



**University  
of Victoria**

## **UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA NEWS TIP & LEAD**

Sept 14, 2016

# **Study identifies BC's top five water challenges and need for action**

Escalating water challenges in BC, including consecutive droughts, unprecedented floods and strikingly low levels in streams and rivers require a better understanding and coordinated work to avoid future crisis, says a study by the POLIS Water Sustainability Project at the University of Victoria.

Drawing on an extensive review of court and tribunal cases, media reports, and insights from attendance at more than 100 recent events related to water issues, *Top 5 Water Challenges That Will Define British Columbia's Future* documents dozens of examples of why and where these water issues exist.

The study shows how these challenges are mounting across BC and their potential to fundamentally impact the province's prosperity and quality of life. The report offers potential solutions to create water security and sustainability over the coming years. It is intended to generate productive discussions and actions among water users, communities and policy-makers.

"When you take stock of all the examples of water issues emerging across BC's watersheds, it amounts to a daunting array of complex problems," says Rosie Simms, a water law and policy researcher at POLIS, and co-author of the report with Oliver M. Brandes, POLIS co-director. "These challenges also present a genuine opportunity to collaborate on solutions, including full implementation of the province's recent *Water Sustainability Act* through development of robust supporting regulations."

A major element is a series of province-wide maps that illustrate each of the five topics:

[Building Resilience to Droughts and Floods](#)

[Sustaining Water for Nature](#)

[Understanding the State of B.C.'s Watersheds](#)

[Protecting Water Quality for Drinking, Swimming and Fishing](#)

[Reconciling the Water Energy Nexus](#)

A copy of the full report is available at [poliswaterproject.org/topfivechallenges](http://poliswaterproject.org/topfivechallenges).

*The POLIS Project on Ecological Governance is a research-based organization at UVic's Centre for Global Studies that blends multidisciplinary academic research and community action.*

Interviews with the following freshwater issues experts can be arranged by contacting Rosie Simms or Megan Spencer:

Oliver M. Brandes, POLIS Project on Ecological Governance, University of Victoria

Anna Warwick Sears, Okanagan Basin Water Board

Hans Schreier, Faculty of Land and Water Systems, University of BC

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