



December 18, 2019

RE: 019-0913 Proposal to extend the current moratorium on water bottling permits

From: **Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW Ontario Council)**

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Consultation regarding the proposal to extend the current moratorium on water bottling permits, 019-0913. CFUW Ontario Council represents 49 clubs throughout the province. We are a grassroots volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to issues of public concern.

Since 2001 we have maintained policy that denotes water as a non-renewable natural resource of paramount importance. We support the proposed moratorium on water bottling permits until October 2020, and call upon the Government of Ontario to make that ban unlimited, including phasing out current permits.

**BACKGROUND:**

The primary debate in the majority of the literature centres around our divided definition of water. Plastic pollution is an additional element of the discussion.

- Some bottling companies (e.g. Nestle) are putting considerable energy, analyses, and community philanthropy into identification as mindful environmental citizens who are and will extract water from community aquifers responsibly.
- While the majority of uses of local aquifers return water to the water table eventually (agriculture, tap water, construction and manufacturing), the practice of extracting water for plastic bottling does not. Once bottled (in single use plastic bottles), the water goes all over the world, and does not return to the aquifer.
- Water is a finite resource. Once an aquifer is drained, it takes many decades, many centuries to replenish.
- Global warming contributes to uncertain water resources through drought, flooding and contamination, massive storms with rapid runoff of valuable rainwater, less snow adding to groundwater, and accelerated glacial melt, reducing ongoing water sources for agriculture and aquifers.

- Canadians, and more specifically Ontarians, have clearly stated that fresh, clean drinking water is one of their top priorities in numerous polls. A recently released poll noted that “82% of Ontario residents want the provincial government to permanently stop issuing permits for extracting groundwater to sell as bottled water.” (Council of Canadians, Oracle Poll, December 2018)
- Many plastic bottling companies (including Nestle) were also signators to the Canada-led Ocean Plastics Charter, which commits to reducing single-use plastic. This charter however, is only a voluntary guideline.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- CFUW Ontario supports the proposed extension to the moratorium on water bottling permits, and calls for a permanent end to further permits enabling commercial bottling water extraction, along with phasing out those permits now in place.
- We encourage action to improve the health of marine ecosystems through a prohibition of single use plastic.

#### **CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL**

Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) is a voluntary, self-funded, non-profit organization, which is affiliated with the national Canadian Federation of University Women. Among our main concerns is a clean safe environment for both our own health and that of the planet.



Sandra Thomson

President, CFUW Ontario Council  
[president.cfuwontario@gmail.com](mailto:president.cfuwontario@gmail.com)  
[www.cfuwontcouncil.org](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.org)

Researched and prepared by Sheila Clarke, CFUW Stratford

## **RELEVANT CFUW POLICIES:**

### **Canadian Water 2001**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments of Canada to protect our water resources and specifically to declare that water, being a non-renewable natural resource of paramount importance, belongs to the Canadian public and its use must be regulated in the long-term public interest;

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to adopt and implement a sustainable and prudent water management policy to respond to long-term regional needs with due regard to the ecosystem and hydrogeological reality;

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to promote conservation and more efficient use of surface water and groundwater at individual, local, provincial, territorial, national and international levels.

### **Protection of Water**

Urge their governments to:

1. protect water resources and specifically declare that water, being a non-renewable natural resource of paramount importance, be protected at all levels of government and its use and price be regulated;
2. oppose all efforts to make privatization of water a condition for receiving financial aid,
3. adopt and implement a sustainable and prudent water management policy to respond to long-term regional needs with due regard to the ecosystem and hydro-geological reality; and,
4. promote conservation and more efficient use of surface water and groundwater at individual, local, national and international levels.

### **Enforcement of the Fisheries Act**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans to enforce the Fisheries Act to eliminate the pollution of fish and their habitat in Canada's coastal and inland waters.

### **Marine Development**

RESOLVED, That national federations and associations within their own countries introduce at local level protection of the marine environment, as well as other environmental factors and urge their governments in taking such measures for the sustainable development of the marine environment.

**RESOURCES:**

82% in Ontario want an end to bottled water extraction permits. December 11, 2018.

Council of Canadians Media Release.

<https://canadians.org/media/82-per-cent-ontario-want-end-bottled-water-extraction-permits>

Glacier shrinkage driving global changes in downstream systems: Alexander M. Milner, Kieran Khamis, Tom J. Battin, John E. Brittain, Nicholas E. Barrand, Leopold Füreder, Sophie Cauvy-Fraunié, Gísli Már Gíslason, Dean Jacobsen, David M. Hannah, Andrew J. Hodson, Eran Hood, Valeria Lencioni, Jón S. Ólafsson, Christopher T. Robinson, Martyn Tranter, and Lee E. Brown. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*. first published September 5, 2017

<https://www.pnas.org/content/114/37/9770>

Government of Canada. Oceans and Fisheries. Canada's oceans agenda. Date modified: 2019-07-30

<https://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/campaign-campagne/oceans/index-eng.html>

Government of Canada. Ocean Plastics Charter.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/international-commitments/ocean-plastics-charter.html>

How Does Climate Change Impact Water? More Profoundly Than You Think.

<https://www.waterdocs.ca/water-talk/2018/9/19/5-ways-climate-change-impacts-water>

Shimo, Alexandra. While Nestlé extracts millions of litres from their land, residents have no drinking water. *The Guardian*, Oct. 4, 2018

<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2018/oct/04/ontario-six-nations-nestle-running-water>

Water for sale: Why Ontario needs to change the rules for water bottlers. October 04, 2016

Ashley Wallis, Program Manager, Water

<https://environmentaldefence.ca/2016/10/04/water-sale-ontario-needs-change-rules-water-bottlers/>