

## **Question in the House of Commons on the Protection of Northern Rivers**

**October 24, 2012**

**MP Dennis Bevington,**

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have excluded from protection many northern rivers which northerners rely on for navigation, such as the Nahanni River, the Liard River, most of the Yukon River, the Bear River and even the Slave River, which drains 80% of the water leaving Alberta and has been used for barging for more than 100 years. It is now excluded from protection. This could be opened up for a major power dam.

Is it the government's intent to remove any controls and development on the Slave and these other rivers?

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, the Navigable Waters Protection Act has always been about navigation, not environment. This has been the case since 1882. There is not a word about the environment in the actual act. My colleague is referring to another act, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which was amended last spring.