

From: Erin Vieira evieira@fraserbasin.bc.ca received September 24, 2009
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Conversation: Attn Chairperson: Air and Water Engagement Strategy to Better Protect Public Health
Subject: Attn Chairperson: Air and Water Engagement Strategy to Better Protect Public Health

Dear Chairperson,

The Fraser Basin Council is leading an air and water engagement initiative with the provincial Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport. We would like to speak with you to discuss public health issues in your regional district and to find out what work is being carried out to address air and water monitoring, planning and reporting as they relate to public health. The information that we gather from you will be used to help the Ministry focus its actions to better support and facilitate air and water protection initiatives at the regional level.

Please accept the attached letter as a formal invitation to participate in the initiative. If you are attending the annual UBCM Convention next week, you will have an opportunity to meet with Ministry representatives to further discuss this initiative.

I hope to be in touch with you soon.
Kind regards,

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September 24, 2009

Dear stakeholder:

Re: Healthy Communities: Air and Water Engagement Initiative to Better Protect Public Health

Many factors combine to affect the health of people and communities. The quality of the environment including the air we breathe and the water we drink are important contributors to good health. Continuing to improve the quality of our air and drinking water is of paramount importance in preventing disease and promoting healthy people and communities. The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport (MHLS) in particular has a key role to play in ensuring public health: MHLS has a mandate to develop policy, report publicly, and provide guidelines and standards for air and water.

To continue to make communities in BC healthier and deliver on its mandate, MHLS has developed an air and water engagement initiative. The goal of the initiative is to enhance communication and information exchange between local governments and MHLS in the areas of airshed and watershed monitoring and reporting related to public health. In addition to determining the issues, capacity, and information needs of communities, the engagement initiative will also identify opportunities for MHLS to provide community support in the area of regional airshed and watershed planning, monitoring and reporting.

MHLS has partnered with the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) to lead the engagement initiative. FBC is a non-profit, non-government organization that facilitates sustainability solutions in British Columbia, with a particular focus on the Fraser River watershed. FBC's role in the engagement initiative is to conduct a series of interviews with regional stakeholders; this process is a key component of the initiative, as it will enhance communications and information exchange between stakeholders. We invite you to participate in the interview process as a regional stakeholder and make a valuable contribution to the information exchange.

Over the next few weeks, Erin Vieira or another staff member of the Fraser Basin Council will call you to arrange an interview with you or with the person in your organization who can answer our questions. You can expect questions that speak to the following themes:

- Regional priorities for air and water planning for public health
- Relationships between communities, governments, and health authorities
- Regional responses to air and water issues
- Planning frameworks and tools for air and drinking water protection
- Data sources, needs, and analyses
- How MHLS can support and facilitate air and water planning for public health

The interview process will require approximately one hour and will likely take place via telephone. We are grateful of your consideration of this request, and hopeful that you will participate; the success of this project - and the continued improvement of public health in BC as it relates to environmental health - depends on your willingness to help us learn.

Kind regards,

Brenda Janke  
Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport  
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