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July 7, 2023

Dear Barriere River watershed residents:

Re: Forecasted drought conditions and water reduction notice

You are receiving this letter because you hold a water license within the Barriere River watershed. The Provincial Water Stewardship group is contacting you to communicate current conditions within the basins, as well as request landowners to be prepared for possible drought conditions this year.

The Southern Interior region of British Columbia is forecasted to experience above average temperatures during the summer of 2023, and below average precipitation. Peak spring freshets have already occurred throughout the North Thompson, and the snowpack has mostly melted. The flow in the Barriere River is at a record low for this time of year, and has already dropped to levels typically seen in August.

The Ministry of Forests raised the Drought Level on the Barriere River to a 3 last week, and raised it again to a 4 this week due to the record low flows. **Raising the river to a Drought Level 4 this early in the summer indicates it is likely that flows will drop below critical levels for fish passage or spawning in mid-to late summer. We are requesting that water users begin to conserve water now, and plan for future additional water conservation measures. We are notifying you that regulatory action to reduce use may be required later this summer.** We are making this request to users who draw directly from the Barriere River, its tributaries, as well as from hydraulically connected aquifers.

Level	Impacts	General Response Measures
0	There is sufficient water to meet socio-economic and ecosystem needs	Preparedness
1	Adverse impacts to socio-economic and ecosystem values are rare .	Conservation
2	Adverse impacts to socio-economic and ecosystem values are likely .	Conservation Local water restrictions where appropriate
3	Adverse impacts to socio-economic and ecosystem values are possible .	Conservation Local water restrictions likely
4	Adverse impacts to socio-economic and ecosystem values are likely .	Conservation and local water restrictions Regulatory action possible
5	Adverse impacts to socio-economic and ecosystem values are almost certain .	Conservation and local water restrictions Regulatory action likely Possible emergency response

We are sharing this information with you in the spirit of cooperation and stewardship. The Barriere River provides important habitat for many culturally and ecologically significant fish and other wildlife species.

If you would like more information on changing drought conditions, please access the British Columbia Drought Information Portal that is managed by the Ministry of Forests at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/drought-flooding-dikes-dams/drought-information> .

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has published online resources on drought preparedness and response strategies that agricultural producers could implement. They are available at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/water/drought-in-agriculture> .

We appreciate your support, and we understand the impacts that drought can have on everyone. Through water conservation measures and working together we can work to protect aquatic life and support water users in the Barriere River watershed.

If you have any questions, please contact Carla Hartling at Carla.Hartling@gov.bc.ca or at (250) 312-6713.