



Sunshine Coast  
Conservation  
Association

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For Immediate Release

### **Public celebrates win for drinking water in the Chapman *Watershed Reserve***

Defenders of the public's drinking water here on the Sunshine are celebrating today after the Sunshine Coast Regional District's Board of Health issued an Order to remedy a health hazard created by Western Forest Product's (WFP) logging activity in the Chapman Creek *Watershed Reserve*.

Chapman Creek is the source of drinking water for 23,000 residents and has been severely damaged by logging activities in the past. The Order curtails logging activity in the watershed's most sensitive areas and also imposes new restraints on forest practices.

Sunshine Coast Conservation Association Executive Director Daniel Bouman said "I've never before seen such an overwhelming response to a local environment issue. The contribution of the public to the Health Board's investigation and hearing was very thorough and effective." Bouman also added that "it was our pleasure to assist the public in making the complaint, filing presentations, getting legal advice and understanding the historical background to this situation." West Coast Environmental Law's Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund (EDRF) also played a major part in informing and empowering the public to deal with this hazard.

Some facts arising from the Health Board's investigation

- The Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) objectives for drinking water protection are entirely inadequate to protect public health,
- Forest companies that achieve "due diligence" as defined by FRPA, are free of any liability for unanticipated consequences of watershed logging,
- In order to facilitate logging opportunities, Western Forest Products removed three Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA) from the watershed,
- Neither the Ministry of Forests and Range (MOFR) nor WFP retained the services of a qualified hydrologist while developing cut-blocks for logging,
- MOFR threatened WFP with a "take or pay" policy to ensure that WFP would complete logging activity in the watershed before April; 2008.

While this Board of Health finding represents a milestone in the history of our watershed, the issue of water source area protection is far from resolved. WFP has 10 days to give notice to the BC Supreme Court if it decides to appeal the Health Board's decision. Local government, the SCCA and a host of concerned citizens will be watching this situation closely.

For more information visit our website [www.thescca.ca](http://www.thescca.ca) or contact

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