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*Watching Out for BC's Wild Salmon*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 22, 2010

## **Water opinion poll reveals wide public support for protecting water, rivers, and wild salmon**

### ***Water identified as most important resource: But is Government willing to act?***

VANCOUVER, BC – Watershed Watch Salmon Society is pointing to an opinion poll released today by McAllister Opinion Research group which identifies overwhelming public support for better protection of water, natural ecosystems and wild salmon. The McAllister poll interviewed 835 British Columbians from October 25 - 31, 2010, and found that:

- 98% of British Columbians feel fresh water is crucial to the prosperity and quality of life in BC.
- 87% rate overuse of water by commercial and industrial users as a major or moderate threat.
- 88% are concerned about impacts of water shortages to streams, rivers and salmon habitat.
- 94% favour ensuring that the protection of nature, wildlife and species like salmon are always top priority.
- 72% say Nature should be the priority for managing water use during times of water scarcity—even if it slows economic growth.

Sadly, few respondents were aware of BC's stalled "Living Water Smart" program, or plans to reform BC's antiquated water law.

"The water poll results reveal exceptional public support for better care and protection of aquatic habitats and fish," said Dr. Craig Orr, Executive Director of Watershed Watch Salmon Society, one of the groups involved in organizing the poll. "The needs of salmon for water were given a much higher priority than most other consumptive uses of water, especially diverting of our rivers for power. People are even willing to slow development and growth to protect water and salmon, and few are happy with the job government is doing," Orr added.

To review the poll:

<http://www.watershed-watch.org/publications/files/BCWaterPollingSummary-Nov2010.pdf>

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