


## Introducing Bill 18 A new Water Sustainability Act

Regional District CEO/CAO Forum  
March 25, 2014

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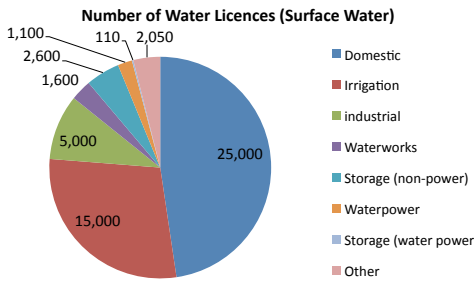
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## Clean and abundant water is essential



- Public health and well-being
- Thriving communities, a growing population
- Healthy ecosystems and fish populations
- Food production and nutrition
- Strong diverse economy

## A long history of regulating surface water



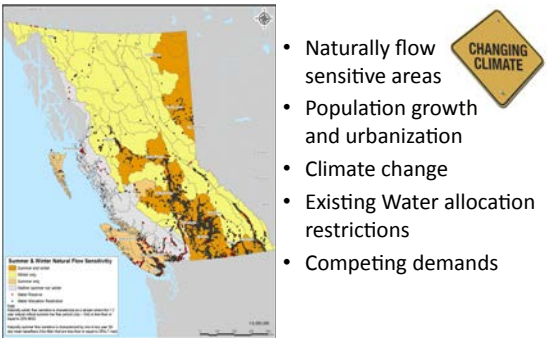
**Number of Water Licences (Surface Water)**

Category	Number of Licences
Domestic	25,000
Irrigation	15,000
Industrial	5,000
Waterworks	1,600
Storage (non-power)	2,600
Waterpower	1,100
Storage (water power)	110
Other	2,050

Number of licences rounded for presentation

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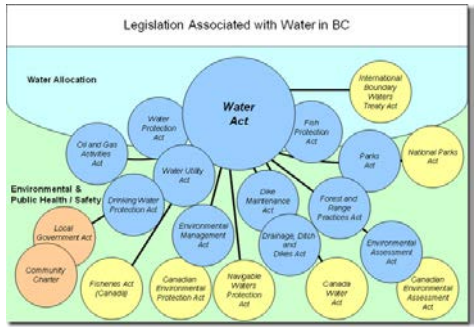
## Our water is under pressure



- Naturally flow sensitive areas
- Population growth and urbanization
- Climate change
- Existing Water allocation restrictions
- Competing demands

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## A central piece of the legislative framework for water




Legislation Associated with Water in BC

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## Engaging British Columbians

Legislative Proposal (October 2014)




- 3150 written submissions
- 13,000 visits to blog/website
- Bilateral meetings, presentations

All documents & submissions available at: <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/watersustainability/>

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### Local government comments ...

- Groundwater regulation and protection of stream health ✓✓
- Streamlining planning and decision-making processes ✓✓
- Shared responsibility and decision-making ✓✓
- Varying support for governance changes ✓✓
- Concerns around fees for groundwater use ✓
- Priority use during times of scarcity
- Resources to implement




### Seven water policy areas




1. Protect Stream Health and Aquatic Environments
2. Consider Water in Land Use Decisions
3. Regulate Groundwater Use
4. Regulate During Scarcity
5. Improve Security, Water Use Efficiency, Conservation
6. Measure and Report
7. Enable a Range of Governance Approaches

### 1. Protect stream health and aquatic environments




- Consider environmental flow needs in new water allocation decisions
- For existing licences, allow temporary restrictions to protect critical environmental flow needs
- Expand prohibitions on dumping debris into streams and aquifers

### 2. Considering water in land use decisions



- Consider water objectives in resource and land use decisions
- Develop water sustainability plans

### 3. Regulate and protect groundwater use



- Manage surface and groundwater as single resource
- Most uses will be licensed; fees and annual rentals
- Domestic uses excluded
- Date of first use would guide priority date
- Improve understanding of aquifers

### Under Water Act: Surface and non-domestic ground water licensed

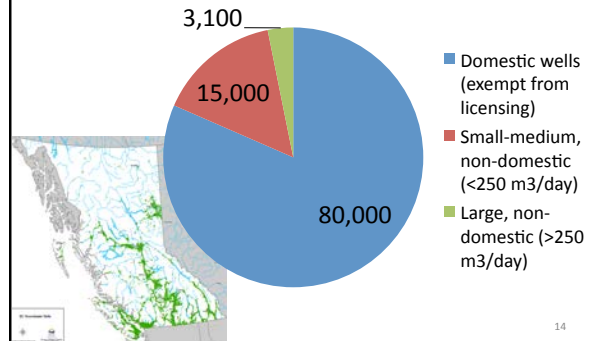
	Surface Water user
Licence Required	Yes
Application fee and Annual Rentals	Yes
Water right	Yes
Improved security from water right	Yes
May be regulated during scarcity	Yes

### Under new WSA: Surface and non-domestic ground water licensed

	Surface Water user	Ground Water user (non-domestic)
Licence Required	Yes	Yes
Application fee and Annual Rentals	Yes	Yes
Water right	Yes	Yes
Improved security from water right	Yes	Yes
May be regulated during scarcity	Yes	Yes

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### Domestic groundwater use exempted from licensing



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### 4. Regulating water use during scarcity



- All users could be regulated during scarcity – including groundwater
- Retain FITFIR with exceptions
- Ensure water supply for essential human and livestock needs
- Allow temporary restrictions to protect critical environmental flows
- Retain Section 9 of *Fish Protection Act*

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### 5. Improving security, water use efficiency and conservation

- Expand beneficial use requirement
- Set water conservation targets and carry out audits
- Make water licences reviewable
- Allow area-based regulation for specific regions
- Create agricultural water reserves



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### 6. Measuring and reporting water use



- Require large volume users to measure, record and report water use
- Smaller volume users to measure in specific circumstances under “area-based” regulations
- WSA would not require mandatory meters in households

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### 7. Enable a range of governance approaches



- Increase flexibility in governance arrangements to better suit local needs
- Allow for delegation of some activities or decisions to agencies outside of government
- Support the creation of advisory groups
- Clear and consistent provincial framework

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### Key implications for users



- Fees/rentals for licensed groundwater use
- Requirements for measuring and reporting
- Potential for more regulation to protect environmental flow needs

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### Bill stages/next steps



BILL introduced to House at first reading (March 11)

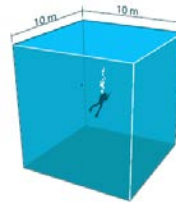
Second reading of BILL

COMMITTEE

Third reading of BILL

ROYAL ASSENT

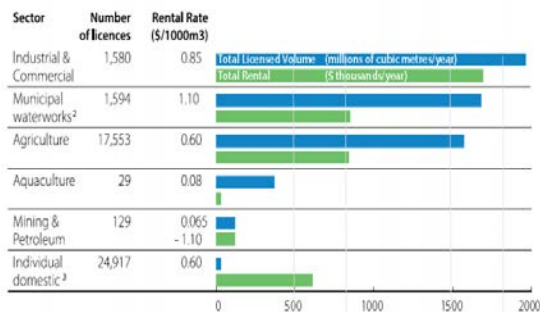
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#### How Much is 1000 cubic metres?

- 1,000,000 litres
- 50,000 five-gallon jugs
- Enough for 15,000 showers
- Fills a 25 metre swimming pool

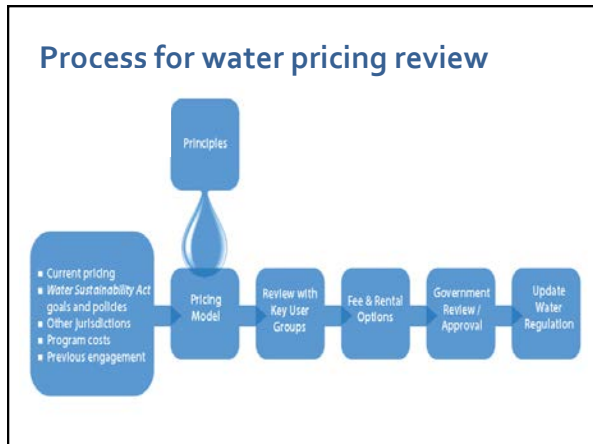
### Annual licensed volume and revenue



### Principles to inform water pricing



- Simplicity
- Fairness and equity
- Implications for water users
- Impact on water resource
- Cost recovery
- Efficiency
- Food security and public health



## Thank you!

Website: <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/watersustainabilityact/>  
 Email: [livingwatersmart@gov.bc.ca](mailto:livingwatersmart@gov.bc.ca)



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### Engagement process

Stage 1 – 2009/2010	Stage 2 – 2011/2012	Stage 3 – Fall 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched Website and Blog</li> <li>Discussion Paper</li> <li>Regional Workshops</li> <li>Report on Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Released Policy Paper</li> <li>Analysis of Public Input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-launch Blog and website</li> <li>Released WSA Legislative Proposal</li> <li>Overview Document</li> <li>Bilateral meetings</li> </ul>

All documents & submissions available at: <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/watersustainabilityact/>

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- ### Some of what we've heard
- Support groundwater regulation
  - Consideration of Environmental Flow Needs should not be discretionary
  - Systematic approach to addressing demand during times of scarcity
  - Respect First Nations relationship with water
  - Area-based tools needed
  - Water is undervalued. Fees and rentals should be reviewed

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