



### HIGH STAKES

- There were 174 drinking water advisories in First Nations in May 2018.
- The proposed Canadian Navigable Waters Protection Act still exempts pipelines and power lines and could give the green light to 118 Site C-type dams currently proposed.
- The proposed Trans Mountain pipeline alone puts 1,355 waterways at risk.
- 213 billion litres of raw sewage was flushed into waterways in Canada in 2016.
- Canada's trade and investment agreements do not adequately protect water policy from costly investor-state disputes.

### CLEAR CHOICES

- Implement the UN-recognized human rights to water and sanitation.
- Adequately fund water and wastewater infrastructure in municipalities and First Nations.
- Fund robust environmental assessments and strong water science and research.
- Safeguard the Great Lakes, groundwater and other freshwater sources, and Canada's oceans.
- Exclude water as a tradeable good, service or investment in Canada's trade and investment agreements.

Canada must take action to recognize water as a human right, a shared commons and a public trust. The United Nations has declared human rights to water and sanitation in several resolutions as well as in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Now that Canada has passed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), it must obtain free, prior and informed consent from Indigenous peoples on all laws, projects and policies affecting water.

Despite the Trudeau government's repeated promises to end drinking water advisories in First Nations by 2020, there are still more than 100 in place at any given time, and no comprehensive plan to address the problem. The proposed Canadian Navigable Waters Act and existing environmental and energy legislation fail to protect waterways from pipelines like Trans Mountain, mega-dams like Site C, fracking, mining, offshore oil drilling in Nova Scotia, and more. Trade agreements like NAFTA encourage and effectively lock in the privatization of water services and continue to give big corporations rights to sue governments for safeguarding water.

**Action:** Strengthen public and community water and wastewater infrastructure through the following measures:

- Strengthen the Clean Water and Wastewater Fund by requiring that it be used to improve public or community-run water and wastewater infrastructure. Cost: \$6.5 billion a year for six years, \$2.5 billion a year in year seven and beyond.
- End drinking water advisories in First Nations (See the First Nations chapter for costing).
- Implement the Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulation passed in 2012, allocating \$3.5 billion over the next two years and \$2 billion a year afterwards.
- Commit \$100 million annually for water infrastructure in small municipalities.
- Commit \$75 million annually for ongoing water operator training, public sector certification and conservation programs.

**Action:** Improve and increase funding for environmental impact assessments in the following ways:

- Conduct assessments of all energy and mining projects in consultation with affected communities, and seek the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous nations in the process. Cost: \$50 million annually for three years.
- Conduct an in-depth, independent study of the effects of tar sands development on the environment and health. Cost: \$30 million annually for two years.
- Reinstate federal funding for water programs at Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Transport Canada. Cost: \$80 million annually for three years.

**Action:** Ensure the safety and sustainability of freshwater in Canada through the following measures:

- Implement a comprehensive action plan to protect the Great Lakes Basin. Cost: \$500 million in year one and \$950 million a year in each of the following four years.
- Commit to complete watershed mapping, establish water quality and quantity monitoring frameworks, increase the number of monitoring stations, and train staff. Cost: \$300 million over three years.
- Create a federal water minister position to co-ordinate the more than 20 departments that set federal policies affecting water.
- Commit \$3 million toward a groundwater protection plan and \$1 million to complete a review of virtual water exports from Canada.