



"Our Wealth is in Our Water – Let's Protect It"

19 January 2018

Province of British Columbia

Delivered by email: CitizenEngagement@gov.bc.ca

To Whom it concerns: Re: Professional Reliance Review

There is an inherent conflict of interest in qualified professionals being responsible for protecting public resources while being paid by employers or clients whose interests are private and often at odds with the public interest. Those contracting professionals may soon learn which are most likely to provide answers favourable to their interests. The WaterWealth Project (WaterWealth) has encountered people who left environmental consulting work because of pressures from clients and employers to compromise ethics.

Where public interests are at stake, government must have a role with sufficient authority and resources to prevent abuses. The letter from Organizing for Change, on which WaterWealth is a signatory, includes some specifics on this and other aspects of the professional reliance model.

In addition, WaterWealth e supports the recommendations of the College of Applied Biology to:

- Amend the New West Provincial Trade Agreement to allow the College discretion in allowing membership, in order to allow the College to verify that applicants coming from other jurisdictions qualify as Registered Professional Biologists and have met the standards required to practice applied biology in British Columbia.
- Support government employees bringing forward possible Code of Ethics infractions by members of a profession.
- Require individual professionals to sign-off on their reports. Reports lacking identification of the professional responsible should not be valid for permits or authorizations.

Sincerely,

Ian Stephen
Program Director,
The WaterWealth Project