



July 16, 2021

BOX 82
GENELLE BC
CANADA

To: Lower Columbia and West Kootenay Basin Water Licence Holders

Re: Low Water Advisory and Water Conservation Request

Many areas in Southeast BC are facing critical water shortages. The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in voluntary water usage reductions for the remainder of the drought season and to give you advance notification of the potential for mandatory restrictions on water licences should conditions worsen.

The Province currently uses a 6-level system to indicate drought severity in basins throughout the province, with Level 0 representing average or wet conditions and Level 5 representing the most severe low flow conditions. In response to a large precipitation deficit and rapidly declining stream flows to record lows for this time of year, the Province has declared Level 3 drought for the Lower Columbia Basin and West Kootenay Basin. You are receiving this letter because your water licence has been found to be in one of these basins.

Due to the Level 3 drought at the time of this letter's writing, the Ministry is requesting voluntary water reductions of 30% by all water users in the Lower Columbia Basin and West Kootenay Basin. Reducing all water use, including groundwater use, is important; especially where licenced water use is not supported by licenced storage. If your water licence includes a storage component, you are encouraged to consider not diverting water for the purpose of storage at this time.

If drought conditions worsen further, additional voluntary reductions may be requested, and specific sensitive streams and water licenses may be targeted for mandatory reductions under the *Water Sustainability Act*. **If you see the drought level updated to Level 4 on the Drought Portal (listed below), the Ministry requests voluntary water reductions of 50% by all water users in the Lower Columbia Basin and West Kootenay Basin.** Once drought conditions improve to Level 2, voluntary reductions requests will cease. Due to the rapidly changing nature of streamflow, please watch the Drought Portal (website below) for the most up to date information as follow up letters may not be possible. Local governments are also posting up to date information on their platforms.

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Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural
Resource Operations, and Rural
Development

Kootenay-Boundary
Water Management

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Regular situational updates and more information can be found by searching the following websites:

- [British Columbia Drought Information Portal](#): for current provincial drought levels and advisory bulletins.
- [Drought Information-Province of British Columbia](#): for links to current drought information and other helpful resources, including tips for water conservation.
- [River Forecast Centre](#): for current streamflow conditions and modelling.
- [British Columbia Drought and Water Scarcity Response Plan](#): for information on the drought levels and how the province manages drought.

If you have questions about drought or drought conditions, please contact Front Counter BC at 1-877-855-3222 or FrontCounterBC.gov.bc.ca.

Conserving water is everyone's responsibility, even more so in times of water shortage. Thank you for your support.

Yours truly,



Garth Wiggill
Regional Executive Director
Kootenay Boundary Region
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development