



Blue Communities Project

February 6, 2009

Dear community member,

Canada's water is under growing pressure from privatization, underfunding, pollution, scarcity, climate change and international trade deals. The need to protect water resources and services is urgent. Over the past decade, community Water Watch activists have successfully worked to defend public water systems and improve the environment. We need your support to expand this work.

There are two competing narratives about the Earth's freshwater resources in the 21st century. On one side are powerful decision-makers, heads of some powerful states, international trade regimes, financial institutions and corporations who view water as a commodity to be bought and sold on the open market. On the other is a global grassroots movement of local communities and activists who see water as part of the global commons and seek to protect water for nature and reasonable human use.

We invite you to become a part of the local and global movement for water security and justice by joining the Blue Communities Project. The Blue Communities Project is a joint initiative that furthers the work of local Water Watch coalitions across the country. The Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Council of Canadians are launching this initiative to promote water as a public resource and a human right in communities across Canada.

This project builds on the work of grassroots activists and workers to defend public water services and challenge the bottled water industry.

This guide was created to help water activists press for local action to protect the water commons in an environment where there is increasing pressure to commodify water resources and privatize water services. As a city worker, municipal councillor or local activist pursuing the creation of a "blue community", you will become part of a network through which you can share ideas and strategies.

As we deal with the impacts of a global water crisis and growing pressure to privatize even in water-rich parts of the world, we hope the information and tools provided in this guide will help you make a difference by protecting your local water resources.

In doing so, you will provide leadership for other communities to do the same.

Sincerely,



MAUDE BARLOW
National Chairperson
Council of Canadians
Senior Advisor on Water
to the President of the General Assembly



PAUL MOIST
National President
Canadian Union of Public Employees

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Encl.