

**April 26, 2024**

The Honourable Rebecca Schultz  
Minister of Environment and Protected Areas  
Government of Alberta  
204 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6  
[aep.minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:aep.minister@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Minister Schultz,

As residents and landowners in Ponoka County, we are writing to bring to your attention the Alberta Environment's authorization of Baytex Energy, Clearview Resources Ltd., Spartan Delta Corporation water licences, as well as Jones Trucking and Backhoe water management practices at Lloyd Creek, particularly in light of the current drought conditions in our province.

Lloyd Creek serves as an indispensable resource for our community, supporting households, farming, wildlife, small businesses, and various other needs.

What has become apparent, is that the actions of all these companies, while profitable for them, have significant detrimental effects and if their operations continue **there will be little to no water left** for the larger community which heavily relies on this resource.

To provide you with background on this matter, Jones Trucking and Backhoe Services, situated at SW 7-44-1-W5 in Ponoka County, has excavated a substantial pit on their premises. Water from Lloyd Creek is infiltrating through the gravel and streaming into the pit. Jones Trucking and Backhoe Service has granted Baytex Energy, Clearview Resources Ltd., and Spartan Delta Corporation access to their property and the water-filled pit, which they claim is surface runoff.

All of these companies are extracting water from the pit for the purpose of oil and gas drilling (fracking). According to water licences authorized by the Alberta Government for 2024, the surface runoff water from the gravel pit can be utilized for oil and gas purposes. What this excavation has caused is not related to surface runoff, but in fact has caused the diversion of water away from Lloyd Creek, which has resulted in significantly low water levels. See the attached photos from the fall of 2023 (appendix #1).

For 2024, the Alberta Government authorized a total of 415,000 m<sup>3</sup> of surface runoff water to be pumped out for oil and gas. This is an additional 14,100 m<sup>3</sup> of surface runoff water from the previous year. See the attached chart (appendix #2).

Baytex Energy has also been authorized by Alberta Environment to divert 400,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water from the Blindman River at SW 21-43-2-W5 and Lloyd Creek is a tributary of the Blindman River.

These actions have been taken despite Lloyd Creek water levels being extremely low and recent correspondence to water licence holders from Alberta Environment indicating that Alberta is in a Stage 4 drought and is urging water conservation measures. See the attached letter (appendix #3).

Furthermore, the timing of these pumping operations, which began earlier this month during spring drought conditions when water levels are already dangerously low, is deeply concerning and necessitates immediate action.

Despite the community's opposition and the recent visit from the Alberta Energy Regulator on Monday, April 15 to assess the situation, no decisive action has been taken to halt Baytex Energy, Clearview Resources Ltd., Spartan Delta Corporation, as well as Jones Trucking and Backhoe operations. This lack of intervention is deeply troubling and underscores the urgency of the situation.

Minister Schultz, the protection of our natural resources and the well-being of our communities are paramount responsibilities that demand urgent attention and decisive action.

We trust in your commitment to upholding these principles and look forward to your prompt response and actions to address this pressing issue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Concerned citizens of Ponoka County

**Appendix #1**

**Photos of Lloyd Creek in the Fall of 2023**

Location: On Township Road 441 facing south of the bridge



## Appendix #2 Comparison of 2023 and 2024 Water Licences

SW7-44-1 W5M Comparison of 2023 and 2024 Water Licenses				
Year	Company	License number	Volume (m3)	Notes
2023	Bonavista	00491622	200000	
	Baytex	00491622	200000	
	I3	00498818	900	
	<del>Bonavista</del>	<del>00492938</del>	<del>460000</del>	Cancelled by Department
	<del>Bonavista</del>	<del>00494180</del>	<del>460000</del>	Cancelled by Department
Total approved (neglecting dust control etc 2023)			<b>400900</b>	
2024	<del>Spartan</del>	<del>00499823</del>	<del>180000</del>	Cancelled by Department
	Baytex	00500077	200000	
	<del>Clearview</del>	<del>00500349</del>	<del>15000</del>	Cancelled by Department
	Clearview	00500622	15000	
	Spartan	00500623	200000	
Total approved (neglecting dust control etc 2023)			<b>415000</b>	

**Authors comment:** After much concern from the provincial authorities about pending drought and a letter from the Office of the Minister circulated saying that water users would voluntarily have to use less water, it doesn't appear that anything has been done.

This landowner formally complained to Alberta Environment about little or no flow in Lloyd Creek after the 2023 pumping from SW7-44-1-W5M and was told by the AER that new licenses would be reviewed to confirm they were appropriate and users would be held to those licenses. It doesn't appear anything has changed.

## Appendix #3

### Letter from Alberta Environment to Water Licence Holders



ALBERTA  
ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECTED AREAS  

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*Office of the Minister*

Dear Water License Holder,

As you know, our province is currently in a drought. Unfortunately, we have received little precipitation so far this winter. These conditions mean there is potential for the drought to worsen this year, and we must be prepared.

Our province is taking action in accordance with Alberta's water shortage management plan. This plan ranges from Stage 1, which is a minor drought, to Stage 5, which can lead to a declaration of an emergency. We are currently in Stage 4.

Alberta has stood up a Drought Command Team, and a first draft of a 2024 Drought Emergency Plan has been completed and is being refined. We have also initiated drought modelling work that will help us predict and maximize the province's water supply.

The province is also bringing together an external advisory panel of leaders from various sectors to provide advice on drought preparations and to advise on how Alberta can make water more available over the long term.

**Finally, and most importantly, starting February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the Drought Command Team will be bringing together major water licence holders to negotiate water sharing agreements.**

Water license holders will be asked to voluntarily take less water in order to ensure that there is water available for as many users as possible. These negotiations will be the largest water-sharing effort that has ever been initiated in Alberta and the first since 2001.

In Alberta, there are 25,000 water licence holders that hold licences for 9.5 billion cubic metres of water. The Drought Command Team will select and prioritize negotiations with Alberta's largest water licence holders in an effort to secure significant and timely reductions in water use.

However, even if you are not identified as a major water licence holder, your support is still needed to help fully prepare Alberta for a severe drought. All Albertans will need to use less water to ensure that water is available to as many users as possible.

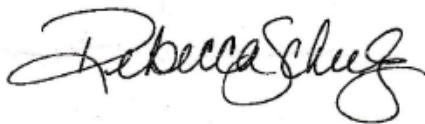
That is why I am writing to all water licence holders to ask that the following action be undertaken in the coming months:

1. Review and understand the conditions of your licence(s).
2. Review and understand how much water your business or organization uses and identify ways to reduce your use of water.
3. Take immediate action by investing in water conservation technologies that will help your business or organization reduce water use.
4. Develop drought plans now in case they are needed in the spring or summer.
5. Enter your licence onto Alberta's Digital Regulatory Assurance System (DRAS). DRAS is a secure online platform which will help licence holders compile and view all parts of their license(s) for greater transparency, completeness, accuracy and timeliness when managing their water licences and water use.
6. Monitoring water availability in your area using [rivers.alberta.ca](http://rivers.alberta.ca) and take action to reduce your water use if your area is under a water shortage advisory.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please call us toll free at: 310-3773 (in Alberta), or email: [epa.drought@gov.ab.ca](mailto:epa.drought@gov.ab.ca).

Alberta has successfully navigated droughts before and has a long, proud history of coming together during tough times. I know we can count on you and all of Alberta's other water licence holders to take the actions necessary to get through these challenging times.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Schulz,  
Minister of Environment and Protected Areas