

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

May 16, 2013

The Editor
Nanaimo Daily News

Dear Editor,

Further to your May 16th editorial, I wish to clarify the province's position on the removal of the Colliery dams. Under the Water Act, the province has the authority and responsibility to order dam owners, in this case, the City of Nanaimo, to immediately address hazardous conditions.

The dams, in their current state, are a public safety hazard. If they fail, over 1,800 people will be affected and up to 150 people could die. In addition to single family homes, a high school, day care and apartment buildings are in the flood zone.

I did say in an interview this week with the Nanaimo Daily News that the dams could remain in place until 2014, if appropriate mitigation measures are taken. The only appropriate mitigation option that would allow the dams to remain for another year would be if they were drained. While the dams would remain, the swimming and fishing opportunities that residents enjoy would not.

In the interest of public safety, the province accepts Nanaimo City Council's decision to decommission the dams this year.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Senior Dam Safety Officer
Ministry of Forests lands and Natural Resource Operations