



The  
**WATERWEALTH**  
Project

## All Candidates Questionnaire

April 18, 2013

### The Importance of our Water Wealth

Context: As we talk with more and more people in our communities, the WaterWealth Project is hearing that clean, safe and flowing water in the Valley is one of people's biggest concerns. We've attached the results of our community survey. This survey is echoed by a 2010 McAllister Opinion Research poll that showed 94% of British Columbians believe water is our most important natural resource.

**Question 1: If you become our local representative, where will freshwater protection place on your priority list?**

1st  2nd  3rd  Other

#### **Comments:**

Water in general is a high priority, be it salt water from the oceans, mixed waters rivers and fresh water. The contamination of the rivers and inlets by diseases carried by farmed salmon is bordering on an ecological disaster., as well as are industrial, commercial, agricultural and recreational pollution of the water. As I have said before, the World Monetary Fund has stated, that the next World War will be fought over water. As we all know, you can live for months without food, yet you can only live a matter of days without water.

### Community Control Over Our Local Home Waters

Context: We are also hearing that people are frustrated with having little to no voice in the decisions that affect our local home waters such as the lack of meaningful consultation on the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the chlorination of drinking water in Chilliwack, and the development of the Aggregate Pilot Project.

**Question 2: Do you support greater community involvement in decisions that affect our local home waters and the right for our communities to say 'yes' or 'no' to major proposals that affect us?**

**Answer: Definitely. As the old saying goes: My Home Is My Castle. And I believe, that our homes and our communities are our castles, and we know best, what most effects them and how to protect them.**

**Question 3: Would you support the formation of a citizens roundtable or watershed board co-chaired by First Nations and non-First Nations community members to provide leadership on a long-term protection plan for our local home waters?**

**Answer: Yes**

## **Indigenous Rights and Title**

**Context:** The waters of the Valley and the life sustained within it have supported Indigenous communities for thousands of years. Long before the first visit of Simon Fraser in 1808, this water wealth allowed them to develop sustainable economies and governance systems. As long-term stewards of lakes, rivers and streams, indigenous communities nurtured the healthy waters we enjoy today.

**Question 4: Given that recognition of indigenous rights and title is essential for the long-term protection of our shared home waters, what would you bring to the table to support First Nations-Crown reconciliation of rights and responsibilities?**

**Answer: The reason, that the Chilliwack-Hope riding does not have someone running for MLA with the BC Excalibur Party is, that the riding was reserved for a First Nations member, as several ridings were, so that the First Nations people would be guaranteed a voice in the Legislature and be able to work towards understanding and reconciliation from within. I have contacted and tried to contact (leaving messages and sending e-mails to those I couldn't reach) many of the First Nations Elders and Chiefs, who have basically point-blank ignored us. In fact, the only organization, that has not ignored us was Idle No More. I also believe that the offer was not extended by the Elders and Chiefs to the members of the First Nations. I expected the openness and friendliness to be similar to that of the people from the Water Wealth Project, who have made us feel welcome and needed as individuals. I Thank Idle No More for their openness in expressing and explaining, why members of their group would not run for MLA. One of the Elders, whom we contacted over the months, even urging him to provide us with an article on the issues surrounding salmon farming, so we could, with his permission, post it on our Party web site, told us, that he would submit something to us and then ignored us. Now he is supporting a candidate of another party quite openly, which is fine with us. What is not fine with us is his declaration, that that candidate is the only one, who has shown an interest in the salmon issue. If First Nations peoples treat issues surrounding the land and waters in the way their ancestors did, with the same respect and connectedness with the wealth these natural resources provide, and do not make politics out of it, then I fully support them, as well as anyone else, who will work towards the common cause of the protection of these shared lands and waters. The lands and waters are now shared by many, and we all agree, that proper stewardship must be exercised. But we need to do this together. Our Party believes in balance, not in supporting only one interest group, buty rather in**

**bringing people from different walks of life together to work on issues together. This goes with our motto: The Land, The People And The Government Are One. But in exercising proper stewardship we do need to learn from those traditionally minded First Nations, who respect the land and the waters they and their ancestors have inhabited for many generations.**

## **The BC Water Act**

Context: The BC Water Act, our most important piece of water legislation, is over 100 years old and completely out-dated. It has no provision to ensure there is enough water in rivers and streams to support fish ('ecosystem flows'); it doesn't put any limits on groundwater withdrawals (BC is the only jurisdiction in Canada with no rules for groundwater removal); and it allocates fresh water through an antiquated system called First in Time, First in Right.

**Question 5: Do you support the implementation of a NEW BC Water Act that would ensure enough water flows through our home waters for fish and other wildlife, enacts groundwater protection, creates the framework to enable comprehensive community planning for water protection, and respects indigenous rights and title?**

**Answer: Yes, we are totally against draining rivers to the point, that they cannot sustain wildlife or keep an all around balanced eco-system. In fact, our family has been advocating and educating others for 7 years on the selling of the BC rivers. 6 years ago almost 10,000 km of river had been sold, where 50% of the water could be piped and re-diverted; this to supposedly create a Trillion Dollar electricity industry with no regard to the ecological disaster this action would cause. This water could be shipped to our southern neighbour, the USA and used for other purposes, maybe even for fracking. With our fast developing social, economical and industrial growth here in BC, we need a new and balanced Water Act, one that considers all aspects of and needs for this precious resource in a balanced manner.**

## **Drinking Water Protection**

Context: The recent controversy around the decision to chlorinate Chilliwack's drinking water has highlighted the importance of keeping contaminants out of our drinking water sources (like the Vedder-Sardis aquifer) in the first place. Experts agree the best way to protect drinking water and reduce the need for expensive treatment solutions is to protect the source of drinking water.

**Question 5: Do you support comprehensive provincial source water protection legislation that would empower local communities to work with government to develop enforceable plans to protect their drinking water?**

**Answer: Absolutely!**

## Your Position on Threats to Our Home Waters

Context - **Kinder Morgan** is increasing transportation of heavy bitumen oil through its existing **TransMountain pipeline** that crosses 100 rivers and streams on its route from Alberta through the Fraser Valley. It is proposing to **triple** the amount of oil transportation from 300,000 to 890,000 barrels per day by building a new pipeline. Since 2005, there have been four ruptures along the existing pipeline. In 2012, a similar pipeline carrying bitumen ruptured and emptied 3,000,000 litres of bitumen into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan, devastating an entire community and becoming the costliest pipeline spill in US history.

**Question 6: What is your position on a) the increasing transportation of bitumen through the existing Kinder Morgan pipeline and b) the creation of a new pipeline to triple the capacity of heavy oil transportation?**

**Answer: I am against it. And, in fact, one of our MLA candidates is an engineer, and he is 100% against it from an engineering point of view.**

Context: Government and the aggregate industry has developed the **Aggregate Pilot Project**, which maps out very large areas of this region that would be open to mining for corporate profit. This has been developed with limited input from local communities despite the substantial impact this mining could have on our rivers, lakes, and groundwater that are our drinking water sources, and which support fish, wildlife and local economies.

**Question 7: Do you support the Aggregate Pilot Project?**

**Answer: There is not enough public involvement. Neither is there enough involvement from sectors outside the mining industry. We've seen local government involvement before without public input with the P3 Water Project here in Abbotsford.**

Context: Scientific experts such as Marvin Rosenau and Otto Langer have shown that the practice of **in-river gravel mining** can be extremely damaging to salmon and other fish habitat, and has questionable benefits for flood control. They have called for the development of a long-term management plan for dealing with this issue for 15 years.

**Question 8: Do you support the development of a long-term management plan for sediment removal developed with full involvement of First Nations, scientific experts, and community members?**

**Answer: Yes**

**Private Hydroelectric Diversions (also known as Independent Power Projects)** - a freedom of information request from the Wilderness Committee discovered 700 instances of non-compliance at 16 private diversions in the past few years, indicating regulatory disarray for this industry. These projects can cause significant harm to fish habitat if improperly installed and operated and the cumulative impacts can be extremely disruptive to river systems.

**Question 9: Would you support undertaking a comprehensive cumulative environmental assessment prior to approving any new private hydroelectric diversions in the Fraser Valley?**

**Yes, especially in the Fraser Valley. But, I think, a review of the entire Province's even existing hydroelectric diversions needs to be conducted.**