create adverse environmental effects, or cumulative adverse effects in combination with other stressors on the environment.

Water decisions should be made through a public process and decisions should be made or recommended by a board or other arms-length-from-government body that has clear direction to prioritize water for fish, wildlife and environment values.

Water users, including those holding existing water licences, should not be allowed to cause adverse effects on fish or other wildlife through their water use, or cumulative effects in combination with other stressors.

In addition to protecting flows for fish and other wildlife, I would like to see the Act strengthened to include protection of streamside (riparian) areas. This should be based on precautionary and scientifically defensible criteria and methodology.

I would like to see the new Act create strong protection of water quality, both surface water and ground water quality.

I would like to see clear and easily enforceable prohibitions included in the new Act to protect flows, streamside (riparian) areas, and water quality.

My preference is that no person or industry should be exempted in any way. I would like to see environment values be the first consideration and only after these are taken care of should human users of industry be able to use the water.

I would also like to see acknowledgement of potential future changes due to climate change or other factors so that we don't create problems for future generations when decisions of today combine with future changes.

I am not opposed to industry and other human uses of our water but I want to ensure that water needs to maintain aquatic health, fish and wildlife are preserved with priority over other demands for water.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

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From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:30 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Subject: Water Sustainability Act comment

Dear Premier Clark, Minister Polak and the Living Water Smart Team,

Further to the many detailed comments I made during Water Modernization Act workshops, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft proposal for the Water Sustainability Act (WSA).

Please include more protections, clarity and commitments to protect water for nature. The draft proposal is a good start, but our water deserves the best possible protection. Without potable water, none of us can live more than a few days. It is our most precious resource next to air, and must not be commodified.

Protecting water for nature has to be our top priority. Binding standards need to be included in the WSA to protect water for fish, wildlife and stream health. Guidelines are not good enough.

Likewise, our provincial water objectives must prioritize water for fish, wildlife and essential human uses. These objectives MUST apply to all industries, including forestry, oil and gas (which includes fracking) and other industries. Fracking, and consequent groundwater contamination threatens our survival as a species and must STOP.

Watershed governance is increasingly important for water management in the 21st century. Please provide a clear mandate and resources for local watershed groups to engage in this important process.

Water Licenses need to be reviewed regularly – not every 30 years! We need to build in the flexibility to adapt to our changing climate.

We need appropriate fee schedules for groundwater and surface water that supports responsible water management. Water use fees must make public ‘cents’.

Increased public participation in the granting of water licenses is critical to monitoring the impact on environmental flows. Please revise the process to enable increased public participation.

Lastly, please include an explicit statement that any private right to use water does not harm the public’s interest.

Thank you for protecting water for nature.

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Mission BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:36 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

My main concern after looking at the Water Sustainability Act is HOW the policy proposals are going to be implemented.

Another concern is with the review of licence terms - 30 years for general and 40 years for power purpose - this period of time

could very well see a major shift in the demand for, and scarcity of water. Shorter terms in these times of rapid change in our earth's

systems would be prudent.

Allowing a project development period prior to the start of operations and the effective date of the licence for

power purpose licences is not acceptable or necessary.

"Require large volume users to measure, record and report water use" is an important first step, but large water use that renders water unusable must be **prohibited**. Water is a finite resource, and as such, is much too valuable to be wasted for profit.

Water should have priority for drinking and for environmental sustenance. Period.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Roberts Creek, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:24 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: fresh water

i feel that corporations should be charged to use fresh water. and a substantial amount at that. a bottle of water costs \$1.50 -\$2.00. so why can nestle and others have it for next to nothing? fresh water is a scarcity, and i'd like to see it protected!

Personal Identifiers Removed

meadow crk, bc

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:09 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern,

I have reviewed the proposed Water Sustainability Act and believe the following provisions must be included in the WSA to protect our water:

--Fresh, clean water is essential to the survival and well-being of every individual, community, economy, and ecosystem in British Columbia. As such, the WSA must protect water as a public good. Water must not be commodified, but rather, stewarded sustainably as a commons. In order to achieve this, a public trust doctrine should be included to ensure that any private rights granted under water licenses are managed in the interest of present and future generations.

--Environmental Flows (flows required for the health and function of rivers and other bodies of water) must be legally protected. Fees charged must be sufficient to cover not only the administration and enforcement of the WSA, but also must be substantial enough to fund the scientific research needed to establish environmental flows and to monitor them. Much larger fees for industrial high-volume water users are required to enable proactive governance based on environmental flows; the WSA must avoid water scarcity rather than merely respond to it.

--The WSA, especially with regard to environmental flow provisions and protections, must apply to existing water licenses, not just to new licenses. In addition, the "First In Time First In Right" model should be replaced by a "priority of use" model. By its nature, the FITFIR model interferes with local stewardship and management of watersheds; it also encourages industrial water users to buy as many licenses as possible to give them priority over local environmental flow and community requirements. The FITFIR model does not prioritize ecological needs; it also ignores first nations' constitutionally enshrined rights.

--Every industry must comply with the WSA, including the gas, oil, and lumber industries.

--In light of increasing pressures upon our fresh water such as climate change, fracking, pipeline leaks, population increases, and development, the duration of water licenses must be much shorter. No more 20 and 30-year licenses ought to be issued. All licenses should be reviewed at 2 or 3 year intervals. The last thing we need is to be locked into long-term, unsustainable water licenses that drain aquifers, streams, lakes, and rivers, and bring about water scarcity.

--Meaningful participation by the people who depend upon the watershed and will be most affected by the issuing of the licenses must be incorporated into the WSA. Applications should be posted publicly. Sufficient funding should also be provided for consultation with affected communities.

Sincerely, *****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:24 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

The following are my comments regarding the new water sustainability act in BC.
I do not feel that private agriculture land owners should be required to licence surface or ground water use, as it should be integral to the ownership of the land, if it is used for agricultural purposes. Surface water improvements such as dugouts were created at the owners expense, they benefit wildlife and reduce the amount of runoff during rainfall and snow melt events, and this is beneficial to everyone.
Agricultural water is used to grow food, either from watering crops or watering livestock, and this is a critical ingredient for human sustainability, as well as ensuring British Columbia can continue to produce our own, safe food supply. Water used for agricultural use should not need to be metered.
Crown grazing tenures need to supply forage and water as part of the range tenure. Current undocumented water use for livestock water must be allowed to continue.
Studies have proven that healthy soil can sequester more carbon than the oceans and the atmosphere combined. One of the best ways to improve and maintain organic material in soils is through proper grazing by ruminants, and to facilitate this there must be plentiful access to good water.
While I do support the concept that in times of scarcity, human essential use should take priority, urban expansion should not be allowed without ensuring that agriculture water supplies are not being impacted by a growing urban population.

Water licence seniority needs to be used and followed

Thank You

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:09 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern,

I have reviewed the proposed Water Sustainability Act and believe the following provisions must be included in the WSA to protect our water:

--Fresh, clean water is essential to the survival and well-being of every individual, community, economy, and ecosystem in British Columbia. As such, the WSA must protect water as a public good. Water must not be commodified, but rather, stewarded sustainably as a commons. In order to achieve this, a public trust doctrine should be included to ensure that any private rights granted under water licenses are managed in the interest of present and future generations.

--Environmental Flows (flows required for the health and function of rivers and other bodies of water) must be legally protected. Fees charged must be sufficient to cover not only the administration and enforcement of the WSA, but also must be substantial enough to fund the scientific research needed to establish environmental flows and to monitor them. Much larger fees for industrial high-volume water users are required to enable proactive governance based on environmental flows; the WSA must avoid water scarcity rather than merely respond to it.

--The WSA, especially with regard to environmental flow provisions and protections, must apply to existing water licenses, not just to new licenses. In addition, the "First In Time First In Right" model should be replaced by a "priority of use" model. By its nature, the FITFIR model interferes with local stewardship and management of watersheds; it also encourages industrial water users to buy as many licenses as possible to give them priority over local environmental flow and community requirements. The FITFIR model does not prioritize ecological needs; it also ignores first nations' constitutionally enshrined rights.

--Every industry must comply with the WSA, including the gas, oil, and lumber industries.

--In light of increasing pressures upon our fresh water such as climate change, fracking, pipeline leaks, population increases, and development, the duration of water licenses must be much shorter. No more 20 and 30-year licenses ought to be issued. All licenses should be reviewed at 2 or 3 year intervals. The last thing we need is to be locked into long-term, unsustainable water licenses that drain aquifers, streams, lakes, and rivers, and bring about water scarcity.

--Meaningful participation by the people who depend upon the watershed and will be most affected by the issuing of the licenses must be incorporated into the WSA. Applications should be posted publicly. Sufficient funding should also be provided for consultation with affected communities.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:25 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water sustainability act comments

The attached document contains my comments on this legislative proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Water Sustainability Act

November , 2013

Thank you for the opportunity once again to comment on this legislative proposal. Managing our use of water is one of the most important challenges we face and it is encouraging to see that the government recognizes this priority.

However it is disappointing to see that the approach taken is tentative and there appears to be a reluctance to critically examine the status quo. Significant change is needed and it is unfortunate that the courage required to advocate for the necessary changes is apparently lacking. Inserting the word “sustainability” in the title of the act may be good PR and give comfort to some people but if it reflects the genuine intent of government, this proposal falls short of the mark. The emphasis seems to be on facilitating access to water for industrial purposes without any requirement for an assessment of sustainability. For example, there is no information provided on the environmental impact or sustainability of the large and increasing volumes of fresh water used by the oil and gas industry.

Water Use Purposes/FITFIR

Allocation of water rights and determination of priority should be based on the type of use. If there were no limit on the number of different uses authorized under a license it would make administration and decision making difficult. Licenses should be issued for specific purposes, with some related uses allowed. Rejecting this basic principle appears to be a move toward converting rights to use a public resource into a marketable commodity.

The new proposal has retained the First in Time, First in Right

approach to allocation of an increasing scarce resource, in spite of acknowledgement of its failure to provide for personal domestic use and environmental protection during times of scarcity.

The privileges and biases of practices, licensing and laws established over 100 years ago have been retained. This can hardly be called “modernization” of the Water Act. In all fairness if this policy is going to be maintained then the government must recognize the reality that First Nations were “First in Time”!

Allocation by importance of use is a more defensible approach. I realize that this will require creative leadership from government and some in depth discussion with the public and licensees. It will be difficult to reach a common understanding and acceptance of a ranking of various uses, but this necessary task shouldn't be avoided. In fact, apparently the current Water Act provides for this type of determination:

Under Section 15 of the Water Act, in rare cases, where two or more licenses on the same stream have the same priority date, a ranking of water uses based on purpose is used to determine who has priority of water use.

I think some of the priorities would be obvious to an informed public. For example, local use of water for food production is a higher use than bottling and exporting water for profit.

It is alarming that the FITFIR is being proposed for regulating ground water. This early 1900s model was not designed to facilitate stewardship and fair allocation of a valuable public resource. What is apparently being promoted is a blue “gold rush” style license grab by industrial users.

The justification for keeping FITFIR seems to be the administrative and political convenience of maintaining the status quo, pleasing senior license holders and advancing corporate interests. This is not defensible, particularly considering previous comments on this issue:

Respondents supported a water allocation system that prioritizes drinking water protection, ecosystem health, food production and clean energy production.

The legislative proposal includes water for livestock on rangeland as an “*essential household use.*” This is certainly a distortion of the common meaning of the words *essential* and *household*. In spite of the fact that some ranchers think of their cows as pets, water for livestock is clearly an industrial use and should be recognized as such.

Environmental Flow Needs

The emphasis seems to be on maintaining some minimum flow level during dry periods. Stewardship and environmental protection would require maintenance of some semblance of a

natural stream flow regime including peak flows. Streams should be assessed to ensure maintenance of “*proper functioning condition*”.

Small lakes, ponds and wetland ecosystems are sensitive to water levels and use impacts. Are they considered in this legislative proposal?

Legislation should require decision makers to obtain professional assessments and advice on requirements for environmental flows. All licenses should be reviewed periodically for consistency with environmental flow needs. Waiting 30 years before conducting reviews will be too long in some cases.

Prohibited dumping of debris/protection of water quality

It is proposed that the WSA would expand the current prohibitions on injecting materials into aquifers or depositing materials into streams. Is this not a logical opportunity to engage in a discussion of the various chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing? There is potential for these chemicals to contaminate aquifers and this clearly should be prohibited.

Environmental offsets are proposed as an option for remediation of adverse impacts on water quality. This could lead to “sacrifice zones” where there is reduced incentive to limit damage. Users that contaminate water should be held responsible for remediation in the affected location. The only legitimate use for environmental offsets that I can think of is as part of a penalty determination.

There is a brief mention of continuing the practice of “cows drinking directly from streams”. It has been demonstrated that range cattle can have significant impacts on water quality and aquatic and riparian ecosystems. Has any research been conducted on this topic? The focus seems to be on streams but from casual observation in the Cariboo and Kamloops regions small lakes and wetlands seem to be even more sensitive to disturbance of vegetation and alteration of soil structure in riparian zones.

Decision- making (governance)

Decisions on issuing or renewing licenses should involve people that are potentially impacted including indigenous communities.

The Water Act should take precedent over other provincial legislation. Decision makers should be free of undue influence by industry or politicians. Decision- making should remain with government staff within the Ministry of Environment. It is hard to believe that Regional Water Managers within the OCG will make decisions that will adequately protect the environment and the public interest. How can they not be somewhat captive of the industry? For example are they not starting from the assumption that use and contamination of massive amounts of water

for hydraulic fracturing is legitimate and involves acceptable levels of risk? This perspective is not commonly accepted within the general population.

I can't support delegation of statutory authority to people outside of government.

Accountability for stewardship of a public resource cannot be effectively delegated. This is an abdication of government's responsibility. I support the proposal to establish water objectives that would focus on environmental condition and aim to protect water quality, quantity and aquatic ecosystems. However the requirement for decision makers to consider water objectives to "the degree practical" lacks logic. Water Objectives must be fully considered in decisions; it would be the compliance with or achievement of objectives that would be subject to this qualifier. There must be adequate provisions for review and appeal of decisions that are not consistent with these objectives.

Ground water regulation

I support the initiative to regulate and protect ground water. However the proposal to use the same out dated system for allocation of rights (FITFIR) is regrettable for reasons previously outlined. The approach to allocation should be based on importance of use and all sectors should be treated equitably. Water use by the oil and gas industry should be regulated under the Water Act by the Ministry of Environment rather than under the Petroleum and Natural Gas Act administered by the Oil and Gas Commission.

There should be more emphasis on monitoring and protecting the quality of ground water

Compliance and Enforcement

An effective compliance regime is necessary to ensure stewardship of this valuable public resource. A foundation of clearly defined and legally enforceable standards and prohibitions is essential.

Administrative compliance and enforcement regimes have proven to be effective in the forest sector. I support the use of administrative penalties to encourage compliance with the Water Act. It is established practice that statutory decision makers use discretion to assess penalties up to a maximum prescribed in regulation. These discretionary penalties are routinely designed to make the crown whole, act as a deterrent and remove any economic benefit. The key to success is to set the maximum administrative penalties high enough that the need to use the court system is reserved for only the most serious contraventions.

Achieving compliance with legislation and adequate stewardship of the resource can only be achieved with adequate staffing and independent decision makers.

Water fees and rentals

Short-term water use approvals processed by

the BC Oil and Gas Commission are also exempt from paying fees.

Is there not a cost involved with processing these applications? Why should this sector be exempt from fees?

Any new fee structure should differentiate between industrial/commercial uses and personal use. In addition fees should reflect the value lost by contaminating or removing water from the ecosystem.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:35 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Legislative Proposal for a Water Sustainability Act

I have been advised that you are in the process of developing a new Water Sustainability Act.

As I see it, this should be a very simple document ensuring that local domestic use has priority along with fish, wildlife and environmental concerns. All other uses should be subjugated to these priorities.

Water exports should be banned and all other permitted uses should include a clause to the affect that the permit can be suspended or withdrawn in the face of changing environmental concerns.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Prince George BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:32 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Hello,

I have had a very difficult time getting through all the legalities in your proposal and I suspect a great many people in the province are in the same position so I have done a perusal and with my limited understanding will submit my opinion and concerns.

I live in northern rural B.C. and have a private well on a residential property. I am concerned that my water usage will be monitored, regulated and taxed. I do not think that those of us with a private well of domestic use only should be submitted to monitoring or regulation. We tend to only use what we have to. I have lived in the Lower Mainland and of course water usage should be limited due to the limited water supply in the watershed particularly in the summer but I really don't think many people abused the supply and complied with direction from the municipalities. I believe there is a water tax on the taxes (?) and that should suffice for maintenance and upgrades to the system.

What has brought this issue to the table is the commercial usage of our water supply. Particularly the extraction and selling of our valuable resource for profit and I support a charge/tax on this usage. I am NOT in favour of using our water for purposes within the oil and gas industry, particularly fracking. Using our valuable resource for this endeavor should exact a hefty charge.

Thank you

Personal Identifiers Removed

Vanderhoof, B.C.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:32 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: McRae.MLA, Don LASS:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Greetings,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed Water Sustainability Act. I do not believe that there has been adequate time for the public to gain an awareness of all that is being proposed in order to have any meaningful input. This tight time frame leaves me rather cynical that the provincial government has any real interest in what the people of BC want. Since the current legislation has been in effect for over 100 years, it would seem reasonable to allow a few more months for the public to provide input.

The proposed Water Sustainability Act focuses on ensuring that private benefits from using water continue – potentially at the expense of stream health, drinking water and other public benefits. There will be no consideration of whether that level of water use is sustainable or best serves the public interest. There is no definition of what is “beneficial” or to whom the use might be beneficial.

I believe that the public values drinking water, habitat for salmon and other fish species and agricultural uses of water more than allowing industrial uses such as bottled water and oil and gas exploitation.

Clearly this government does not value agricultural interests since there is a move to weaken the ALR and to allow the oil and gas commission to make decisions about agricultural land. Food security in a changing climate is a critical issue and should be given one of the highest priorities for water use.

I am very concerned about the high use of water required for hydraulic fracturing (fracking). The Water Sustainability Act will make water available for this controversial oil and gas industrial process. The proposed Water Sustainability Act does not do enough to meet the promise of producing the “cleanest LNG” in the world. Cleanest LNG would mean severely limiting the oil and gas industry’s access to fresh water for hydraulic fracturing, and instead providing strong incentives for alternatives to fresh water use such as new waterless processes being developed.

I urge you to extend the period for public consultation.

Respectfully submitted,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

Courtenay, BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:28 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX; Trevena.MLA, Claire F LASS:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act for B.C.

To the B.C.Legislature:

B.C. is blessed with an abundance of clean, fresh water. The new Water Sustainability Act should above all be clear in its mandate to protect this resource.

"Guidelines" to me are unenforceable. Some heavy users of B.C. water, ie. logging industry, oil and gas industry, and commercial water sale companies should not be exempt from the new Acts objectives.

As a concerned B.C. citizen I want the new Water Sustainability Act to prioritize water flows for fish, wildlife, and essential human needs, and to do this in a way that is binding.

Yours truly,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Campbell River, B.C.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:21 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I firmly believe that water should be a public resource, it should be guarded and protected for all citizens now and in the future. The interests of domestic users and agricultural users must come before corporate interests. The present situation of companies who bottle water and sell it for profit, yet do not pay for the resource is so wrong and shame on the governments who have allowed this to continue. The oil and gas developers who use and contaminate huge amounts of water should have to pay much more, they should be closely monitored and regulated.

No more permits for water use should be granted until there is a much clearly picture of how much water is available

Yours truly,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:21 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Legislative Proposal for a Water Sustainability Act

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Legislative Proposal for a new Water Sustainability Act (WSA).

I understand that BC's Water Act is out of date and does not reflect current challenges facing our province.

I support groundwater regulation.

I support charges for groundwater removal

I support local management for local water so that the people who are locally affected by water use can have a say over how the water is used.

Here are areas that I feel are of a high priority to improve the proposed revised Water Act - "Environmental flows" need to be scientifically defined and it must be made mandatory to meet them in all new and existing licences. Let's avoid vague definitions that will lead to abuse.

- Private rights do not supersede public interests and this should be explicit. This must also be enforceable, no exemptions!! Industry is not an excuse. No oil and gas loophole.

- more frequent reviews - especially for industry.

- groundwater removal must cover the cost of government oversight for responsible water management.

- more public participation opportunities.

- industry self-regulation is not okay. independent monitoring is key.

I look forward to seeing a new WSA introduced in the spring of 2014 that includes these improvements and has the tools, the resources and the flexibility to face current and future uncertainties head on, and with our priorities straight.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed Vancouver BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:08 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: BC Water Act Review

Hi -

Thank you for reviewing my input into the new Water Sustainability Act.

#1. I would encourage you to extend the deadline for submissions until March 2014. The extended deadline of March 2014 would allow all the interested parties like stream-keepers and water-user groups in B.C, to have a debate and time to comment. This deadline tomorrow is a bit hasty, as I just found out about it 2 days ago.

#2. Industry must be regulated by the new Water Act Legislation -they can't have a different set of rules with loopholes. There must be an explicit statement that any private right to use water cannot harm the public's interest in water resources. Fracking is ruining clean water permanently , which seems insane at this time in our planets' history of climate change and the forecast annual droughts we will experience in all regions of B.C. from June to October : " From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate" 2007 -report by the Federal government, available online.

#3. There must be increased public participation in the granting of our water licenses. The public deserves the right to review water licenses and monitor the impact on environmental flows. The local residents make the best water stewards.

#4. New water licenses need to be reviewed more regularly than every 30 years. We need to build in the flexibility to adapt to our changing climate. Current water licenses must undergo a review to address future water needs and First Nations rights.

#5. There must be appropriate fee schedules for groundwater and surface water that support responsible management and allow communities to engage in local watershed planning.

#6. Rural water needs are different from urban water needs. A collection tank serving 2 households does not need the same treatment as a neighborhood collection treatment system that serves 10 households. There needs to be flexibility to differing situations written into the new water act legislation laws. We need a clear mandate and the resources for local watershed groups to engage in watershed governance. Local data base collection knowledge, in this time

of climate change is especially relevant.

#7. The protection of our fisheries, including the rearing habitat and the aquatic life habitat where the juvenile fish feed is critically important for the future of B.C. Whether it is the sustained fertility of the land from fish carcasses, the essential food source for the mammals and birds, the income from the commercial fisheries or the quality of protein that no fish-farm could ever match for human consumption, the well-being of our wild fish stocks must have top priority over industries demands. There must be a scientific definition and commitment to ensuring the protection of water flows for fish and other environmental values.

#8. The new B.C. Water Act needs to build protection into its' legislation to protect B.C.s' resident users of the river, stream and lake, water licenses and municipal water systems from being sued by corporate business and industry protesting a potential loss of income.

Thank you for considering my requests.

Regards,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Yahk, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:52 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

- We need assurances that a large water user is not defined just by the number of gallons used, but it must be relative to the water source. (i.e. "Water In vs Water Out of an aquifer)
- Land improvement is described in the 1904 Water Act as "drainage". This is not a definition to sustain water. Please ensure that a more appropriate term such as 'stewardship' is used. Stewards and Stewardship societies are an integral part of any water management planning, as government is provided with much specific information pertaining to any areas of interest.
- Let there be a public arbitrator for water conflicts.
- Ensure that Public Education is a key component as most in BC still believe that water is abundant and thus they are paying little attention to water issues.
- Water must be a Public Trust not a commodity to be sold – we know that water from BC is being bottled and sold in other parts of the world and this is untenable.
- FITFIR should certainly be reviewed at the level of major industrial users benefiting from abusing the resource based on volumes of withdrawal and toxins added (i.e. Fracking) directly into the water tables and watersheds.
- Industry MUST be responsible for any costs incurred for remediation of any negative impacts caused by any of their activities in the course of their business.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Kaleden BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:51 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

SAVE OUR WATER!

NO TO FRACKING!

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:50 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

The most important things the BC government can do in the proposed *Water Sustainability Act* would be to:

- ☐ enact strong legal protection of “**environmental flows**,” the flows that are critical to healthy functioning rivers and water bodies
- ☐ ensure water remains protected as a **public good**,
- ☐ provide for **meaningful public participation** in decisions regarding water governance approaches,
- ☐ define environmental flows and essential household needs as a “**beneficial use**,” rather than the narrow and private-use oriented definition currently proposed,
- ☐ ensure that water pricing for commercial use reflects **the inherent value of freshwater** to British Columbians; fees should be set high enough to fund a comprehensive approach to fresh water management in BC,
- ☐ include a **public trust doctrine** which ensures that any private rights granted under water licences are subject to be managed in the interest of present and future generations,
- ☐ ensure that **no industry is exempt** from the WSA – particularly with regard to the oil and gas, and timber industries, and
- ☐ ensure that the WSA, especially environmental flow provisions, applies to existing water licences – not just new licences.

Water is BC’s most important natural resource. Given the pressures of a growing population, changing climate and expanding development pressures, steps must be taken to ensure that BC’s use of freshwater is sustainable. A new WSA must ensure that private rights to water do not take precedence over this the sustainable management of this public resource.

NO TO FRACKING!

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:47 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX; Mungall.MLA, Michelle LASS:EX

Subject: new Water Sustainability Act for the province 3013

HELLO,

Thank you for reviewing my input into the new Water Sustainability Act.

#1. I would encourage you to extend the deadline for submissions until March 2014. The extended deadline of March 2014 would allow all the interested parties like stream-keepers and water-user groups in B.C, to have a debate and time to comment. This deadline tomorrow is a bit hasty, as I just found out about it 2 days ago.

#2. Industry must be regulated by the new Water Act Legislation -they can't have a different set of rules with loopholes. An explicit statement that any private right to use water cannot harm the public's interest in water resources. Fracking is ruining clean water permanently , which seems insane at this time in our planets' history of climate change and the forecast annual droughts we will experience in all regions of B.C. from June to October : " From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate" 2007 -report by the Federal government, available online.

#3. There must be increased public participation in the granting of our water licenses. The public deserves the right to review water licenses and monitor the impact on environmental flows. The local residents make the best water stewards.

#4. New water licenses need to be reviewed more regularly than every 30 years. We need to build in the flexibility to adapt to our changing climate. Current water licenses must undergo a review to address future water needs and First Nations rights.

#5. There must be appropriate fee schedules for groundwater and surface water that support responsible management and allow communities to engage in local watershed planning.

#6. Rural water needs are different from urban water needs. A collection tank serving 2 households does not need the same treatment as a neighborhood collection treatment system that serves 10 households. There needs to be flexibility to differing situations written into the new water act legislation laws. We need a clear mandate and the resources for local watershed groups to engage in watershed governance. Local data base collection knowledge, in this time of climate change is especially relevant.

#7. The protection of our fisheries, including the rearing habitat and the aquatic life habitat where the juvenile fish feed is critically important for the future of B.C. Whether it is the sustained fertility of the land from fish carcasses, the essential food source for the mammals and birds, the income from the commercial fisheries or the quality of protein that no fish-farm could ever match for human consumption, the well-being of our wild fish stocks must have top priority over industries demands. There must be a scientific definition and commitment to ensuring the protection of water flows for fish and other environmental values.

#8. The new B.C. Water Act needs to build protection into its' legislation to protect B.C.s' resident users of the river, stream and lake, water licenses and municipal water systems from being sued by corporate business and industry protesting a potential loss of income.

Thank you for considering my requests.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Yahk, B.C.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:46 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Comments on the Water Act

Dear Government of BC,

I would like to take the opportunity to provide comment on the new Water Sustainability Act. While I am by no means an expert on water or hydrology in BC, I do have a M.Sc. in Environment & International Development and have some familiarity with natural resource exploitation and valuation.

Based on my understanding of the Water Sustainability Act there are two areas of concern that I would like to highlight.

1. Water permitting for industrial/commercial use will be implemented where end-users are to be charged a marginal fee for freshwater withdrawal. This is an outstanding beginning and is in line with some of the best advice coming from UNEP, the World Bank, and the OECD. However, based on my understanding the cost for water withdrawals is infinitesimally small. I understand that Nestle's use of hundreds of thousands of liters of water would incur a charge of only several hundred dollars. It hardly seems right to me to continue to subsidize industry through undervaluation of a scarce resource commons like freshwater. Has the Government of BC considered the non-use value of this water?

2. I understand that non-potable water will be free of charge for fracking purposes. Again, water resources are commons that belong to the people of BC, not industry. If the government would like to develop a industry then it is better to provide incentives through the tax system and not through undervaluation of resource inputs. What is the total economic valuation of this water? What is the bequest value? Is there no system of auctioning permits that would allow for at least some semblance of market valuation?

Before I could consider supporting the new Act, I would need to see an independent review from non-partisan resource experts and economists.

I hope that you consider my comments.

All the best.

Personal Identifiers Removed Vancouver, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:44 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I have reviewed the material regarding the proposed Water Sustainability Act.

I would like to echo the sentiments put forward by the Council of Canadians in their April 30, 2010 submission.

Water is a public resource and the public should have oversight over decision-making regarding water use.

The needs of the public and the environment should take precedence over commercial interests.

Water is a fundamental human right.

Protect rivers and lakes from pollution.

Water is a precious resource. Poisoning it by fracking is madness.

Regards,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Victoria, B.C.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:33 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Feedback on A Water Sustainability Act for B.C. Legislative Proposal

To whom it may concern,

Given how vital water is, and the realities of climate change 30 years between [licence reviews](#) is not sufficiently flexible; reviews should happen more frequently. As well, the new groundwater licences that are going to be granted to existing users, primarily large industrial users, must explicitly state they are subject to a future review until it can be determined the withdrawals are at sustainable levels and to allow for honourable government-to-government consultations with First Nations.

The only responsible choice is to protect fish and other environmental factors. The proposed [provincial 'water objectives'](#) must make protecting "environmental flows" for nature a priority. This needs to be scientifically defined and it must be mandatory to meet them in all new and existing licences. This must be enforceable and apply to all sectors of industry. No exemptions for forestry or oil and gas, as contemplated in the proposal. In my view this is critical.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Vancouver BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:26 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Legislative Proposal for a Water Sustainability Act

Water, not gas or oil, will be BC's key to prosperity in the future.

1. No export of bulk water ever and stop allowing Nestle and others to bottle our water for virtually free. Two entirely preventable environmental disasters of the 90's: bottled water and SUVs.

2. Use water as an economic attractant (the way we used to with health care and affordable hydro before the BC Liberals wrecked them) like this:

If corporations want access to our water we say to them: "Great! We'd love to have you! Open a head office here in BC; employ British Columbians to use our water for your business; adhere to our environmental laws. We'd love to talk business with you. You will be welcome if you are willing to commit yourself to BC's labour force and communities.

Access to our hydro electricity and water should be completely predicated on corporations being willing to settle here and commit themselves to us. Otherwise no go.

Remember, 7 years from now nobody will be talking about oil and gas. Everybody will be talking about water. Whether BC takes control of its future and its destiny as a destination for responsible corporations and local employment is in your hands.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Victoria BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:22 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Legislative Proposal for a Water Sustainability Act

The Water Sustainability Act must be prudent about future demands. Remember that the economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment; we forget that at our peril and at the dire peril of succeeding generations.

We are involved in a web of life in which all species depend upon each other, and all species depend on fresh, clean water. Do not deplete aquifers by thoughtlessly giving away water to industrial interests like frackers and bottled-water merchants. Do not allow logging interests to destroy or compromise watersheds. Please pay attention to science and not to industry lobbyists.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Victoria BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:17 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Hi,

I would like to say that the proposed rates for extracting groundwater are way too low. Charging such low rates does not encourage conservation at all.

Also, our water, including bottled water, should not be allowed to be exported.

Thanks,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Surrey

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:00 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: PROPOSED WATER SUSTAINABILITY ACT
Personal Identifiers Removed

Comments on Proposed Water Sustainability Act

I find it strange that at the time we are discussing water sustainability and increased water use, there seem to be a record number of water licences unused. In our immediate neighbourhood, we were the only ranch making use of our irrigation licences this year, and a trip to the North Okanagan showed many dry acreages that were formerly irrigated. Some places could not find people to irrigate, others have internal problems, some are owned by individuals with no interest in agriculture, and others cannot afford the costs of maintaining their irrigation equipment with low returns for their agricultural products.

I am concerned about the number of responses from agricultural stakeholders. Although there was no breakdown given as to the background of individuals who responded, a 6% share of a 13% stakeholder total seems extremely small. A few voices crying in the wilderness.

Our concern was not addressed. We have a water licence, on ALR land, that will always be considered the last licence on the creek because there is a community storage licence below us. Every licence below us, even those granted fifty years from now, automatically receives a 1938 priority. Our storage and irrigation licences are 1974. The vast majority of licence holders are not bonafide farmers. Their existence does not depend on farm production. We do recognize priority of irrigation licences before ours, but not storage.

I can see reviewing licences every thirty years as both good and bad. Would farms consider a considerable outlay of funds for irrigation upgrades, say \$100,000.00 or \$200,000.00, if their rights to irrigation could be removed? On the other hand, water changes put into effect twenty years after being granted, without notice to anyone affected, should not be permitted.

A simple and inexpensive way of measuring water use would be to check Hydro bills, taking into consideration size of pump and distance of delivery of water.

Livestock require water to live, and should be considered on the same priority as households. Not only in times of drought, but also in times of prolonged power interruption, such as ice storms. Irrigation rights should not be lost in order to provide water licencing for livestock. ALR lands should provide an agricultural environment as a priority, not as an afterthought. Regional authority may not be the best answer for agriculture, because agriculture always bows out to surrounding population pressures.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:57 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

My particular concern is the pricing of water. Water is a provincial resource and government should receive appropriate revenue for the use and consumption of water. Rates that have been publicized for groundwater extraction are ridiculously low as are the present rates for all water licences. The province should set rates which should (a) cover the cost of administrating and managing the water resource (b) providing revenue to the province - as use of any public natural resource should provide.

-

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:59 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Re: Comments for the Water Sustainability Act

I think that the Act must address industrial use of water. There needs to be protection of our water from contamination and over use. It is not sufficient to "mitigate". Many industries, such as the oil and gas industries, that use enormous amounts of water, infused with chemicals are wasting water. Even the use of gray water leaves us with contaminated water that has to be stored somewhere. If such stored water leaks or breaks into our water supply, it is then too late.

Something needs to be done about "grandfathering" old agreements with industry that allots to them larger quantities of water than they actually need or use. These allotments need to be pared down to preserve, protect and guarantee that citizens have priority access to drinking water and water for growing local food.

Watersheds need to be in the control of the province or municipalities, not in the control of forestry owners, who, by misfortune of old deals, agreements and unforeseen changes in our socioeconomic and ecological needs of today. Climate change was not an issue at the time, but it definitely is now. Economy must not trump survival needs for food and water, for what is economy without healthy people!

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:39 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I endorse all of the concerns and suggestions raised in the “LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA’S WATER SUSTAINABILITY ACT” as submitted by the Vancouver Island Water Watch Coalition.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed Port Alberni / Comox, BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:16 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: B.C. Water Act

I am thankful the government is revising the Water Act and some progress is being made to protect water.

I urge the government to respect First Nations Rights and Title.

My priorities:

1. Protect water for communities and nature by addressing water flow, water allocation, licensing, -ensuring First Nations rights are paramount and water is a public trust
2. Water use fees must make sense, large corporations should pay more than their fair share, fees should no longer go to general revenue but go directly to water projects.
3. give the public greater input and control for local water decisions -authorities, follow models such as the Okanagan water basin, to ensure public water sustainability and provide adequate funding too make that so,
4. ensure the water act covers all fresh water in BC. with no EXCEPTIONS for Oil and Gas and Forestry, as currently is the case.

Gaps such as inadequate consultation with First Nations, the absence of legal commitment to support water as value in nature, low water use fees and the lack of public participation in decision making are concerning.

With public input and support, I trust that the gaps and inadequacies in the current proposal will be addressed, ensuring BC water is protected as a valuable living entity.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Courtenay, B.C.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:16 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Please ensure that our water is kept fresh and pure for everyone, and do not allow corporate interests to use it for free when everyone else has to pay for it. This economic model is leading to environmental disaster.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:10 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: water sustainability act

Hello

Yukon shares watersheds with BC. We are at an earlier stage than BC of drafting Yukon's water strategy.

Water's needs must be met first and foremost - water is life. It must be kept in a form that sustains all life - the fish, the plants... the ecosystem.

Independent scientists must set the minimum quality and quantity thresholds in order that water continue to support its surrounding ecosystem The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council representing 70 First Nations along the Yukon River has a vision to be able to drink from the Yukon River.

That is the kind of standard essential for any establishment and maintenance of "sustainability",

The capitalist world economy and private interests exert powerful pressures on natural resources, and are latecomers to the concept of sustainability, they are not naturally driven to implement truly sustainable practices.

Water standards, such as water being kept in its natural state and being fit for humans to drink, need to be enforceable - limits on water licenses are but one example

Local communities obviously are the best situated to be stewards of water - monitoring and contributing to decision making that affects the water in the area.

The government should incentivise and reward intelligent water use at all levels.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Whitehorse, Yukon

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:55 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Attn: Living Water Smart,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Water Sustainability Act.

There are some positive initiatives in the proposal, such as regulation of groundwater, improved conservation and efficiency requirements and protection of stream health and aquatic ecosystems.

However, there are some significant gaps and concerns in the policy proposal that must be addressed if we are going to balance competing demands for water, ensure watersheds are healthy, and best serve the public interest through good decision-making and public participation.

Water Allocations: The current water allocation regime, “first-in-time, first-in-right” (FITFIR), is not working, yet the Water Sustainability Act proposal does not tackle the FITFIR regime. Instead, it proposes water licence trading and water markets to deal with allocation that could open the door to the privatization of water, which most British Columbians, including me, do not want to have happen. Instead of moving BC towards water markets, the proposed legislation should consider:

- A watershed based decision making process that allows water users within a basin to determine an equitable allocation in times of drought.
- Government regulation of the ways in which licensees can exercise water entitlement ensuring efficient and sustainable use of resources.

In-Stream Flows: While the policy proposal appears to recognize the need to balance the needs of water for people and water for nature, the proposed in-stream flow measures would only apply to new water users and not to the 44,000 current water licence holders. This is a significant weakness, as is leaving in-stream flow measures as only “guidelines” and not legislated with a robust regulatory framework. Strong regulations for stream flows are our best insurance against further degradation of our natural world and a new water law must have strong, legislated flows to meet the needs for human needs and the environment. A new Water

Sustainability Act should:

- Ensure better transparency of hydrological/water licensing data to allow in-stream flow needs to be understood
- Set environmental flow standards
- Develop “precautionary flow numbers” for rivers and streams where incomplete data exists, until more site-specific determinations can be made.

Water Governance: How decisions are made about water will define our future as a province. The new policy proposal attempts to enable a variety of governance approaches, but are vague and lacking in vision. A better system of water governance would recognize that citizen engagement, watershed management groups with multiple sectors represented, and empowered local governments is a better model to decide how we make decisions about water.

I look forward to a strong new law to protect BC’s water, for current and future generations.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Vancouver, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:55 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: my input

Hi; I think the act should specifically cover the aquifers - how can local politicians and planners know how many toilets to okay for development if they don't know the extent of the aquifers and have control of the aquifers?.

No commercialization of water ever.

Clear directives on water use and management and a definite plan of how to enforce the rules and who pays for the enforcement.

An "environmental" deposit before any commercial or corporation use of water bodies is allowed to stop the practise of companies going bankrupt and avoiding ecological restoration costs.

Thank you for taking thoughtful care of our most precious resource.

Personal Identifiers RemovedDuncan, ***Personal Identifiers
Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:35 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Protect our water!

Our water is a precious natural resource that must be protected by everyone, including our Provincial Government. That means not only ensuring that it remains safe to drink, but also that limits are placed on the amounts and types of usage by everyone, especially business! Please pass legislation that reflects these concerns - thank you!

Personal Identifiers Removed
Vancouver, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:35 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: CBC Radio

Subject: Input for the proposed new Water Sustainability Act

Hello,

Here is my input towards the proposed new Water Sustainability Act.

The Water Sustainability Act must ensure the long-term sustainability, as much as possible within the confines of our warming climate, of the historical ecological abundance and diversity of our watersheds and their associated ecosystems. This cannot be achieved if the Act enables ongoing massive extractions of ground water. Water is our most precious resource, and our government has a moral obligation to protect our water abundance and quality for its people, for the ecological health of our land, and for future generations of British Columbians. The authors of the Act must strive to meet this obligation.

Industry must pay a reasonable rate for using our most precious resource. A rate as low as \$0.85 per 1000 cubic meters (about 1000 fridge-fuls) is nothing short of robbery of the people. \$1.00 per cubic meter would still be a gross undervaluation of our water. The Water Act should require that companies pay at least that – perhaps up to 10 times that – as a condition of their water licences.

Exemptions from licence renewal must not be allowed by the Water Act. Sustainable restraints must be placed on existing projects, especially in light of the growing uncertainty over our future water supply that climate change is causing.

Natural annual ground water reservoir inputs must be scientifically established – and also, due to our changing climate, be regularly monitored. Annual limits – i.e. sustainable *percentage*-based limits – must be placed on the amounts of water extracted which will be either removed from the watershed and/or polluted. [Water licences must require and specify these limits.](#)

The huge volumes of polluted waste water generated by current fracking processes cannot realistically be contained without leakage. Therefore, the fracking industry must categorically demonstrate their ability to extract from their waste water the pollutants they produce – sufficient to make the water non-toxic to soil organisms and local fish species. Assumedly, time and incentive are needed so that they will invent the necessary technologies. Companies must

show by regular government testing that their waste water has been made non-toxic before they are allowed to discharge it back into the ecosystem.

Ultimately, the Water Act must require for each water licence that the pollutants in the waste water have been negated to safe levels *before* the company's responsibility for their waste water pollutants is extinguished.

The current 'gold rush' push to facilitate the fracking industry is premature and short-sighted. It shows that the Provincial Government is addicted to the huge profits generated by NLG licences regardless of the long-term damage to our ecosystems, let alone human health. Standards, improved technologies, and baselines must be established before British Columbia approves the withdrawal of more groundwater.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:31 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Comments on WSA Legislative Proposal

Dear Honourable Minister Polak

I'm quite conscious my bothering to write this note is a complete waste of time. I'm doing it anyway. I come with a background as a VP Senior Analyst with Moodys' Investors Service, the global rating agency. I'm fully aware the BC has an extremely poor reputation internationally on environmental protection policy. At some point BC's credit rating will be downgraded as a result. It's a question of balance. Moody's will anticipate a backlash against the environmental whitewash currently going on, and the drying up of investment. It's a disaster waiting to happen.

As far as the Water Act is concerned, BC most desperately needs a legal structure within the Water Act that defines the rights and penalties associated with industrial water use and discharges, and defined responsibilities of government health officials, water control officers, and community water boards in rural areas.

For example, Community Water Boards, through the Water Control Officer must have the power to test and take water samples in locations which drain into community water sheds. If there are health concerns, the Water Control Officer must have the duty to notify the Regional Medical Health Officer (RHO). The RHO, through the BC Medical Health Officer, must have the legal duty and right to authorise a Health Impact Assessment to ascertain the risk to human health, and what measures must be done in mitigation by the offending company. It may be that the Regional Medical Health Officer, as supported by the BC Medical Health Officer, finds that pollution of the water supply cannot be mitigated and in which case he must have the power under the Act to suspend operations. This could be appealed to the Courts but the Medical Health Officers must have the powers within the Water Act. It would then be up to the Courts to decide.

If there is a legal duty under the Water Act and powers of enforcement, we may see less feckless industrial activity and a much more responsible actions taken by mining companies.

People have few rights in BC compared to the US. Even people in Chile have more rights than us (re suspension of the Pasua-Lama gold mine) but here is an opportunity to set a legal framework to protect human health in BC and build a legal structure in the Water Act setting out roles, responsibilities, rights and penalties; one that actually counts. I am not optimistic.

Personal Identifiers Removed Gillies Bay

BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:28 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Please find attached my comments on the draft Water Sustainability Act.

Personal Identifiers Removed

I have reviewed “A Water Sustainability Act for BC – Legislative Proposal” document dated October 2013 and wish to offer the following comments:

The Overview document and the introductory statements present very ambitious and progressive targets to be accomplished by this legislation; however, the actual legislative proposals fall short in several areas.

Notably, the delegation of Environmental Flow Needs (EFN) or the ecological services of water as secondary to the First In Time, First in Rights (FITFIR) allocation method undermines the proposal. Simply considering EFN for most applications (p.39/127) does not establish the necessary hierarchy of legal rights to achieve the stated goals.

The addition of a new oil and gas purpose (p.34/127) is a concern if the FITFIR method is retained. This, in conjunction with the recent authorities of the Oil and Gas Commission (OGC) to administer the Water Act, the proposal for the OGC to complete “desk top” assessments of EFN or for the oil and gas company applicants to provide more detailed assessments is worrisome. I also note that EFN will not be considered retroactively when rolling over existing licences unless done as part of a licence review (1/30 years) or a Water Sustainability Plan. Now is the time to do it; problems will only become more intractable as time goes on. I also note that access to Water Sustainability Plans is very restricted. (p.49/127); local communities, basin water user groups etc. need to have access to the management tools available.

Rationale for the removal of the current limitation of three water use purposes per water licence (p.34/127) is not provided; this measure will only serve to encourage speculative licencing.

The application of the FITFIR allocation rights to both groundwater and surface water users is contentious, particularly since domestic users are excluded from licences (p.54/127) and the rights that licences confer. I note that provisions for basic domestic use can be ensured in

times of scarcity; presumably by petitioning the Minister or a local Manager to invoke that guarantee.

The “assumed” disconnection between deep saline and shallow groundwater’s (p.56/127) is flimsy support for the arbitrary 600 meter cut-off proposed for this legislation. The oil and gas companies can easily prove this from analysis of existing drill records and the addition of rudimentary testing; proof should be required upon application for the water.

The mandatory licence review schedule of once every 30 years (p.75/127) is far too infrequent. The legislation should enable a proactive and flexible approach to licence review and administration.

I believe the threshold for “large water users” of 250 m³/day (p.82/127) is too high for some areas of the province. Province wide legislation should establish a low threshold for applicability; the onus would then be on water users in other water rich areas of the province to establish more lenient threshold’s via water Plans or other mechanisms.

I note the proposals on governance models are under development however, I would like to stress that administration of local watersheds must allow for representation of water users living in the watershed.

The enforcement provisions appear to be woefully inadequate (p.87/127). For example, the loss of a licence appears to be considered only in the event that fees are not paid. Again, I would emphasize that water provides essential ecological services for our environment and our society. A strong and effective regulatory regime is warranted to protect it if BC truly wants a sustainable water act.

The exemption of oil and gas companies from the fees for short term approvals issued by the OGC (p.92/127) clearly contradicts the stated objectives for the fee structure; hopefully it will be corrected in the new legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:20 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Subject: Response to the Water Sustainability Act for B.C. - Legislative Proposal

[To the Ministry of Environment Water Protection and Sustainability Branch](#)

[Please consider this my feedback on the proposed Water Sustainability Act:](#)

[KEY CONCERNS - Not in order of any priority](#)

From the outset, this proposal has been three years in the making while the government has only given the public and various other stakeholder groups one month to respond. This does not make sense. The imposed timeline is far too short of a time period for any meaningful responses from the majority to be received, compiled and reviewed. The deadline should therefore be extended to April 1, 2014 at minimum.

UBID notes that this is a "proposal" only. The proposal is so huge and unwieldy it is difficult not to believe the intended purpose is to baffle the reader. There is no legislation or regulations attached. From our perspective, "the devil will be in the yet to be received details". Therefore, UBID urges the government to consult once again very broadly with all stakeholders prior to the actual presenting of the legislation and regulations. Legislation should prioritize public health and safety, (quality and sustainability), above all other interests which this current proposal does not do.

The Public Trust Doctrine must be embedded within the legislation. The Public Trust Doctrine does not appear within said documents and this is a necessity if the Water Act is going to be meaningful. Water, and access to water, belongs to the Commons. The people are the Commons. Water belongs to the people of this province and that must be clearly and distinctly recognized within the Water Act.

Environmental Flow needs and critical environmental flow must be embedded in Provincial Water Objectives which it currently is not. Without our environment, there would be no economy. There must be clear and legally enforceable environmental flow protections that apply across the province in watersheds where, in particular, EFN's are under threat.

Why is it necessary to have Water rights and anything to do with Water enshrined in **FOURTEEN** Provincial Acts? There should be one Water Act with any and all water related issues imbedded within the one Act instead of having 14 Acts that affect our water. This is blatantly harmful. If the government is going to leave 14 Acts in place to deal with our water, then these other 13 Acts require revision to give the 'Water Sustainability Act' the top priority it should have.

There should be a Ministry of Water where responsibility for this resource is under the control of one Ministry.

Exemptions must not be given to oil, gas and forestry and any other industry/corporation. These exemptions, given to industry, are being enshrined within the Water Act and are unacceptable.

On page 64 of this proposal it states: "(e.g., allow for delegation of some water management activities or decisions to people or agencies outside the provincial government or more than one person or agency with the authority to exercise the same powers);" This is unbelievably vague – what "people", what "agencies" beyond the local government, responsible for managing their water resources?

Explicit provisions must be made that enable local watershed governance, whether it is on Crown Land or Private Land. Such a provision must take into consideration first and foremost, Environmental Flow Needs (EFN'S). In addition, funds must be provided by the Provincial Government to make it possible for Local Governance Boards to operate. Along with this, there must be enforcement rights given to a Local Governance structure. Currently and under your proposal, the preciseness necessary is entirely missing and currently the Provincial Government provides little if any enforcement of rules they may make. This must change if we are truly

going to protect our water resources and the surrounding environs on which the sustainability of water relies.

FITFIR must be removed.

Groundwater! As a province, one of the very last in the country, the government has finally recognized that our groundwater (aquifers) must also be protected. However, the government is proposing to place groundwater under the FITFIR portion of an Act! Why would the government do this?

The Water Act must make clear that there is no co modification of water.

The government needs to take the responsibility to determine the capacity of our water resources.

Water is the key to all life. Water underpins economic growth and community prosperity. Many other countries have enshrined explicit protections for environmental flows, rigorous water planning and promotion of conservation, improved governance more focused on citizen engagement in decision making at the watershed level, and an emphasis placed on accountability and effective oversight. Under this current proposal, we are far removed from achieving these objectives.

In closing, these items are brief in nature, because of being allotted such a short timeline in which to respond.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Fanny Bay, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:00 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Water is sacred, stop selling it to oil and gas companies. Also, completely end all contracts with Nestlé .

When we have no water, we have no life.

Water is not a for sure thing, there is a limit!!

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: *****Personal Identifiers Removed*****
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:45 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I expect my government to protect our water from corporate freeloaders like Nestlé, who are able to withdraw as much groundwater as they like free of charge. B.C. needs water legislation that puts public interest ahead of corporate profits. A law that gives our communities and our First Nations the power to effectively steward our precious water.

*****Personal Identifiers Removed*****
Nanaimo, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:41 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: B.C WATER ACT

THE DEADLINE FOR PUBLIC COMMENTARY ON B.C.'S WATER ACT ON NOV 15 REQUIRES AN EXTENSION TO THE DEADLINE FOR THIS IMPORTANT PIECE OF LEGISLATION.

Personal Identifiers RemovedCAMPBELL RIVER

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:35 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: B.C Current Water Act Needs rewriting

As clean water is a human right we as Canadian citizens must have the right to insist on how our water is looked after. companies who come into Canada and bottle water and do not pay anything for it should not be allowed. Water has to be protected from mines dumping chemicals in an area where it can contaminate drinking water can not be allowed. WE NEED MORE TIME, WE NEED MORE TIME TO EXAMINE THE B.C. WATER ACT

Personal Identifiers Removed

CAMPBELL RIVER

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:22 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Submission re: BC's Proposed Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concerns about BC's proposed Water Sustainability Act and to request that the BC government revise the proposed Act to take account of my concerns, which I believe are shared by many other British Columbians.

I strongly believe the government should abandon the First in Time, First in Right (FITFIR) model of prioritizing water licences. This model ignores the issue of unsettled indigenous land claims and fails to adequately prioritize the ecological needs of a watershed or the rights of the community at large. I believe water rights for any watershed should be prioritized as follows: 1. Ecological needs should get top priority; 2. Indigenous and community needs should get second priority; 3. Agricultural needs should get next priority; 4. Industrial uses should get the lowest priority, regardless of whether they may have historically been first in time. The model I propose recognizes indigenous rights to water and prioritizes water rights based by putting the public good ahead of individual or corporate profit.

I believe that water allocation must be based on these three principles: water as a human right, water as a commons and water as a public trust. Every resident of a watershed has an inherent right to a sufficient amount of water for drinking, sanitation and basic household use. Water as a commons means our watersheds must be shared, protected, carefully managed and enjoyed by all who live around them. Water as a public trust means that water, including groundwater, belongs to communities and cannot be privately owned or controlled. The BC government should act as a trustee or steward of the province's water resources, managing them in the public interest based on these three principles.

The concept of "beneficial uses" in the proposed Act should be specifically defined as uses that are in the public interest. The beneficial use of water must prioritize the public interest, indigenous social and cultural use, household use and ecological needs. Economic uses of water should have the lowest priority and only be allowed when all the public uses above can be fully met first.

In section 2.3.1 of the proposed Act, well-defined limits should be placed on the uses of water licences. For example, a licence originally issued for agricultural purposes should not be allowed to be subsequently used for industrial purposes. Moreover, licenses should not be tradeable or sellable in any way. Any new use of a license should require a new application process.

While environmental flow requirements are proposed in the new Act, the levels are left to the discretion of government appointees. This opens watershed management to the possibility of politically motivated decisions. Instead, there should be strict, mandatory flow levels

established in the Act based on sound scientific data about actual environmental flow requirements.

Decisions on management of watersheds and on the issuing of water licences should not be left to the Comptroller of Water Rights and the Regional Water Manager, as they are political appointees of the Minister. All these decisions should be made with the full involvement and consent of First Nations and local residents. I would recommend that each watershed establish a stewardship council comprised of First Nations representatives and local residents. These councils could consult with Ministry scientists and make all decisions regarding the stewardship of the watershed and the issuing of water licenses.

The proposed Act introduces the use of water for oil and gas development. This change should be stricken from the Act, as any oil and gas development in this age of climate change is completely irresponsible. Moreover, fracking and other technologies require vast amounts of water, which are often severely polluted through their use. Such uses of water do not meet the public interest test and should never be allowed.

The proposed Act also introduces offsets for remediation. In other words, it proposes allowing companies to damage one area at will if they remediate another area as an offset. This sort of provision would allow companies to do terrible, unacceptable damage to some areas, and that should not be tolerated. Sustainability of every part of every watershed should be the goal of the new Act.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Best regards,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Vancouver, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:13 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: water for our future!

To: Premier Clark, Minister Polak and the Living Water Smart Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft proposal for the Water Sustainability Act (WSA).

I am writing to urge you to create the most powerful, radical water protection act in the world. Our beautiful province has the best water in the world. We are so fortunate. It is our duty to protect water for our children and for the natural we are so lucky to have remaining in BC. The draft proposal is a good start, but our water deserves the best possible protection.

Protecting water for nature has to be our top priority. Stringent and binding standards need to be included in the WSA to protect water for fish, wildlife and stream health. Guidelines are have never been good enough to stand up to industrial greed.

Likewise, our provincial water objectives must prioritize water for fish, wildlife and essential human uses. There must be no exemptions for any industries, including forestry, oil and gas (which includes fracking).

Watershed governance is increasingly important for water management in the 21st century. Please provide a clear mandate and resources for local watershed groups to engage in this important process.

Water Licenses must be limited, must be recognized as conferring only a limited right to use water and to that in a sustainable way. Poisoning water cannot be permitted. All water used by industry should be returned to the natural cycle UNHARMED! We need to build in the flexibility to adapt to our changing climate. Licenses need to be reviewed regularly – not every 30 years!

We need appropriate fee schedules for groundwater and surface water that supports responsible water management. Water use fees must make public 'cents'.

Increased public participation in the granting of water licenses is critical to monitoring the impact on environmental flows. Please revise the process to enable increased public participation.

Lastly, please include an explicit statement declaring that there is no such thing as a private right to use water. Water belongs to all of us; first the land and water systems, then people. It must never become a private commodity.

Thank you.

Personal Identifiers Removed

vancouver

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 4:59 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Commentary On BC's New Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern,

It is very heartening to know that the government is taking action to update our Water Act which is over 100 years old and does not adequately protect the interest of all stakeholders, especially First Nations. First Nations Rights and Title must be considered as a priority when issuing licences to corporate users.

Given that the United Nations has declared that water is a human right which gives every person in BC the right to clean water for drinking, sanitation and basic household use these are my priorities:

1. That this Act provides protection over our water in order that communities, salmon and other fish, and nature have adequate access for all their needs by addressing water flow, water allocation, and licensing. It should ensure that First Nations rights are held paramount and water is held as a public trust.
2. Water is a very precious and finite resource and as such water use fees must reflect this, with the cost of water extraction for large corporations reflecting its true, very high, value. This increased revenue should then be invested in sensible, responsible water projects.
3. Underground saline water is part of our underground water system meaning that its extraction must be carefully policed. As such it should not be excluded in this Act.
4. Water as a public trust means that the public must have greater input and control in local water decisions to ensure public water sustainability and provide adequate funding to make that so.
5. This Act must cover ALL fresh water use in BC with no exceptions to Oil and Gas or Forestry as is currently the case.

This Act as proposed has serious weaknesses such as inadequate consultation with First Nations, the absence of legal commitment to support water as value in nature, low water use fees and the lack of public participation in decision making which are concerning. I trust that this process of public input and commentary will address these shortcomings thus ensuring BC water is protected as a valuable living entity.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed Maple Ridge, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 4:48 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Protecting water/protecting the future

I want the government to write the most powerful and radical Water Act in the world. BC is incredibly rich in water and we do not yet value it. Weak regulations and non-existent laws allow corporations to pump water out of aquifers or poison water through fracking operations. If we are going to allow this (and I wish we wouldn't) at least put a premium price on our most precious resource. Protect environmental flows and headwaters. Protect glaciers and groundwater. Please, recognize that we cannot replace our water.

Personal Identifiers Removedvancouver, bc

From: thinkwell design [mailto:thinkwell@telus.net]
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 4:26 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Hello

In light of the proposed revisions to the current 100+ yr old Water Act, I would like to voice my concerns and wishes for the Province to consider in regard to drawing up new legislation under the new Water Sustainability Act (WSA).

I am deeply concerned by the latest reports of multi-national corporate exploitation of fresh water resources including the drawing of hundreds-of-millions of litres of groundwater, free of charge and oversight, to companies like Nestlé, as well as the incredible volume of water used by the oil and gas industry. And in the case of the gas industry, the contamination of underground fresh water resources resulting from fracking.

The proposed WSA should recognize the public trust and fresh water as an invaluable public resource and it should be managed, first and foremost, in the public interest and protected accordingly. This would include increased opportunity for public participation in decision-making and debate when industrial licensing applications are considered.

Also of concern is the lack of fair return for water used in industrial extraction and exploitation, especially in relation to the fees that the public pays for domestic water-use. At the current rates, and even with the proposed revisions, industrial user fees do not even cover the public administrative costs for water-use in BC. With budgets being cut, or “tightened” in all areas of government these days, surely this is a common-sense and fair opportunity to increase industrial water-us fees that could be used to sustain water governance and environmental-impact assessments.

Thank you.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 4:02 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: New Water Protection Legislation

Subject: Comments on the Water Sustainability Act Proposal

To Whom it Concerns,

There is no question that water is one of British Columbia's most essential and important natural resources. There is also no question that with the pressures of a growing population (especially in the lower mainland), changing climate and expanding development pressures, steps must be taken to ensure that BC's use of freshwater is protected and sustainable.

Any new WSA must ensure that private and corporate rights (and especially international companies currently exploiting our water resource for their own profit at no cost to them-Nestles) do not take precedence over the sustainable management of this public resource.

There must be no exemptions from regulations; Public, private or governmental.

The current government has a core responsibility to take steps to ensure that our precious water resource is available now and in the future to Canadians. Protection now is essential of this invaluable resource.

Personal Identifiers RemovedChilliwack

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 3:51 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: BC Water Sustainability Act

To: *Water Sustainability Act*, Ministry of Environment, Water Protection and Sustainability Branch, PO Box 9362 Stn Prov Gov, Victoria BC, V8W 9M2.

Re: BC Water Sustainability Act

Thank you for this opportunity to voice my thoughts and concerns regarding the BC Water Sustainability Act.

I work for the Capital Regional District in the Water Quality Department. I am very familiar with water quality management and the challenges it faces. I believe we are at a critical point in the management of our water resources.

I would like to see increased protection of our aquatic ecosystems and the species that occupy them. These aquatic ecosystems are currently facing many threats, but the single greatest among them is the oil and gas industry. The Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) boom we are currently experiencing will do irreparable damage to water quality.

There are currently proposals for at least 3 LNG export terminals to be built on our coast by 2020. Fracking uses millions of litres of water per well. Over 7000 wells have been drilled in B.C since 2005, and each year more and more are being drilled. This process is disastrous for water quality.

In addition to this, the proposed pipeline and tankers that will bring tar sand bitumen to our coast further threatens our water resources across the province.

I am terrified of the consequences we will be faced with as a result of these proposals. They threaten our health, our homes, our livelihoods, everything B.C citizens value. The damage is irreversible, as we've seen in so many communities recently.

I would like strictly enforced regulations in place that protect our water from contamination. I would like industrial practices to be strictly regulated and monitored to ensure they do not pose a risk to water quality. I would like for our government to use extreme caution and take

no chances with our water quality, realizing that it is an absolutely critical and fragile resource. I would like the multi-barrier approach to exceed beyond individual watersheds, for management practices to acknowledge the interdependence of water systems and their relationship to land use practices.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 3:31 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Subject: My water views

The BC environment, fish and wildlife, should have the first call on all water in British Columbia.

Agriculture and food production should have the next call on the water. Normal human needs fit into this category.

Industry - especially the oil and gas industry, should be the last in line for water. They can change their processes and become more efficient and innovative with their use of water from their profits. Otherwise, don't operate. Fracking water for the oil and gas industry, should be charged to the companies to give a fair and real return of value to the citizens of BC. What is going on now with the fracking is basically obscene. Massive amounts of water being used and contaminated with almost nothing being paid to the citizens of BC. Any water contamination by fracking, should be the responsibility of the the company responsible for the contamination. Polluter pay principle.

Basically, the environment must come ahead of all else. We are all visitors here. It's our duty and obligation to pass a healthy environment onto future generations.

Sincerely,

Thank you,

Personal Identifiers Removed Colleymount, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 3:15 PM

To: Laura Frank; Graham Watt; Doug French; Anna Page; Dr. Anna Warwick-Sears

Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Subject: FYI - US EPA Links.....Perhaps useful Re: integrated watershed management planning & implementation processes *

FYI -

US EPA links below... Perhaps useful Re: integrated watershed management planning & implementation processes *

...in which "we" find ourselves:

Okanagan River watershed

<http://www.obwb.ca/blog/tag/watershed-management/>

<http://www.obwb.ca/>

Shuswap River watershed

<http://www.rdno.ca/index.php/services/planning-building/planning-projects/shuswap-river-watershed-sustainability-plan>

Similkameen River watershed

<http://www.rdos.bc.ca/departments/.../similkameen-valley-watershed-study/>

Kettle/Granby River watershed

<http://kettleriver.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/KRWMP-discussionpaper-sept4-2013.pdf>

and

elsewhere

http://www.epa.gov/owow/volunteer/vm_index.htm

US EPA

The Volunteer Monitor

The National Newsletter of Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring

<http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/>

US EPA

Watersheds

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/watertrain/index.cfm>

US EPA

Online Training in Watershed Management

http://water.epa.gov/learn/training/wacademy/webcasts_index.cfm

US EPA

Watershed Academy Webcast Seminars

http://water.epa.gov/learn/training/wacademy/epatools_index.cfm

US EPA

Key EPA Internet Tools for Watershed Management: A Hands-On Computer Training Course

Consistent with:

*** 2009 - 2014 BCWF REGION 8 FISHERIES COMMITTEE PLANS:**

01. Continue sharing practical & timely fish, fishing (angling) & fish habitat information among BCWF Region 8 clubs & members.

02. Continue to develop & refine fisheries committee “feedback” contacts with each BCWF Region 8 club.

03. Take action as directed, focusing on BCWF Region 8 volunteer members fish, fishing (angling) & fish habitat concerns and interests.

* 04. Support completion of integrated watershed management plans (water use plans – especially water for fish) in BCWF Region 8 (Okanagan – Kettle - Similkameen – Shuswap basins).

* 05. Support BC Water Act review and revision – especially groundwater legislation, water for fish and vigorous on-the-ground enforcement;

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed, Kelowna, British Columbia, ***Personal Identifiers
Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 4:10 PM

To: GroundWater ENV:EX

Subject: Water Protection Act Draft

I wanted you to know that I feel it is imperative to protect ground water from large commercial interests who are currently withdrawing enormous quantities of water with little regulation or compensation. As water is our most precious resource, its use needs to be restricted and we need to be well compensated for any water that corporations use for their own profit.

Water use should also be restricted by private persons as well by charging enough that conservation becomes a necessity. Homeowners and business owners waste water by power washing driveways and sidewalks. This is just nuts. Watering for cosmetic reasons (lawns), washing cars etc. are all things that need public education.

Our water belongs to us all, not just a few wealthy abusers of this resource. \

Thank you for protecting our water in every way and for enforcing the laws that protect it for our province.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 3:03 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Comment on new Water Sustainability Act

I want to register my total disagreement with allowing corporations such as Nestle to pay the pittance price of .85 per 1,000 cubic meters for our B.C. water which should not be for sale for bottling by any company at any price. Water is a precious natural resource which our government should be protecting and conserving for use by British Columbian citizens, and water will become a more and more precious natural resource in the future. Why on earth did corporations such as Nestle get the right in the first place to bottle our water for free and then have our Government refer to charging this pittance for such a valuable resource as an improvement? It is laughable! This is not Government working to protect our province, and this must be disallowed.

I also am very concerned about hydraulic fracturing and the toll it would take on B.C. water. As I understand it, unknown chemicals are used in the process which could contaminate groundwater, and also huge quantities of water are used in fracking. Our Liberal Government likes to talk about the profits to be made by LNG plants, but are in a race with other countries to provide LNG that they likely might not win. From many accounts I've read re fracking, it can cause earthquakes, (in an already earthquake prone area), pollutes the air and water sources nearby fracking sites, and just has too many harmful consequences for our Province to be worth the risk. Your minds are made up it seems, but once again I feel that Government is not looking far enough into the future and protecting B.C.'s environment, water included, from probable and potential harm of it's citizens, flora and fauna. B.C. is in an enviable position of still having wilderness, pristine areas, and clean sustainable water in streams and rivers that provide historically abundant and thriving salmon populations. I do not see that this new Water Sustainability Act, though a step in the right direction, goes far enough to think of it as sufficient.

Not enough time, also, was provided to allow for comments. Debate should also have occurred in our legislature over this new Water Sustainability Act, a very important part of the democratic process.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed Surrey, B.C. ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 2:45 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Why do you suppose that Space explorers are looking for planets that have or may have had water? Because without clean water all life (including humans) is impossible!! So "stop fracking" our water! Stop giving away our water to Nestle and others! Stop allowing mining companies from destroying pristine lakes (Fish Lake) by filling them with mine tailings! Stop these all encompassing trade agreements that would have other countries coming after our water!.... or else they will sue Canada for billions if we fail to comply! Forget about the short term gain, money, and start thinking about a future for our children and grandchildren.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Victoria, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 1:36 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Hello, I am pleased to offer my thoughts on priorities for the new BC Water Act

- The intent of the legislation should be to enshrine the rights of public to access water
- Private use of water should account for the needs of a healthy ecological function of that water
- Biodiversity and proper function conditioning should guide all private use of water
- The rights of the commons for use of water should trump private use of water
- A conservation ethic must be observed and practiced by all water users
- There must be no special exemptions in rules or guidelines governing use by specific organizations, private interests or public use
- The BC Water Act should support the funding of local regional water governance entities
- Protection and regulation of riparian zones is a given for all users of water
- Protection and regulation of wetlands must inform all water use licenses
- Protection and regulation of ground water must guide all water use licenses
- Government supported monitoring of all surface and ground water must be an essential service

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 2:17 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

To whom it may concern:

I have recently moved to BC from Ontario and have extensive experience with the aftermath of the Walkerton ecoli outbreak and the development of Ontario's water legislation, subsequent to the tragedy, to address existing policy weaknesses. I am active in our local stream-keeper group, the Nile Creek Enhancement Society and assist the Regional District of Nanaimo in their on-going study of the water resources in our area.

I am pleased that BC is amending its very old existing legislation but based on my experience and things I have read I feel there are many weaknesses in the current draft. I have highlighted a few of my concerns below and urge the BC Government to significantly rework this legislation and improve it.

In my view:

- The Water Act needs to ensure that environmental flows are legally-protected and have priority over commercial users.
- Water flows need to be determined by a scientifically-defensible methodology (not the guesses of industry consultants and bureaucrats) with public input and be done in a transparent manner.
- Industrial water-use fees need to be increased, and the revenue used to improve water governance and environmental remediation.
- There must be significant public access and input on important decisions affecting water management. Include the public in all key processes, such as reviewing existing licences, setting "water objectives" (which will guide a range of land-use decisions), establishing environmental flows, creating area-based regulations (which may tighten standards at a local level or address regional water scarcity), and designing water efficiency standards.
- There must be public notice and opportunity to participate in the decision on applications for a licence to take water

- The Act should include recognition of the public trust doctrine and explicitly declare that water is owned by the public and must be managed on the public's behalf. Private rights to use water must be ultimately subordinate to the overall public interest.

I will be following this issue and look forward to seeing a vastly improved next draft.

Sincerely

Personal Identifiers RemovedQualicum, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 2:13 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act - comments

Hello

I have had a chance to review the Water Sustainability proposal and have several comments and concerns:

I am mainly concerned about private use of BC's water – both surface and ground water – and would strongly suggest there needs to be an explicit statement that any private right to use water cannot harm the public's interest Or the natural environments' interests in water resources.

Water needs to be protected for nature and to guarantee that environmental flows are enforceable and apply to all sectors equally – no exceptions for forestry, oil and gas, or other industry.

I believe we need a scientific definition and commitment to ensuring the protection of water flows for fish and other environmental values.

I would also like to see a clear mandate and the resources for local watershed groups to engage in watershed governance.

We need to build in the flexibility to adapt to our changing climate - New water licenses should be reviewed much more regularly than every 30 years. The public should also have more of a say in water licensing – and deserves the right to review water licenses and monitor the impact on environmental flows.

There should also be appropriate fee schedules for groundwater and surface water that support responsible management and allow communities to engage in local watershed planning.

Thank you for this opportunity

regards

Personal Identifiers Removed North Saanich BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 1:57 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Dear Minister,

I have a great concern of the fracking that is going in the North in extraction of natural gas. I feel that the Fracking process should be restricted to a limited area and study what affect it is having on the ground water, water stream and any body of water before we damage the environment beyond repair. We need to protect this valuable resource, WATER, which is much more important to society. I think we need development but it needs to be responsible. And who will be held responsible if the natural ground water becomes polluted. I hope you act on behalf of the all the people of B.C. and not a selected few. I will be paying attention to what happens between now and the next election.

Sincerely

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 1:52 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: ***Personal Identifiers Removed*** - Submission on Changes to the Provincial Water Act

To: Whom this may concern:-

Re: Water Sustainability Act (WSA) – Proposed

We applaud the Province for moving to modernizing the old Water Act with a new Water Sustainability Act. Given the supreme importance of water to all life in British Columbia and given an uncertain future with human population growth and climate change, this modernization is long overdue. A new Act must provide greater priority and protection to aquatic ecosystems, groundwater systems and a more enlightened management system that is fair and transparent. Our more specific concerns and comments follow:-

Environmental Flows

- must be defined; must be a clearly understood and be an obligation for all licensees; must be front and center in any allocation decisions and license reviews
- must be a commitment to public consultations during the establishment of minimum flow policy and regulations; scientifically defensible methods must be used in determining environmental flows
- the Act must clearly state that licenses can be rejected or applications suspended if they will negatively impact an aquatic ecosystem
- Standards (province-wide and regional) must appear in the Act that will apply to different river classes

Groundwater

- must receive greater consideration since water in-ground and surface flows are inextricably linked
- more research must be done on the location, amount and quality of the provincial groundwater resource

-new groundwater licenses must be conditional upon their impact on recharge rates, water quality and local streams (a period of 5 years of monitoring should be required to answer questions related to impacts)

- existing groundwater licenses must be subject to modifications should it be determined that the license is having an adverse impact on the aquifer and/or surrounding aquatic ecosystem

- the licensing relationship between domestic well owners and licensed well owners needs clarification

Public Participation

- Commitments in the proposed WSA for public involvement need to be more specifically defined so that the public will have input in all aspects of the water management and licensing process. Applications for new water licenses must be made public and the public must be allowed to approach the Environmental Appeal Board for permission to appeal applications.

Public Trust Doctrine

- A new WSA must ensure that private rights to use water do not impact public resources.

Beneficial Use

The WSA must, at a minimum, must define environmental flows and essential household need as being a pre-requisite to beneficial use.

Water Pricing

- government must establish proper pricing on the industrial use and extraction of water that reflects the value British Columbians place on this resource (water is currently undervalued and underpriced)

Personal Identifiers RemovedPort Moody, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 1:32 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Comments on proposed Water Sustainability Act

Hi,

Please find my following comments on the proposed Water Sustainability Act:

Executive Summary/ Table 1 / 6.Improve Security, Water Use Efficiency and Conservation/
Power Purpose- 40 year term:

I think the current 40-year term is too lengthy as the licence will be based on the current state of knowledge of water resources and climate change impacts. As we are not too sure about the future development and climate change related uncertainties, 20 year term licence with 10 year renewable (to update the quantity of flow diversion based on regional hydrology and collected data) option should be incorporated.

It is also mentioned in this document that this 40 year term are similar to tenures under Land Act and Energy Purchase Agreement. I think if we change this 40 year term then land Act and Energy Purchase Agreement will follow.

2.3.4 Regulate and Protect Groundwater Use/ Proposal:

It is a good decision in respect of risk management matrix not to restrict people of using groundwater. However, it is essential to keep track of the number of ground water users (domestic purposes) so that proper water balance for a specific area or /and an aquifer can be computed any time over the time. Therefore, introduction of a Notification system for domestic groundwater user is essential to incorporate in the WSA.

3.1 The Current Approach to Water Pricing in BC/ Table 3/Residential Power:

For the Residential Power it is more logical to breakdown the 50kw limit in to 0-25kw and above 25kw. This will make sure that people who are producing power solely for their own use are getting maximum benefits than people who are partially selling power to BC hydro under

the same licence. As people are establishing plants with more than 25kw are usually targeting to earn money from BC Hydro. Therefore different charge should be applied for those people who are producing more than 25 Kw (25kw -50kw).

Additional point:

It is not very uncommon that natural flow of a Stream can be impacted by vegetation overgrowth, especially when it's flowing through private property owner's boundary. Such issue is often creating backwater buildup and causing flooding to others property. As a person if you make any complain to the provincial authority then they are not able to do anything as they can't say anything under the *Water Act*. Therefore, it is essential to have some room in the new Water Sustainability Act so that the responsibility of keeping the Stream or waterbody clean (to maintain a natural flow) goes to the property owner.

Please let me know if you require further clarification.

Best,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 1:11 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: Bond.MLA, Shirley LASS:EX; mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca

Subject: Water Sustainability Act (Final Copy)

To Whom it may Concern:

Response to Water Sustainability Act:

November 14, 2013

I believe that British Columbia needs to monitor and control each of our 290 unique water sheds.

BC needs a single agency to manage and track our water use and report to the public who owns the water.

We must work from the premise that "Water is owned by the Crown on behalf of all British Columbians"

I must ask some of the same questions asked by Ben Parfitt, Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives, in an article "Water Withdrawal Stats Run Dry" August 7/2013

"BC has no comprehensive groundwater regulations, so withdrawal from wells is virtually untracked." Will the BC government start to track and preserve ground water? I believe this is very important.

I live in central British Columbia and Fracking concerns us directly.

How is the waste water from industrial hydraulic fracturing being recycled?

I understand there is a water dump in the Dawson Creek area. Who monitors this dump of toxic water?

What are the environmental safe guards placed on this dump?

Please keep me informed about this act.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:45 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Feedback re: Water Sustainability Act

I would like to see the following addressed in the Water Sustainability Act:

- [Protection of water flows for fish and other environmental values](#) is too discretionary in the WSA Proposal. "Environmental flows" need to be scientifically defined and it must be mandatory to meet them in all new and existing licences.
- The WSA needs to explicitly state that any private rights to use water cannot harm the [public's interest in our precious water resources](#). As well, British Columbians will continue to reject attempts to create licences that could be traded in markets.
- The proposed [provincial 'water objectives'](#) must make protecting "environmental flows" for nature a priority, must be enforceable and apply to all sectors of industry. No exemptions for forestry or oil and gas, as contemplated in the proposal.
- In a climate changing world, 30 years between [licence reviews](#) is not sufficiently flexible; reviews should happen more frequently. As well, the new groundwater licences that are going to be granted to existing users, primarily large industrial users, must explicitly state they are subject to a future review until it can be determined the withdrawals are at sustainable levels and to allow for honourable government-to-government consultations with First Nations.
- [Water use fees must make public "cents"](#). Fee schedules for both groundwater and surface water must cover government's costs for responsibly managing our water, and ensure resources are available for local watershed planning and management enabled under the new Act.
- There need to be more opportunities for the [public to participate](#) in the granting of water licenses and the setting and monitoring of environmental flows. BC also needs independent oversight of water and watershed management with the resources and expertise to do it right.
- The commitment to [shared governance](#) in local watersheds is a positive step, and it must ensure local watershed groups have a clear mandate and the resources to engage responsibly.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed North Vancouver, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:45 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I am thankful the government is revising the WATER Act and some progress is being made to protect water.

I urge the government to respect First Nations Rights and Title.

My priorities:

1. Protect water for communities and nature by addressing water flow, water allocation, licensing, -ensuring First Nations rights are paramount and water is a public trust
2. Water use fees must make sense, large corporations should pay more than their fair share, fees should no longer go to general revenue but go directly to water projects.
3. give the public greater input and control for local water decisions -authorities, follow models such as the Okanagan water basin, to ensure public water sustainability and provide adequate funding too make that so,
4. ENSURE the water act covers All Fresh WATER in BC. WITH no EXCEPTIONS for Oil and Gas and FORESTRY as currently is the case..

Gaps such as inadequate consultation with First Nations, the absence of legal commitment to support water as value in nature, low water use fees and the lack of public participation in decision making are concerning.

With public input and support, I trust that the gaps and inadequacies in the current proposal will be addressed, ensuring BC water is protected as a valuable living entity.

Thank you

Personal Identifiers Removed

Westbank

Bc

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:41 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Re: Comments on BC's Water Act Legislation

Dear BC Lawmakers,

As you review the existing BC Water Act Legislation, as a B.C. resident I would like to see public (commons) interest placed ahead of corporate profits.

I would like BC to be progressive and a world leader when it comes to protecting our precious water resources, rather than giving them away for next to nothing to fracking firms and oil/gas industries. A new Water Act that gives our communities the power to effectively steward our precious water resources - not foreign multinationals that have no concern what happens to our previous water and environment.

Once freshwater is used once for fracking/shale gas extraction, the toxic residue can no longer be used for human consumption. There must be serious consideration given to whether licences should be issued, particularly for shale gas fracking, which has seen moratoriums imposed in many jurisdictions. I would also like to see Williston Lake protected from fracking corporations.

I would like to have increased public engagement regarding the licensing process and community involvement when it comes to the approval of IPPs, especially in the Sea to Sky corridor (i.e. Pemberton, Lillooet, Whistler, Squamish).

In both the drafting of this Act as well as in proposed governance models, the province must recognize that it cannot claim exclusive title to the land and must recognize Indigenous title.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Personal Identifiers Removed Whistler, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:40 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Feedback on Water Sustainability Act

To whom it may concern;

I am thankful the government is revising the Water Act and some progress is being made to protect water.

I urge the government to respect First Nations Rights and Title.

My priorities:

1. Protect water for communities and nature by addressing water flow, water allocation, licensing, -ensuring First Nations rights are paramount and water is a public trust
2. Water use fees must make sense, large corporations should pay more than their fair share, fees should no longer go to general revenue but go directly to water projects.
3. Give the public greater input and control for local water decisions -authorities, follow models such as the Okanagan water basin, to ensure public water sustainability and provide adequate funding too make that so,
4. Ensure the water act covers All Fresh Water in BC. with no EXCEPTIONS for Oil and Gas and Forestry as currently is the case..

Gaps such as inadequate consultation with First Nations, the absence of legal commitment to support water as value in nature, low water use fees and the lack of public participation in decision making are concerning.

With public input and support, I trust that the gaps and inadequacies in the current proposal will be addressed, ensuring BC water is protected as a valuable living entity.

Sincerely,

Personal Identifiers Removed Kelowna, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:38 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: proposed new Water Sustainability Act

B.C. needs water legislation that puts public interest ahead of corporate profits. A law that gives our communities and our First Nations the power to effectively steward our precious water. Please do the right thing - rewrite the Water Sustainability Act so that it fully protects our water for the next 100 years.

Personal Identifiers Removed Oshawa, Ontario

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:10 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Ministry of Environment
Water Protection and Sustainability Branch PO Box 9362, Stn. Prov. Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9M2

Re: Water Sustainability Act

To Whom It May Concern:

I am no water expert, but I do get my water from a lake, along with many others on Salt Spring, that is sick. All the lakes on our island, but one, are experiencing huge difficulties. Because of this, I have become very interested in water issues over the last few years. Add to this Climate Change and what it is and will continue to do, only it will get much worse, to water sources around the globe and I believe, every one of us should be very interested in water issues now and forever. I hope you have given sufficient time for the public to respond to this request of yours to comment on this new legislation. Generally, I support in principal, much of what is proposed in this new Water Sustainability Act. I would also hope that once you have written a draft legislation, that the public will be able to comment further on it. I feel the Act, as written, lack a lot of details about how things are going to be done.

I believe that protection of source water should be enshrined in the act and the Water Act should take precedence over all other land uses and related acts. I also strongly believe that local communities must have local control over our drinking water to protect and manage our community drinking water sources. I do not believe that exemptions from the act should be made to industry. Water should be a human right and the Public Trust Doctrine should be embedded with the legislation. On our island at one business is pumping water for free, bottling and selling it, all for his private gain. I have no idea if this activity is effecting neighbouring wells, or hurting others. This should be regulated. We should know. Water is a community asset and the community needs should come first.

Life will only get more difficult on our planet with climate change. We need to start thinking really long term. We need to be thinking past seven generations into the future. We need leaders with the courage to lead us into this transition we have to make. One that is away from "business as usual" to a new way that puts a price tag on the damage we are doing to our planet as a part of how we figure out the true cost of any item, off of fossil fuels to renewable energies, considering the needs of life over industry/corporations and to protecting all our natural resources. Water is crucial to all life. It should not be a commodity for private profit.

I look forward to seeing the draft of this new Water Sustainability Act.

Sincerely,

*****Personal Identifiers Removed*****

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:02 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Comments on the proposed WSA

I find the proposed legislative proposal disappointing .It is not even good as a regulation as it is still in a subjunctive , suggestion and recommendation format . It has failed to even consider where the Act would position relative to the Mining Act .I would assume the worst in that the Mining Act would trump the WAS when the opposite is what should be in place . The recent activities of Mr Pimm do not provide any assurances that the WSA will be written and maintained in a form to protect and sustain the water resource in BC

The current proposal is certainly an improvement on the last proposal but it still is not a document for the future . FITFIR has now been included for changes but only very weakly. F|ITFIR is an anachronism and should be converted to long term renewable agreements with the government of BC The regulation should be written with a long term vision and as proposed hardly brings the regulation up to the realities of the day. It appears to be too influenced by currently entitled groups and current political culture . To make water “sustainable” the Act needs the input of organisations that have a longer term view than the politicians and by organisations that are not too controlled by the current government like the Ministry of the Environment.

I have reviewed several dissertations on the Act and have found the submission by POLIS to be the most comprehensive and provides a framework for the WSA that would provide protection for the sustainability of the water resource in BC for the benefit of all citizens of BC.

There are two issues that do not seem to be covered directly by the POLIS document and that is the relationship between the Mining Act and the WSA and I have noted my suggestion above and the omission of deep recovery saline water . The latter should be in the WSA because of its dire effects on other water if it is mixed. It should have special regulations within the WSA so that it can be controlled . It may be covered in other regulations but it must be in the WSA to protect the other water sources.

The WSA regulation must incorporate many or all of recommendations of the POLIS document or provide good reasons for why not .

The POLIS document also includes recommendations that the government adopt the Public Trust Doctrine .The adoption of this doctrine in regulation would provide direction for the government for the next century wrt water sustainability and demonstrate a political maturity one **hopes to see in this government**

Personal Identifiers Removed

Fanny Bay

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:55 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Proposed Water Sustainability Act - comment

I believe that there is a lack of binding, legally enforceable protections for fish and the environment. This is the single biggest problem with the proposed Water Sustainability Act. Environmental flows are critical to the healthy function of watersheds and must be clearly prioritized over other non-essential human uses. The Water Sustainability Act must explicitly set aside an ecological reserve of water that is not available for any use other than the conservation and maintenance of fish habitat and preservation of ecosystems.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:33 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Proposed BC Water Sustainability Act

I strongly feel that water should be considered a public trust. That definition places the Provincial Government in a stewardship role and avoids conflicts with first nations who are naturally resistant to the Province declaring ownership of all BC water.

I am also worried that the First In Time - First In Right rule is proposed for water licences this will lead to a rush for prime industrial water licences putting them ahead of any current or emerging public interest about the water in question.

Personal Identifiers Removed Langley, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 11:24 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Comments on newly proposed provincial Water Act

Please find my comments below.

Re: Water Sustainability Act - Comments

The modernization of this Act was overdue; it must now reflect today's needs, uses, costs and climate change concerns. The stated intentions are a start but far more detail is necessary to ensure the Act is effective and enforceable. We cannot afford a weak Act with numerous loopholes.

Water is a critical resource essential to all life forms and must be well respected.

Water licences should be reviewed on a 10-15 year frequency.

Development in watersheds and climate change can alter flow patterns very rapidly. Electricity generation should have a 25 year licence and usage review.

. Specifically prohibit dumping of mining wastes in the new Act .

Other provinces have regulation on this already.

. Assure protection of fish habitat, ensuring environmental flows are monitored and enforced.

. The needs of aquatic systems MUST be met before withdrawals for other purposes are allowed.

Water use by agriculture needs more regulation and greater conservation. currently much water is wasted and lost through outdated practices.

Protection of the water in deep aquifers must be clearly stated in the Act.

Increase charges to gas and oil companies to create a real incentive to use resources more efficiently. This is critical in view of the amounts of water now used in Fracking.

Commercial operations taking water to bottle and sell commercially MUST pay an adequate royalty for the privilege. The newly proposed fees are ridiculous. Fees must reflect the value of the resource and costs of regulation, Currently the province is losing out economically by allowing abuse of the resource to occur.

Water is a precious resource in the public trust. Demands will increase in the future. Please ensure the new Act will reflect the importance of wise water planning and management into the future.

Personal Identifiers Removed Coquitlam

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:44 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act public feedback

To whom it may concern,

I have read through your legislative proposal for a new Water Sustainability Act and below I have pasted my feedback. I have also attached my feedback as a pdf. Please review my proposed changes and take them into account for final passing of the legislation.

I have also attached an introduction to Integrated Resource Planning ([International Rivers, 2013](#)), which presents a sustainable approach to development of resources. I'm not sure if the British Columbia government follows any IRP frameworks, but if they don't, then this approach must be considered. I urge you to read the literature and consider it in your act as well.

Water Sustainability Act feedback

Submitted by ***Personal Identifiers Removed***, Port Moody, B.C. ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

-The health of aquatic ecosystems must be given priority. From page 18 of the legislative proposal, *"It was felt that it would be unreasonably onerous for the government and applicants to consider Environmental Flow Needs for all decisions. There should therefore be discretion allowed for low risk (small) applications as well as applications for the use of (deep) saline groundwater."* Healthy aquatic ecosystems are essential in the overall ecological health of the province. The BC Government must enact strong legal protection of "environmental flows." They must be considered at all times. When we are talking about an ecosystem, there is no system that is too small. They are made up of all life forms, small and large and in the case of water are all interconnected; deep saline groundwater, small streams and large rivers are all related. We can't introduce and act that favors one use over another. I get the sense that buried in this new act are provisions that are required for new energy development in B.C., particularly shale gas exploration. If economic concerns are given priority over social and environmental concerns, then the act misses the "sustainable" part of sustainability.

-Riparian areas of aquatic environments must be protected throughout the province. A system of riparian buffers zones should be maintained on all streams and rivers and other waterways, even on private land. If fresh water is a public good, private land owners should not be permitted to degrade the quality for downstream users. Buffers are a simple way to encourage healthy aquatic ecosystems and protect waterways from degradation. In the first section of the act overview it states the act will *"Expand prohibitions on dumping debris that currently exist under the Fish Protection Act – including human and animal waste, pesticides*

and fertilizers – into streams and aquifers.” In my hometown of Keremeos, in the Similkameen, ranchers have habitually let their cattle directly enter and disturb large sections of the Similkameen River and Keremeos Creek, often defecating directly into the river. It not only effects the aquatic life, with noted declines in Rainbow trout in Keremeos creek, but directly effects the health of the community via the water born bacteria that enter the waterways. The new act must ensure water remains protected as a public good, and the private degradation of water must be prevented.

- Any sustainability framework needs to be mandated into use. In section 2 of the overview *“Considering water in land use decisions”* it states *“Allow for the development of Water Sustainability Plans. These would integrate water and land use planning and could be combined with other local, regional or provincial planning processes.”* I agree that plans should be locally generated to meet unique needs, but I think they should be mandatory. If every community was introduced to the process of the development of sustainability frameworks and plans, I think it could create a world class precedent where every community in BC learned about sustainability. A plan surrounding water use would open the door for plans in other resource areas. Communities would develop the skills to sustainably manage their own resources.

-Energy policy and regulations , in particular Hydro policy, must be kept inline with any new Water Sustainability Act. We need a sustainable hydro system because it directly effects the water systems in our province. In section 5 of the WSA overview it states *“Making water licences – which are generally issued without a defined term – reviewable every 30 years. The 40-year term for hydroelectric power production would remain unchanged.”* The WSA needs to accommodate the changing climate by reviewing water licences on a more frequent basis. A 10 year review cycle would ensure that changing environments (changes in water supply, changes in water temperature,etc) would be taken into account regarding water licences and uses. So much can change in 30 or 40 years, a more conservative approach must be taken when managing these ecosystems over time.

-The recreational value of waterways must be taken into account. The use and enjoyment of our waterways plays a crucial role in our collective well being. We are a nation built on the exploration and travel of our waterways. I would argue that experiences in pristine nature are an integral part of our cultural heritage. That heritage must be respected and considered for any future development of our waterways. Recreational/social uses of our lakes, rivers, streams, and oceans are just as important as the industrial.

-The act must provide for meaningful public participation in decisions on water governance. When the BC government passed Bill 30 and decided to bypass local input on the Ashlu River power project, I think British Columbians lost a lot of faith in the democratic process. I think the new act must address this issue, and put the power back in the hands of the people to govern their local resources. It should be up to the corporations to find support with locals, not the governments job to strong arm in consent of the citizens.

-The WSA must ensure that water pricing for commercial use reflects the inherent value of freshwater to British Columbians.

The need for economic growth must be balanced with the ecological concerns of our waters extraction. If we are going to put a price tag on our water it has to reflect the immense value of our freshwater here in B.C., we cannot sell our water cheaply as it is far too valuable.

- Environmental regulation and enforcement must back up the new act. If the act has no teeth, it is meaningless. The reduction of environmental enforcement agencies both provincially and federally over the last 10 years negates any meaningful consequences. We need more monitoring and enforcement of environmental legislation!

Other considerations :

- I think it would be beneficial if the government could provide water quality monitoring services for the citizens of BC. If the new act could give control to locals to keep an eye on the health of their local waterways, the citizens of BC would feel meaningfully engaged regarding the health of their communities.

-Having grown up in the Okanogan valley on an orchard, I have directly seen the impact that water use has on environment. I always wondered how farmers could use so much water for irrigation and not have any idea how much they were using and if it was truly effective with their crops. In such a water scarce environment with such economic impact in the province, I really believe the development of better irrigations science could make BC a world leader in water conservation efforts. Perhaps a government led research program with UBC-Okanogan and other educational/research organizations could create a unique research and development opportunity.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Regards,

Personal Identifiers Removed

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:55 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Cc: suzanne.anton.mla@leg.bc.ca; Wai.Young.A1@parl.gc.ca

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Water, like air, is our common heritage. Both are essential for life, and both must be healthy for that life to function optimally. Both belong to us collectively, and collectively we are responsible for ensuring they are used and protected for the benefit of present and future life forms. Both are currently severely threatened—air by the accelerating burning of fossil fuels; water by the destruction of rain forests, the leaching of chemicals used in mining and agriculture, and the massive withdrawal of water for industrial purposes. And by the greatest threat of all: the sheer number of human beings.

In most of British Columbia, good quality water, and plenty of it, is taken for granted. I am reading about water. I read that it takes 140 litres of water to produce the cup of coffee I drink, or 2400 litres to produce a hamburger; that it takes 1700 litres of water to produce one litre of corn ethanol or up to 3500 litres of irrigated water; that the tar sands industry uses $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Athabasca River's water; that the Dead Sea is dying because of water diversion; that the Jordan River's flow has dropped 98%; that Lake Chad, once the sixth largest lake in the world is 90% gone; that nuclear power requires a lot of water for the cooling process and that the water returned to the watershed afterwards is 25 degrees warmer than it was originally; that runoff from feedlots in Texas is largely responsible for a 12,000 square kilometre dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico; that hydraulic fracturing (or fracking) uses large amounts of water to which are added over 600 chemicals of which at least a quarter are linked to cancer and mutations, and half of which can affect the nervous, immune, and cardiovascular systems. I read that in Spain, grass planted on a golf course is called a "crop", and trees planted at a vacation home qualifies the home as a "farm" so developers pay the lower irrigation water rates; that in California, some farmers let their fields lie fallow, then sell the public's water as a cash crop to local municipalities; and that Nestle's has withdrawn millions of litres of BC's water, free of charge, bottling it and selling it for millions. That Nestle's will soon be paying almost \$300.00 a year for this privilege brings no comfort. Are we really the most intelligent of animals?

Everything is connected. Without massive amounts of water, energy companies would not be able to extract the fossil fuels that pollute the air we breathe, industrial agriculture would not

be able to poison the soil that grows our food, the groundwater we drink, and the aquatic habitat that absorbs runoff, and nuclear power plants would not be able to put current and future generations at devastating risk of radioactive fallout. Although water and air operate according to natural laws, recognize no boundaries, and favour no one people over another, both are affected by human law, human actions and human greed. What we are doing to our water and air is unconscionable and shameful.

What we need is a Water Sustainability Act that puts life-supporting systems foremost. That means that water for all life forms takes precedence over water for industrial and commercial uses. It is inexcusably risky to privatize a public resource upon which all life depends.

Personal Identifiers Removed Vancouver BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:42 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Act Comments

Persisting with "First in Time First in Right" and extending it to groundwater just because it is "convenient" is grossly irresponsible. We need real regulation that:

1. Protects stream health and aquatic environments by establishing legally enforceable minimum environmental flows in each watershed.
2. Improves water governance by creating regional watershed agencies that have a clear mandate and financial capability to engage in water management activities and decision-making.
3. Improves the water allocation system. Allocation must first be based on maintaining minimum in-stream flows to ensure ecosystem function with flexibility to allow for seasonal and longer-term changes and allow for review and amendment of existing licenses.
4. Regulates ground water use by requiring licensing in all regions of the province.
5. Enshrines the Public Trust Doctrine by acknowledging water as a public resource that the provincial government holds in trust for all British Columbians that must be preserved and maintained for future generations.
6. Recognizes and protects First Nations water rights and the right of every British Columbian to Clean Water.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:43 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

I don't think people voted to support this corporation of mother earth to make the 1% rich. It seems they ignore the importance of water, clean food and air to basic survival for any living being rich or poor.

I have heard talk about the Agricultural Land Commission being turned over to oil corporation interests.

Has this country gone insane? The way things seem to be going clean water, one day will be the most expensive commodity that we could possess.

If we have any left.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:39 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water legislation

Water is a common good and must be protected as such in the face of old and new trade agreements that are designed to make it a good subject to market forces.

Personal Identifiers Removed Vancouver bc

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:24 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Without water we cease to exist. Several states in the US are experiencing massive economic issues due to water scarcity.

The proposal is a good step, but doesn't go far enough. Water usage and depletion should just be "considered" but rather a driving determining factor, weighted as top priority.

Personal Identifiers Removed

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Sent from my Windows Phone

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:57 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX; Minister, ENV ENV:EX

Cc: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org; ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Subject: New Water Sustainability Act

Importance: High

November 14 2013

Water Sustainability Act

Ministry of Environment, Water Protection and Sustainability Branch

PO Box 9362 Stn Prov Gov

Victoria BC V8W 9M2

To the Ministry,

I am sending this response on behalf of my friend ***Personal Identifiers Removed*** have copied her on this email.

She is having computer issues today , but wants to give you feedback on the new act, before the November 15 deadline.

Thank you

Personal Identifiers Removed

copied to

Wilderness Committee

Mark Polak, Minister of Environment

RE: New Water Sustainability Act

The most important things the BC government can do in the proposed *Water Sustainability Act* would be to:

- enact strong legal protection of “**environmental flows**,” the flows that are critical to healthy functioning rivers and water bodies
- ensure water remains protected as a **public good**,
- provide for **meaningful public participation** in decisions regarding water governance approaches,
- define environmental flows and essential household needs as a “**beneficial use**,” rather than the narrow and private-use oriented definition currently proposed,
- ensure that water pricing for commercial use reflects **the inherent value of freshwater** to British Columbians; fees should be set high enough to fund a comprehensive approach to fresh water management in BC,
- include a **public trust doctrine** which ensures that any private rights granted under water licences are subject to be managed in the interest of present and future generations,
- ensure that **no industry is exempt** from the WSA – particularly with regard to the oil and gas, and timber industries, and
- ensure that the WSA, especially environmental flow provisions, applies to existing water licences – not just new licences.

Water is BC’s most important natural resource. Given the pressures of a growing population, changing climate and expanding development pressures, steps must be taken to ensure that BC’s use of freshwater is sustainable. A new WSA must ensure that private rights to water do not take precedence over this the sustainable management of this public resource.

On behalf of

Personal Identifiers Removed

From***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:49 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Hello -

We live on a small lake in the southern Interior and are faced with the need to add a treatment system to meet IHA/Water Act requirements. There are seven lots here in a strata development, so not very many users to share the extremely high cost of installation and maintenance of what an engineer has proposed as a suitable system. It is not viable and we have been engaged in a multi-year process to find a more economical solution.

The current well is adjacent to the lake and considered to be a GUDI well. Treating the well water will be very expensive. Testing of lake water revealed that the treatment of the lake water would be much cheaper than treating the well water. Yet, we are told we cannot currently obtain a water license, no more licenses are being issues for our lake.

Yet, there are a number of water licenses on the lake that we know are not being used, and have not been for years, or are underutilized. Some licensees have never used water from their water license lake sources.

It would seem that in fairness, those who have not made "beneficial use" of a water license, or have been allocated far more water than they will ever need, should share water with those who live on the lake and need water for essential human purposes.

Water conservation is to be applauded, and should be part of any license. If water use if monitored and water is conserved, then there would be more to go around, and water licenses could be issued to more users.

Please ensure that these issues are directly addressed in the updates to the legislation.

Thank you

Personal Identifiers Removed Enderby BC
Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:45 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Proposed Water Sustainability Act

Dear Livingwatersmart:

I am not in support of what I have read in the report. To me the approach is all wrong because it does not put the water security with water as a residential resource as the central focus. The report appears to be tinkering around the edges resulting in policy that ultimately will just serve the status quo. For example in times of need I am afraid that the water for needy residents will become a financial burden while water for industrial uses such as fish plants and farms and pulp mills will have priority for the sake of corporate profit. I fear that companies will be allowed to treat our water with back room deals that will later allow them to sell our water back to us. And I live in a rain forest so I can only assume the same concerns should be magnified for residents in all other drier parts of BC.

I think this legislation should be brought back to all BC communities and under the regional planning jurisdictions based on watershed boundary and planning for communities land use and development should be developed on the basis of natural water resources, food security, and local carrying capacities of the environmental systems.

Instead the current model is totally unsustainable based on the idea of global markets for all of our resources including our water. Our water must not be made for sale to international markets and should not even be treated and sold back to us by corporations like Veolia. Veolia is now building our new water treatment plant and it seems to me that the true details of their schemes are being withheld from the citizens on the Sunshine Coast.

Thank you for taking my input.

Personal Identifiers Removed Sechelt BC

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:07 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

- While fully understanding the realities of economic growth and sustainability, water protection is one area that *must* take precedence over profits for the greater good.

Public Trust and Beneficial Use

The property in and the right to the use and flow of all the water at any time in a stream in British Columbia are for all purposes vested in the government in trust for the public and any private rights established under licences or approvals under this or a former Act are subject to be managed in the interest of present and future generations.

Oliver M. Brandes, BA(H), Dip.RNS, M.Econ., JD
Co-Director & Water Sustainability Project Lead, POLIS Project on Ecological Governance
University of Victoria

- It is essential that water protection be enshrined in legislation rather than in regulations, which can be easily changed and which are not necessarily open to public scrutiny.
- Fees assessed to corporate users need to be set at a rate that covers the true cost of water monitoring and administration. The fees collected should be specifically allocated, via the legislative process, to cover the costs noted.
- The period for public input needs to be extended. One month is not a sufficient amount of time for something so important to British Columbians.

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:42 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: new water legislation

Dear Premier Clark, Minister Polak and the Living Water Smart Team,

Water for fish, wildlife and stream health should be identified and protected before other uses are permitted.

Priority uses should be established for watersheds. These uses should result from a public review process.

Water Licences should be granted for specified times. Periodic reviews of licences should be required.

Licencees should be required to report usage which is then public information and the basis for fees.

All usage of ground and surface water should be reported.

Monitoring of water quality should be required by the water licence holder where degradation or depletion of water supplies are possible consequences of use.

"Free" water should not be given as an incentive for industrial development because it sends the wrong message about our valuation of our environment.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Personal Identifiers Removed

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:36 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Sustainability Act

Fresh water unites all living organisms on this planet, without it all life will end. Let's manage our water as the precious resource that it is.

Allow for only responsible consumption and make human beings and the environment a priority.

Don't allow the pollution of our fresh water resources. Put in place steps and standards and policies with teeth to ensure that our water quality and quantity will be around to serve future generations too.

Don't allow for privatization of our fresh water.

Don't allow corporations to take our water without demanding fair compensation. Monitor and measure the quantities that they are removing.

Act responsibly, protect our water, all life depends on it.

Personal Identifiers Removed Mill Bay, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:11 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: Water Legislation

To Whom It May Concern,
Water Sustainability concerns us all!
B.C. needs water legislation that puts public interest ahead of corporate profits. A law that gives our communities and our First Nations the power to effectively steward our precious water.

Personal Identifiers Removed Mile 108 Ranch, B.C.

From ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:43 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: New water Act

Review of water licenses should not be every 30 yrs but should be reduced to every 10 yrs to ensure there is proper use of the water. What are the reasons for it being 30 yrs??????

In drought conditions golf courses were always allowed to water and the resident who has a small garden are not allowed. Why?????

I hope you will answer my questions in a timely manner.
Thank you

Yours truly

Personal Identifiers Removed Sparwood, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

-

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:32 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: New Water Legislation

I think that over time, each user type has to be evaluated independently and not just grandfathered in. I believe that metering is the way to go. Enforced responsibility. We have too many water wasters.

Personal Identifiers Removed Twin Lakes, South Okanagan, B.C.

From ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 6:15 AM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

The following issues have to be included in this act to ensure the public's resource is protected.

1. **Key Considerations for Advancing a Comprehensive *Water Sustainability Act***

1. Priority for environmental flows;
2. A flexible allocation system that embeds the public trust;
3. Commitment to shared water governance;
4. Full-cost recover through fees and water-use rentals; and,
5. Accountability and oversight.

Personal Identifiers Removed

Kimberley, BC ***Personal Identifiers Removed***

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:16 AM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: corporate water withdrawal

No free or cheap water withdrawal, incremental increase in cost with increased withdrawal, much like BC Hydro residential tiered increases, likewise alongside residential rate increases.

No water withdrawal for gas and oil fracking without making public the now secret chemicals, and a commitment to remove the use of such chemicals by a set date in this decade.

Personal Identifiers Removed Whistler, BC

From: ***Personal Identifiers Removed***
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 11:26 PM
To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX
Subject: The Water Act Proposal Remains Inadequate

The Water Act Proposal Remains Inadequate

The Act fails to define our watersheds and groundwater 'recharge' or catchment areas and protect them. For example in White Rock we draw from an Aquifer without knowing where the source is and we fail to consider any protection of the Aquifer.

The proposal remains largely supportive of business as usual for industrial use, limits the ability for effective stewardship and is lacking in consideration for Indigenous Title and Rights as well as the public interest.

New Oil & Gas Use

A great deal of pressure will be placed on watersheds due to the dramatic increase oil and gas development in the region. While this industry needs far more regulation of their water use it is questionable to even consider Oil & Gas development as a beneficial use of water. There must be serious consideration given to whether licenses should be issued, particularly for shale gas fracking which has seen moratoriums imposed in many jurisdictions.

Saline Water Not Included in Groundwater Regulation While groundwater regulation is included in the proposal, in addition to the FITFIR priority system proposed, there is concern about the exclusion of saline water. The proposal clearly acknowledges that there is an "assumed disconnection" of saline groundwater, shallower groundwater and surface water. Saline water use should not have a licensing exemption based on an assumption.

Does the Ministry of Environment have scientific evidence to prove this disconnection? Will they assess projects for these connections? It is unclear what the impacts of withdrawing saline groundwater from deep formations and although dependant on hydrogeology, a salt water intrusion of a freshwater aquifer and groundwater drawdown are key concerns.

This exemption appears to be an attempt to support the fracking industry that is very water intensive. By using the precautionary principle, even the possibility of impacts to potable water sources or other environmental impacts should be avoided.

We cannot meaningfully talk about water sustainability or Act to protect it as long as there is a failure to acknowledge that corporate rights have undermined human rights and that investment protection mechanisms and free trade agreements have undermined rights of communities to say no to water destruction and polluting projects.

Maude Barlow in the Blue Future has stated four principles that should be guiding our Water Sustainability Act.

Water is a Human Right, Water is our Common Heritage, Water has rights(human laws and those of nature must be compatible) and Water can teach us how to live together; these are foundation principles that the water act should be written to uphold.

Personal Identifiers Removed White Rock BC.