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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

June 19, 2005

The Editor  
The Province

As British Columbia's new environment minister, I was extremely disappointed with James McNulty's column from June 19th attacking BC's environmental record. The article was long on rhetoric, short on facts and read more like an American-style political fundraising letter than a thoughtful analysis piece.

BC's highly-regarded Progress Board ranks our province number one, above all others, in environmental quality. That ranking takes into account, among other factors, urban air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, waste water treatment and BC's protected areas system. We have kept that ranking for four straight years and it is something all British Columbians can be proud of.

Mr. McNulty overlooked the fact that in the last four years, we created 37 new parks and expanded 34 others. We introduced species at risk protection for the first time in BC under the Wildlife Act. We introduced a comprehensive Drinking Water Action Plan to strengthen groundwater protection and improve water quality. We protected the Codd Wetlands and Burns Bog (which the NDP wanted to turn into an amusement park), and are successfully fighting the Sumas Energy 2 power plant in the Fraser Valley. And we created more regional airshed plans than the NDP did in 10 years.

On climate change, BC now has a goal of acquiring 50% of all new electricity from clean sources - a goal that has been met and exceeded in the past four years. Our 40-point climate change plan sets out a target of maintaining BC's current position as the province with the third lowest greenhouse gas emissions per capita.

We have a wonderful environmental legacy to maintain in our province. With a renewed commitment to environmental sustainability in the decade ahead, it's my job to work with my colleagues to see that BC leads the world and has the best air and water quality and the best fisheries management, bar none.

Sincerely,

Barry Penner  
Minister of Environment