

## **BCLSS Newsletter**

### **Volume 4, Issue 2**

# "Furthering Lake Stewardship Through Communication and Education"

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### **Okanagan Lake Foreshore Protection Project**

The BCLSS is proud to announce that it is starting to get in the swing of things with its Okanagan Lake Foreshore Protection Project. We have received just over \$85,000 from Human Resources Department of Canada (HRDC) to hire three staff for a 52-week period, two of which will be Landowner Contact Agents and one a Project Coordinator, as well as to get our office up and running with computers. This money was very much appreciated as everyone knows that without the help of staff, work couldn't be completed.

The Habitat Conservation Trust Fund has also awarded us with \$25,000 towards the Foreshore Project as well. This money will help with the delivery of the educational packages to those who own or lease land around the foreshore of the lake as well as to provide Homesite Assessments.

Some of the previous work that has been preformed for the project is collecting all the names and addresses of those who own/lease property around Okanagan Lake and putting together the educational packages to be delivered.

### **BCLSS Annual Conference at Chimney Lake**

We are pleased to announce our upcoming annual conference at Chimney Lake on June 2nd and 3rd. This year's theme is "Partnerships for Quality Lakes" and will include such information on how volunteer groups and the Ministry have worked together. More information is included in this package and we hope to see you there.

### **New Legislation Protects Drinking Water in BC**

VICTORIA - The provincial government has introduced new legislation and standards to protect B.C.'s drinking water, Environment, Lands and Parks Minister Ian Waddell and Health Minister Corky Evans announced today.

"Safe, clean drinking water is a priority for this government and for British Columbians," said Waddell. "We are committed to putting stronger laws and standards in place to protect

drinking water and water sources throughout the province."

The legislation is backed by over \$11 million in new funding this year to help protect drinking water supplies in B.C.

Bill 20, tabled in the legislature today, establishes lead authorities on drinking water in B.C., as recommended by the public and stakeholders in recent consultations. A provincial drinking water co-ordinator from each of the ministries of Health and Environment will provide central direction on drinking water issues, support B.C.'s regional drinking water programs and issue an annual report on the implementation of the new measures. As well, community-based drinking water officers will be responsible for drinking water issues in each health region of B.C.

"This legislation strengthens measures to protect public health," said Evans. "The legislation will enhance the protection of drinking water from source to tap and safeguard the health of British Columbians."

The drinking water protection act will:

- Improve regulation of water supply systems and protection of water sources.
- Affirm the public's right to know about their drinking water by requiring that assessments, water monitoring results and emergency response plans be made public.
- Enable individuals to request an investigation if they believe there is a threat to drinking water.
- Add requirements for monitoring and reporting drinking water quality.
- Establish province wide and system-specific water quality standards.
- Provide stronger standards for treating and distributing drinking water, and for the training and qualification of systems operators.
- Require water suppliers to assess their drinking water sources and systems to identify potential threats to public health.
- Require plans to address and manage those threats.
- Ensure that local governments, medical health officers and drinking water officers are consulted on statutory decisions affecting drinking water quality, such as waste management, mining or range permits, or logging plans.
- Enable the development of community-based drinking water protection plans as ordered by the minister of health, or as requested by a drinking water officer or local government.
- Strengthen inspection and order powers, and establish new prohibitions and penalties against contaminating drinking water or tampering with a water system.
- Establish statutory obligations for water suppliers and others to report threats to drinking water in B.C. communities.

Evans said the government also plans to make immediate amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Regulation. Amendments will introduce new treatment and water quality standards that are among the strongest of any jurisdiction in Canada, and these will be enforced based on the professional judgment of medical health officials. It is intended that the new regulation will come into force at the same time as the passage of the legislation.

"British Columbians have told us they want comprehensive legislation that protects the drinking water used by their communities," said Waddell. "This legislation is one of the strongest in Canada to provide safe drinking water and to prevent a Walkerton-type tragedy here."

"This legislation recognizes the threats to drinking water in B.C. and gives government the tools to protect our drinking water," said Chris Rolfe, staff counsel to the West Coast Environmental Law Association. "Delivering on its potential benefits will require a firm and dedicated commitment from the provincial government."

"This bill establishes a framework to respond to long-standing local government concerns about groundwater protection and land uses in watersheds that threaten drinking water," said Robert Hobson, chair of the environment committee of the Union of B.C. Municipalities. "We appreciate the opportunity to have been consulted, and further consultation and funding will be needed to realize the potential of the legislation."

The drinking water protection act includes amendments to existing legislation. Amendments to the Health Act modernize inspection and enforcement powers to protect against all health hazards, including those related to drinking water.

Amendments to the Water Act strengthen the protection of groundwater, including groundwater used for drinking water. Standards are established for well construction, operation, closure and floodproofing, and enable qualification requirements to be set for well drillers.

The new funding will be available to health authorities and communities for water assessments and staffing to support the requirements of the new legislation. Funding is also provided for groundwater protection, compliance, enforcement, planning and subsidized water testing for individuals.

(Note: For more information on drinking water visit the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks' Web site at <http://www.elp.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/dw/index.html> Backgrounders are available at <http://www.gov.bc.ca/elp>. The bill can be viewed at [http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/2001/1st\\_read/](http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/2001/1st_read/))

Contact:

Alex Dabrowski, 250-387-9423

Media Relations

Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Victoria

Communications Branch, 250-952-1887

Ministry of Health, Victoria

### **2001 Wetlands Institute: Wetlands and Health**

If you're working on lake stewardship, chances are you've run into a wetland. Wetlands (marshes, swamps, bogs, fens, and estuaries) often slip through the stewardship cracks, being somewhere between lakes, streams, and dry land. They've also slipped through the legislative cracks, being left out of federal, provincial and (most) municipal law for upwards of a century. Without laws to protect them, these valuable ecosystems depend heavily on citizen stewardship and responsible land-use planning.

If you're interested in learning more about how to protect these fragile ecosystems, consider attending the 2001 Wetlands Institute in Nanaimo, BC, July 2-8, 2001. The Wetlands Institute is a six day field course offered by the BC Wildlife Federation. The Wetlands Institute will help you start a wetland conservation / education / stewardship project. You will learn about wetland mapping, classification, and assessment, how to conduct fish, bird and amphibian surveys, and about legal issues, land-owner contact, water quality testing and community planning - all while gathering badly needed information at several wetland sites.

Wetlands have been compared to tropical rainforests for the diversity of species they support; yet they are being filled and developed at an unprecedented rate. If you would like to help protect these amazing ecosystems, please contact the BC Wildlife Federation's Wetland Education Program at (250) 354-1088 or by email at [sthmconstaff@netidea.com](mailto:sthmconstaff@netidea.com).

### **What's going on in B.C.**

#### *Charlie Lake Conservation Society*

The Charlie Lake Conservation Society has turned a strategic corner. At the recent AGM the society was privy to a donation of twenty thousand dollars from the Peace River Regional District. These monies will ensure the society can continue to serve the needs of Charlie Lake for many years to follow. Although not earmarked for any specific project the monies do come with strings. The monies cannot be used for operational funding (e.g. Insurance). This is not a concern as there are many potential projects that the funds can be directed towards, including a joint project with Ducks Unlimited. The Charlie Lake Conservation Society gratefully acknowledges this generous contribution by the Regional District.

Fisheries Renewal has also made a presence in the Peace Region. The newly formed Peace Liard Watershed Council is expecting funding for the first time this year. The council was initiated last fall with the focus of bring FrRBC to the Peace Region of BC. Call for proposals were sent in February and a total of seven proposals were received. The Technical and Steering Committees approved six of the proposals to be funded by FrRBC. Two proposals were submitted by the Charlie Lake Conservation Society. Both proposals focus on Charlie Lake, one an education and stewardship program delivered to lakeshore residents and recreational users of the lake. The other proposal is a fish survey and habitat assessment.

This is an exciting time for the Charlie Lake Conservation Society and the Peace Liard Watershed Council, as we hold great expectations for future watershed projects and continued success with Fisheries Renewal and other funding partners.

#### *Whistler Angling Club*

The Whistler Angling Club ratified its intention to host a community fishing derby on Alta Lake at the historic Alta Lake Lodge site, Rainbow Beach in Whistler June 17th 2001

The club is now in its 10th year as a registered society, we have been fundamental in the Whistler Stewardship Fisheries Group. The WSFG through the Urban Salmonoid Enhancement Program developed much needed community support and habitat improvements. Fishing activity has increased dramatically in the area in the past 10 years. Up to a dozen Commercial Operations focus on fishing excursions, some year round from the resort.

The Club in partnership with Fisheries Branch MoE, established a biological control fishery in

Alta Lake using 4,000 neutered cutthroat, and from early monitoring (oct. 2000) these fish have targeted the stickleback population as planned. Needless to say we should have an exciting fishery this year. Long term plans for Alta Lake will be to support a sustainable recreation fishery through native rainbow recruitment and habitat re-habilitation. The lake regulation is now catch and release.

We anticipate up to 200 people on June 17th and would like to have access to the complimentary licenses for those who attend the event. We hope to tie with Big Brothers/Sisters Whistler and local Scouts / Guide groups. Of special interest to me is the relationship with the Whistler Museum and Archives as the Alta Lake Lodge was the initial tourist attraction to the area.

Tom Cole - Director Whistler Angling Club.

### *Great BC Beach Cleanup*

On behalf of the Vancouver Aquarium's Outreach Department, I'd like to invite you to participate in this year's Great BC Beach Cleanup in September. In 2000, more participants were involved, more sites were cleaned and more garbage was removed from our shorelines than in previous years!

In continuing with last year's success, we would like to invite your group to participate in our seventh annual event, which runs from September 15th to 23rd, 2001. We are currently preparing a proposal for submission to our sponsor, TD Friends of the Environment, to ensure their continued support of this program. For this purpose, we need to know how many groups plan to return to make this year's cleanup the biggest ever.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact BCLSS or Tara Taylor for the accompanying registration form. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me at (604) 659-3487.

Tara Taylor

Manager of Community Outreach

Email: [taylort@vanaqua.org](mailto:taylort@vanaqua.org)

### **Membership Renewal Reminder**

Just a reminder to renew your membership for this year if you have not. This will ensure that you receive articles, such as LakeLine.