

DRAFT POLICY

Greater Consideration for Citizens of the Columbia River Treaty Negotiation



Whereas: the international Columbia River Treaty re-negotiation is in progress. Currently the Americans send about \$120 million annually to BC government in hydro generated in the US to compensate for using the Columbia River Basin in Canada as the American water reservoir and for flood control. The Libby Dam (part of the river system in the US) contributes nothing.

Whereas: the US water lobby is powerful, conservative, organized and strong; and want to eliminate our Canadian entitlement, yet retain business as usual.

Whereas: the original treaty had and continues to have massive impact on Basin vitality – our ecology, sustainable farming, tourism, recreation, forestry and fisheries. About 1100 square kilometers of BC remain underwater so American hydro generating companies can maximize power production; minimize their urban flood concerns; maintain recreational opportunities on US waterfronts; and ensure irrigation to an arid zone to grow water thirsty, high value crops. In Canada, the third largest agricultural valley in BC remains underwater; Lake Koochanusa is dried up for most of the year (you can't even launch a boat); and not one cent of Treaty earnings is earmarked directly to the citizens of the Columbia Basin as compensation.

Whereas: many Indigenous and colonial settlers were displaced and received paltry restitution if any, and promises remain unfulfilled in the original negotiation. In the current negotiation none of the citizens most affected by the Treaty, those in the Columbia Basin, have assurances their "voice" will result in any significant action.

Be it resolved that the LPC urge the federal government to:

- i. Include the Sinixt First Nations (declared extinct) in the Treaty negotiations
- ii. Consider the lack of remediation to those most affected in the first round of negotiations and work to ensure the promises made in the original treaty are fulfilled
- iii. Add a percentage of the Libby Dam profits as part of the compensation for the water storage that the Libby Dam currently have for free in Canada
- iv. Ensure the citizens in the Columbia Basin have better assurances their concerns are not only being heard but also acted upon.

Be it further resolved that the citizens in the Columbia Basin be more appropriately compensated through improved provincial government services and infrastructure in recognition of the ongoing sacrifices these citizens are making for American advantage.

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Note: US water right sales for agriculture – ramifications – might want to address as well