



## **MEDIA TIPS AND LEADS**

### **CRITICAL TIME FOR BC'S NEW WATER LAW:**

BC's new Water Sustainability Act will not successfully protect the province's freshwater resources unless the right regulations and resources are in place to make the law fully functional, says an analysis by the University of Victoria's POLIS Project on Ecological Governance.

The report provides a timely analysis of the core regulations required for the law, which was passed in May 2014, and which still requires legislative detail before being implemented. The new law replaces the 106-year-old Water Act, providing an unprecedented opportunity to fully modernize BC's water laws.

*Awash with Opportunity: Ensuring the Sustainability of British Columbia's New Water Law* offers clear recommendations to develop the necessary regulations based on leading international practices in five key areas: groundwater, environmental flows, monitoring and reporting, water objectives, and planning and governance.

"Mounting water concerns in the province underscore the urgent need to reform water management and the supporting legal structures," says report co-author Deborah Curran, Hakai Professor in Environmental Law and Sustainability in UVic's Faculty of Law.

BC's fresh water is under pressure from an array of threats including climate change, population growth, and escalating and competing demands for water. Watersheds across the province are showing signs of stress from unprecedented droughts to water quality degradation and conflicts over water use.

If BC doesn't change its approach to freshwater management in response to these realities, the consequences may be significant, as demonstrated by the recent water crises in California and Washington, and globally, says POLIS co-director Oliver M. Brandes, who authored the report with Curran and POLIS colleagues.

"A comprehensive water law regime that includes a fully implemented *Water Sustainability Act* and a full suite of supporting regulations is a necessary condition to ensure that future water challenges don't become debilitating water crises," says Brandes.

A copy of the report is available at  
<http://poliswaterproject.org/awashwithopportunity>.

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

--30--

**Media Contacts:**

Megan Spencer (Research />Communications, POLIS Water Sustainability Project) at 250-668-9273 or [ra@polisproject.org](mailto:ra@polisproject.org)

Rosie Simms (Water Law />Policy Researcher/Coordinator, POLIS Water Sustainability Project) at 250-721-6388 or [water@polisproject.org](mailto:water@polisproject.org)

Follow us on Twitter: @uvicnews

UVic media relations />services:  
[www.uvic.ca/communicationsmarketing/media](http://www.uvic.ca/communicationsmarketing/media)

**UVic media releases and other resources for journalists are available on the Internet at "<http://communications.uvic.ca/media>".**