



Why 99% of Lakes and Rivers Remain **Unprotected** in Canada

Emma Lui, Water Campaigner

The Capilano River travels south through Vancouver's North Shore to the Burrard Inlet across from Stanley Park. Ten minutes from Vancouver's downtown core, the river is a popular attraction with locals and tourists. The river has world-class kayaking and salmon fishing.

The Capilano River also flows through the Cleveland Dam, which provides 40 per cent of metro Vancouver's drinking water. I walked the popular trail along the Capilano River to the Cleveland Dam in 2015 – when B.C. experienced one of its worst droughts – and saw how noticeably low the reservoir was that year.

As a local resident I am deeply concerned that the Capilano River is one of millions of rivers and lakes that remains unprotected under the federal Navigation Protection Act (NPA), formerly the Navigable Waters Protection Act (NWPA).

In 2012, the former Harper government removed protections from 99 per cent of lakes and rivers under the NWPA. This change meant that only pipeline, dam, mining or other industrial projects that crossed

the short list of 162 (now 164) waterways would be reviewed for harmful water impacts, putting the remaining waterways at risk.

Leading up to the 2015 election, the Trudeau government committed to restoring and modernizing the freshwater and environmental protections that the Harper government had so wrongly gutted.

The Trudeau government is reviewing the NWPA along with the Fisheries Act and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. In March, the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities tabled recommendations that failed to recognize the importance of water. The first of 18 recommendations advised that protections be kept off of the 99 per cent of lakes and rivers and encouraged the federal government to abandon its responsibilities to protect waterways and communities' right to navigate waterways.

In 2012, the former Harper government also exempted large pipelines and powerlines projects from the NWPA. Under these changes, the Trudeau government gave the green light to the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline, which crosses 1,300 waterways in Alberta and B.C. The Standing Committee recommended that Transport Canada be included in decision-making on environmental assessments for pipelines and power lines, yet it is unclear whether this will include all lakes and rivers.

The Trudeau government has a limited amount of time to respond to the recommendations. It can implement the recommendations and carry on Harper's legacy, or it can deliver the real change it promised us by putting protections back on every lake and every river and working towards the bold visions to truly protect the world's lakes and rivers.

Report: *Every Lake, Every River: Restoring the Navigable Waters Protection Act.*
canadians.org/report-everylakeeveryriver

TAKE ACTION! Protect #EveryLakeEveryRiver

Add your voice – and your local lake or river! – to a mass delivery to the Trudeau government to put protections back on every lake and every river. To join, send us:

1. Your name: _____
2. Your postal code/city/town: _____
3. The lakes and rivers in your community:

(Check the webpage at goo.gl/N1LMH6 to see if they are protected.)

4. A photo or hand-drawn picture of the lake or river (optional).



Mail: Return this form using the enclosed postage-paid envelope to: The Council of Canadians
300-251 Bank St., Ottawa, ON
K2P 1X3

Online: Learn more online at canadians.org/EveryLakeEveryRiver