

-----Original Message-----

From: marie elliott \*\*\*Personal Identifiers Removed\*\*\*

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:05 PM

To: Living Water Smart ENV:EX

Subject: Water Sustainability Act

The Gulf Islands Alliance (GIA) is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to the protection of the BC Gulf Islands, their natural environments, rural nature and unique cultures. GIA supports the Islands Trust federation in achieving its legislated object. We are pleased that the ministry recognizes the importance of regulating groundwater extraction in order to protect declining groundwater levels and aquifer sustainability.

We are pleased that the ministry has recognized the need for the designation of special areas, such as the southern Gulf Islands, that will allow for proactive planning. The planning being accomplished on the neighbouring San Juan Islands should be studied as an example of positive action. We urge you to implement policy changes as quickly as possible because island wells continue to be destroyed by bad drilling practices and hydrofracturing. The increasing number of residents who have salt water intrusion in their wells are forced to pay for trucking in water at a cost of \$650 or more for 3,000 gallons. Because many private wells are in close proximity to one another and situated near saltwater, we support a policy of banning hydrofracturing entirely from the southern Gulf Islands. We also support a policy of regulating the volume of water drawn from private wells.

The most significant threat to surface drinking water supplies is nutrient loading from activities such as land clearing and septic runoff. This nutrient loading has led to regular occurrences of algal blooms, which too frequently have turned toxic, rendering drinking water unsafe. We urge the Province to designate nutrients that promote algal blooms as potential drinking water contaminants that could merit appropriate legal sanctions and status under drinking water plans.

We look forward to government action in the near future.

Marie Elliott,  
Secretary,  
Gulf Islands Alliance