

Dear Minister McKenna:

The people of Shawnigan Lake ask your immediate help to stop the destruction of Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island, in Beautiful British Columbia. I am one of 12,000 residents in this community. A permit granted to South Island Aggregates (SIA), AKA Cobble Hill Holdings, allows the dumping of 100,000 tons of toxic soil per year, for 50 years, in a high elevation quarry above the Shawnigan Lake watershed. This permit has been granted by the BC Ministry of Environment without due process. It allows the permit applicant to validate environmental credentials and site specific data instead of rigorous government assessment, to determine safety and compliance. Contaminated water from the site has breached containment systems that were never properly designed. Toxic sediment and water is being introduced into Shawnigan Lake. The heavy rains have exacerbated the situation and yet Mary Polak, the Liberal BC Environment Minister, remains indifferent to the destruction of that which she has sworn to protect. A petition with 15,000 signatures was submitted to the BC legislature during a mass rally at the Victoria Legislature on May 13, 2015, with no effect. The Cowichan Valley Regional District and the residents of Shawnigan Lake are involved in a very costly BC Supreme Court challenge to rescind the permit. Minister McKenna, millions of Canadians have very high hopes for you as our Environment Minister. But how can anyone have support for a government that allows the destruction of drinking water for thousands of people? The BC Environment Minister has failed to protect our environment, ignored her mandate and denied us representation.

Decisive action is essential to protect the lake and our water before it is too late. Minister McKenna, please use your authority to intercede in this matter, void this permit, force SIA to stop operations forever and cease the irreversible destruction of Shawnigan Lake.

Thank you for your attention and call anytime.

Paul Chorney