



June 8, 2023
Julia Berardinucci
Director, Water Resources Stewardship
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS)

RE: Peachland and Trepanier Watersheds

Dear Ms Berardinucci,

Thank you for making the time to speak with Peachland Water Protection Alliance (PWPA) about how we restore a healthy quality, quantity, and timing of water to the community of Peachland.

We believe that your new ministry WLRS and PWPA have mutual beneficial goals with respect water and the land. WLRS, under the direction of Minister Nathan Cullen has a mandate to transform the management and stewardship of our waters, lands and resources; to implement the Healthy Watersheds Strategy and protect wildlife and species at risk. We believe that our goal to protect our watershed comprises many of the Ministry's key priorities.

PWPA was established as a grassroots non-profit society in 2016, with a mission to protect Peachland's watershed – the source of Peachland's drinking water, and the habitat for many wildlife and plant species, including the rare Northern Pygmy owl.

Over past 5 years, PWPA has forged many productive relationships with other likeminded organizations who understand that the economic values of our natural environment are subservient to all other values – not the other way around.

The Forest Practices Board agreed that the lack of data about the watershed was a detriment to preventing logging infractions and suggested more needs to be done. We have partnered with **Westbank First Nation** on collaborative projects using **the syilx Water Strategy** as the framework for PWPA's watershed activities. Dave Gill of **Ntityx Resources** has become one of our trusted advisors on matters of sustainable logging. We continue to work with industry players, such as **Gormans' and Tolko** and to work with them to achieve our objectives. We engage independent subject matter experts who are leaders in their respective fields. **Dr Younes Alila from UBCO** is one of our trusted advisors and partners. We are working with Dr John Wagner, and Dr Adam Wei of UBCO on their Watershed Cluster project. And we have recently established an action coalition of 20 watershed protection groups in the Okanagan who are likewise suffering from the horrific consequences of unprotected watersheds, the Interior Watershed Task Force (IWTF). Peachland is not alone, unfortunately but it's not just grassroots groups that know this.

PWPA has had many "firsts" in the watershed protection community. We would love to be the first watershed to get protections just as Vancouver and Victoria have enjoyed for years. We believe we can get there with your help, and become a model for all the watersheds to come.



These steps below must be undertaken to ensure any work done under the Watershed Security Strategy (WSS) is a long lasting success – these will prepare our watershed for the successful implementation of the WSS and related projects.

- 1) We ask that this Ministry to respond to our previous Mayor's (Mayor Cindy Fortin) letter of June 26, 2019, asking for an immediate pause on industrial logging while a comprehensive and independent cumulative effects analysis is conducted.
- 2) We ask that this Ministry assists us in prohibiting **clear-cut logging** in consumptive watersheds, and replace it with First Nations traditional forestry methods, like those utilized by Westbank First Nation forestry arm, Ntityx Resources, in the Trepanier watershed adjacent to Peachland.
- 3) We ask that this Ministry to initiate the deactivation and decommissioning of legacy industrial roads in the Peachland watershed to be completed in the next 5 years.
- 4) To ensure the Healthy Watershed Strategy (HWS) has the best outcomes in Peachland, we need our watershed to be protected like Vancouver or Victoria – before restoration and remediation can be successful. We believe in our watershed, there is little point in restoring riparian areas for example, if they still being destroyed a few miles away by industrial uses. We ask that together, we work towards fully protecting Peachland's watershed by 2030.

We look forward to forging an ongoing relationship with WLRS and your teams to ensure resilient watersheds in Peachland and beyond.

And we also invite you to come to Peachland to see firsthand the travesty of this once thriving, productive, and pristine water source.

Best regards,

Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance