



Ref: 200515

September 30, 2013

Jamie Brennan, Chair
School District 68
Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools
395 Wakesiah Avenue
Nanaimo, British Columbia
V9R 3K6

Dear Chair Brennan:

Thank you for your letter of August 28, 2013, regarding the risk to John Barsby Community School associated with Middle and Lower Chase River Dams (Chase River Dams), on Chase River.

I understand and appreciate the concerns of the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools regarding the risks posed by the Chase River Dams, owned by the City of Nanaimo. As you state in your letter, as recently as July 30, 2013, the City of Nanaimo has been reminded by the comptroller of water rights that they must correct the deficiencies identified in the two dams as soon as possible and implement measures to mitigate the ongoing risk while these deficiencies are being corrected. It is the dam owners right to determine which safeguarding option to use provided it is acceptable and approved by the provincial dam safety officer.

This ministry recognizes the seriousness of the situation with the two dams on the Chase River and continues to encourage the City of Nanaimo to reach an appropriate solution in a timely manner. As you point out, if necessary, options are available to the British Columbia Government if the City of Nanaimo fails to meet their obligations as dam owner.

I encourage the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools to contact the City of Nanaimo directly to express your concerns and to ensure that the risks to John Barsby Community School are appropriately addressed by the City of Nanaimo in both their short-term risk mitigation plan and for the long term. In the interim, the School Board may want to consider having a safety

consultant review the City of Nanaimo's July 2012 Chase River Dam Breach Flood Inundation Study and the other related technical reports (available on their website) and provide recommendations to the School Board on appropriate emergency preparedness.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Thomson" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Thomson
Minister

pc: Honourable Peter Fassbender , Minister of Education
Mayor John Ruttan, City of Nanaimo
Glen Davidson, Director and Comptroller of Water Rights, Water Management Branch
Resource Stewardship Division
John Baldwin, Water Stewardship Officer, West Coast Region