

B. C. TAP WATER ALLIANCE

**Caring for, Monitoring, and Protecting
British Columbia's Community Water
Supply Sources**

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CAMPBELL GOVERNMENT TAMPERS WITH COMMUNITY WATERSHED OBJECTIVES IN LILLOOET LRMP

Vancouver - The recent announcement by the Campbell government about its controversial revisions to the Lillooet LRMP (Land and Resources Management Plan), which includes downsizing the boundaries of the Spruce Lake Park, has also removed contextual details and discussion about the protection of drinking water sources. The LRMP Table reached Phase One consensus in April 2001 under the former NDP government. But shortly after the Campbell government took power in June 2001, Stan Hagan, the Minister of the newly created Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (recently replaced by George Abbott), largely dismembered the Plan by withdrawing: five areas proposed for protection, two First Nations land deferrals, other land deferrals, special resource management zones, some riparian habitat protection measures, and access management plans. The Campbell government accommodated private industry interests by disbanding the LRMP consensus-based consultation process headed towards Phase Two discussions and replaced it with an individual consultation-based process.

In 2000, near the end of the process that began in 1997, the Lillooet LRMP Table was handed information from the finalized Shuswap-Okanagan (S-O) LRMP on recommendations for future management of drinking watershed sources. The recommendations were to act as a model to help guide stakeholders to make similar recommendations for the Lillooet Timber Supply Area. The S-O LRMP document questionably states that road access, logging, cattle grazing, and mining are fundamental prerequisites for Crown and private land management of the public's more than sixty community drinking water sources. Opposing this model, the Lillooet LRMP Conservation Sector provided a detailed critique of the Draft Water Text in late 2000 that was adopted by the Lillooet LRMP Table in the final April 2001 document (see Background). It included background information about 21 Community Watersheds and *Land Act* Watershed Reserves and, specifically rejecting the S-O LRMP, included recommendations to prohibit resource activities in these sources. That text was considerably altered in the current July 22, 2004 Liberal government document.

"The revisionism regarding community and domestic watershed sources in the Liberal's Lillooet Plan is disturbing", said Will Koop, Coordinator of the B.C. Tap Water Alliance. "Unfortunately, it is entirely consistent with the Campbell government's unscrupulous directives since 2001 aimed at accommodating private industry by dismembering legislative protection for the public's drinking water sources. We were closely monitoring the matter during the Lillooet LRMP Table negotiations in 2000 and were also very concerned about the Shuswap-Okanagan decision possibly setting a dangerous precedent. Provincial and regional government records in the 1970s clearly demonstrate the concern and vigilance of communities throughout the Okanagan and Shuswap intent on the protection of their drinking water sources, but successive governments over the last 30 years have continued to compromise them. Drinking water is a precious, valuable and essential public resource, and all the provincial LRMPs must have legislative provisions for the protection of these irreplaceable assets."

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Please contact: Will Koop at email: info@bctwa.org. For comparative details on the Lillooet IWMP Table negotiations, you can download the **Background** at the website provided above, www.bctwa.org.