

Hans Smit
Chair, Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board
Box 577
Smithers, BC
V0J 2N0

August 12, 2003

Bob Williams
Manager, Fisheries Section
Environmental Stewardship Division
Fish and Wildlife Branch
PO Box 9363
Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC
V8W 9M2

Re: Angling Use on Classified Waters

Dear Mr. Williams,

The Bulkley and Babine rivers provide world class angling opportunities in our backyard. The Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board (CRB) considers these opportunities to be a very valuable resource to our community, for recreational, economic, social, cultural and subsistence reasons. However, the CRB is concerned that the quality of the angling experience is being compromised for all users by overuse and lack of management. The CRB is also concerned that the current Classified Waters Process, which is intended to deal with some of the problems associated with angling use on high-value rivers such as the Bulkley and Babine, will not adequately address concerns of local anglers. This concern is in part because of how the Angling Use Plan process, in which many local people invested countless hours of volunteer time, transpired. We have had several discussions with the local office of the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection about this matter. In the latest correspondence from Hugh Markides, Regional Manager, Environmental Stewardship Division (attached) he recommended that the CRB contact you for further discussion regarding the Classified Waters Review Process.

The CRB has canvassed the local community and found a great deal of concern with the May 2003 Draft Strategy for Public Review on Managing Angling Use on Classified Waters, and the recommendations it contains. Members of the Bulkley Valley Steelhead Society, the local Driftfisher's Association, the Bulkley Valley Rod & Gun Club, and the Northwest Powerboat Association all expressed concerns. Therefore, the CRB requests that a meeting be set up in Smithers between yourself and concerned local anglers to discuss the Classified Waters Review Process.

The CRB is prepared to help get local residents aware of the meeting. The CRB is also prepared to forward a list of the main concerns/questions to you prior to a meeting in order that you can adequately prepare for the meeting.

Please let us know of your intentions at your earliest convenience. I can be contacted at (250) 846-5764.

Sincerely,

Hans Smit

Chair, Bulkley Valley Community Resource Board

c.c. Honourable Joyce Murray, WLAP

Hugh Markides, WLAP

Jamie Elmhirst, Assistant to Joyce Murray

Dennis McKay, MLA, Bulkley-Stikine

Kevin Kriese, MRSM