



Message from Barry Penner B.C. Minister of Environment

I am delighted the BC Water and Waste Association has given me this opportunity to tell you about the Ministry of Environment's water-related initiatives.

As Minister Responsible for Water Stewardship and Sustainable Communities, I am pleased to report that the ministry is working to develop a sound strategy for water stewardship for British Columbia. Water stewardship is an ethic by which British Columbians care for and are responsible for the sustainability of the water resource and aquatic ecosystems.

The ministry's new Water Stewardship Division will be leading this work to provide provincial leadership in ensuring the water resources and aquatic ecosystems of B.C. are safe, sustainable and valued by all. This involves protecting and managing water quality and quantity to optimize the benefits and sustainability of water resources for communities, the economy and the environment.

The Water Stewardship Division places a high priority on fostering stewardship and individual responsibility through public awareness, education, partnerships and capacity building. Water is vital to the future of B.C., so our strategies must ensure cooperative and collaborative

approaches that involve other ministries, all levels of government, First Nations, industry, business, non-government institutions and citizens. Of course, the skilled and knowledgeable members of your association will play a vital role in these strategies.

I am pleased with the continuing success of the ministry's partnership with the BCWWA's Water Sustainability Committee in providing program delivery for the Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia. Under the umbrella of the Action Plan, my predecessor announced the formal launch of the *Waterbucket.ca* web site at the 2005 BCWWA Annual Conference. A year later, your association has expanded the number of 'communities-of-interest' from two to seven. Congratulations!

This year I would like to highlight the role that BCWWA is playing in implementing the Convening for Action initiative through partnerships with my ministry and others. This outreach and continuing education program is

outcome-oriented and a key element of the Water Sustainability Action Plan.

This initiative is all about sharing information and promoting water stewardship at the community level. I value the important role this partnership is playing in promoting water awareness and supporting communities to integrate water management practices with local land use planning and development programs. The ministry continues to provide core funding to support implementation of this Action Plan.

We will continue to work with BCWWA and qualified professionals to provide training that ensures the environment is protected under provincial legislation. We are also sponsoring a workshop on current developments on municipal wastewater at the association's 34th Annual Conference and Trade Show in Whistler.

I look forward to meeting BCWWA members in May when I hope to be able to make some opening remarks at your upcoming conference.

Until then, keep up the good work! 🌍

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