

BC TAP WATER ALLIANCE URGES ABCFP TO END COMMERCIAL LOGGING IN THE PUBLIC'S DRINKING WATER SOURCES

(This information distributed on the morning of February 23, 2007,
to about 250 delegates attending the annual conference held in Harrison Hot Springs.)

The Association of BC Forest Professionals should support the end of commercial logging in BC's domestic and community drinking watershed sources.

Formerly, provincial politicians and inter-ministry administrators granted protection over these sources for British Columbians. In fact, old forest atlas maps routinely indicated as much with standard bold blue italicized letters, *No Timber Sales*. Many were the Map Reserves granted through the *Land Act*, which the Forest Service was formerly administered under. The Greater Vancouver watersheds are also protected under the *Land Act*, a 999-year lease originally assigned in August 1927, granting the Water District autonomy over its Crown lands. In all, this is the legacy of what foresters in Canada and the United States once referred to as 'single purpose', or 'single use', watersheds.

As described in our recent report, *From Wisdom to Tyranny: A History of British Columbia's Drinking Watershed Reserves* (see opposite page for the details), professional foresters began advocating against single use of these watersheds in the 1950s. By the 1960s, through public working circles and the increase in forest harvesting levels, the Forest Service began to "invade" the drinking watersheds, even those reserved from use under the *Land Act*. Successive Forest Service publications stated that these sources were to be excluded from harvesting plans.

As a result of these incursions and public protests, the Social Credit government created a provincial Task Force on community watersheds in early 1972. This Task Force, with authority under a new and powerful Environment Act, established and re-established about 300 *Land Act* Watershed Reserves to protect the public's drinking watersheds. However, for a short while, foresters ignored these Reserves and in 1975 the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources ordered these foresters to listen and recognize the Reserves and their exclusionary status on Forest Atlas maps.

However, by the early 1980s, an era that historians refer to as "sympathetic administration", orders were secretly given to include the drinking watersheds and the Watershed Reserves in the Allowable Annual Cuts. Provincial records show how this was accomplished by top Forest Service administrators, such as Deputy Forest Minister Mike Apsy and Chief Forester Bill Young. The former Seymour Demonstration Forest, the logging program in Vancouver's Seymour watershed, was a planned extension of this agenda, a coordinated and government/private industry funded public relations scheme to achieve widespread public support and acceptance.

These outcomes continued, but with new twists. Watershed Reserves, with their legal status, were sidelined in the 1990s during provincial Land Use planning processes. Oddly, none were mentioned in the Boundary, Cariboo, and Vancouver Island Land Use Plans, and in all the sub-regional LRMP processes that still continue. This exclusion was also extended to the creation of the Forest Practices Code Community Watersheds, where Watershed Reserves were again ignored, and their historic numerical designations assigned under the *Land Act* were switched with new numbers.

The abuse of the public's drinking watershed sources, for logging profits, is an ongoing disgrace. It is imperative that the ABCFP reconsider its views on this matter, particularly as the effects of global warming are unfolding, to reassert the well known principles and value of protecting our community watersheds.

See reverse side for more information

B. C. (British Columbia) TAP WATER ALLIANCE

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

website: www.alternatives.com/bctwa

email: bctwa@alternatives.com



NEW BOOK RELEASE

June 13, 2006

By Alliance Coordinator, Will Koop

FROM WISDOM TO TYRANNY: A HISTORY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA'S DRINKING WATERSHED RESERVES

Quotes from the Press

Mr. Koop ... has gone where no other researcher has gone before – deep into the provincial government's own watershed reserve archives – and he has surfaced with findings that have to be taken seriously. If he is right in his assertions, British Columbians have been robbed by their own government, of the right to clean water.

Mark Hume, Globe and Mail, Troubled Waters and a Thirst for Profit, June 12, 2006.

Koop ... sifted through the city and provincial archives, reviewed crumbling newspaper files, interviewed old-timers and retired bureaucrats, explored other arcane sources and compiled an exhaustive history of how the enlightened and far-thinking policy which established drinking watershed reserves for communities across the province came to be subverted in the interests of industrial ideology. ... Packed with old maps, images of rare posters, correspondence, public documents, excerpts from newspaper articles, photographs of long-forgotten bureaucrats, detailed chronologies and an accounting of the many municipal watersheds across B.C. where wishes of local residents are still overridden by the provincial government and its logging policies (hence the "Tyranny" in the title), the book is idiosyncratic but indispensable.

Stephen Hume, Vancouver Sun, A Dedicated Gadfly gives us a History of our Watershed Wars, June 30, 2006.

Copies of the 284-page (self-published) book are available in numerous public and University/College libraries throughout British Columbia, and Washington State, U.S.A. Note: A detailed index for the book will be available by the Spring of 2007 as a downloadable PDF file on the B.C. Tap Water Alliance website.

How To Order: For a copy of *From Wisdom To Tyranny*, send a cheque for \$25.00 (Canadian), plus \$10.00 postage and handling to the following address (same handling charges apply in BC for a bulk shipment of 1 to 4 copies, slightly more for shipping to other Canadian Provinces. Shipping prices increase slightly for the United States, etc. For specific prices outside Canada, please inquire by email or at the address below:

B.C. Tap Water Alliance
P.O. Box #39154
3695 West 10th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C. Canada. V6R-1G0