



For Immediate Release - April 28, 2003

Dr. Jack Blaney, nominated today as Chair of The Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform, to take leave of absence as Chair of the Fraser Basin Council

Vancouver, BC: Following his nomination as Chair of The Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform, Dr. Jack Blaney announced that he will be taking a leave of absence as Chair of the Fraser Basin Council should his nomination be confirmed. Premier Gordon Campbell made the announcement of Dr. Blaney's nomination today in Victoria. An all-party legislative committee will meet with Dr. Blaney to review his qualifications. With the committee's endorsement, the government will then formalize his appointment.

"Being nominated to Chair The Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform is a great honour and a challenging responsibility," Dr. Blaney said. "The idea of selecting citizens from all across this province and bringing them together for about 12 months of learning and dialogue on a matter of importance to all citizens is one that I find powerfully compelling. However, should I be confirmed as the Chair, I must at that time and with great regret leave my position as Chair of the Fraser Basin Council.

"The Council is truly a unique coalition of dedicated individuals and collaborative leadership at its best," Blaney added. "I must say how impressed I have been with the effectiveness of the Council in bringing people together to tackle big issues, solve problems and create opportunities to advance the sustainability of the Fraser River Basin. The Directors and staff are most exceptional and, should I serve as Chair of the Citizen's Assembly, I would look forward to working with the Council upon completion of my assignment with the Assembly."

"The Council regrets that Dr. Blaney may be taking this leave of absence," said Fraser Basin Council Executive Director David Marshall, "but we wish him well if he undertakes this important role with the Citizen's Assembly. Should his nomination be confirmed, the Council will be reviewing options to fill Dr. Blaney's position. In the interim, Roy Mussell, Vice-Chair of the Council and Chief of the Skwah First Nation in Chilliwack, would assume the responsibilities of the Chair."

Dr. Blaney was appointed Chair of the Fraser Basin Council in September 2001. He succeeded Iona Campagnolo who was Chair of the Council from 1997 until her appointment as British Columbia's first female Lieutenant-Governor. Dr. Blaney was President of Simon Fraser University from 1997 to 2000, and is currently Senior Fellow, The Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, Simon Fraser University. He is also a Commissioner on the International Joint Commission and co-creator and founding Director of Action Canada.

Established in 1997, the non-profit, non-partisan Fraser Basin Council brings people together to find solutions to long-standing issues and conflicts. Issues like flood management, the impacts of climate change, resolving 50 years of conflict in the Nechako watershed, aboriginal/non-aboriginal relations, and finding ways to strengthen smaller communities. The mandate of the Council is to ensure that the decisions we make about the Fraser River Basin today will protect and advance its economic, environmental and social sustainability into the future. The Council's 36 member board includes individuals from all regions of the Basin, with representatives from federal, provincial, local and First Nations' governments, as well as from the private sector and community organizations.

For more information, contact:

Raymond McAllister, Director of Communications, Fraser Basin Council

Tel: 604-488-5356

Email: rmcallister@fraserbasin.bc.ca