



May 30, 2023

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, MP
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Sent via email: Steven.Guilbeault@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister Guilbeault,

The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) is the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) area association representing the interests of local governments and member First Nations in the British Columbia region of Vancouver Island, qathet, the Sunshine Coast, Central Coast and North Coast. After consideration at the AVICC Annual Convention in April 2023, AVICC members endorsed a resolution that may be of interest to your Ministry:

AVICC Regional Resolution R4- E&N Land Grant Biodiversity and Restoration

The resolution is enclosed for your review and attention. We would welcome your comments on this matter.

If you have any questions, or require further information, please contact Theresa Dennison, AVICC Executive Coordinator, at 604-270-8226 ext 221 or by email at avicc@ubcm.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Cote', is positioned above the typed name of the sender.

Director Penny Cote, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
AVICC President

Enclosure

cc: The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, MP, Minister of Finance

Note: The resolution has also been conveyed under separate cover to your BC provincial colleague:
The Honourable George Heyman, MLA, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

E&N LAND GRANT BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION AND RESTORATION REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

WHEREAS in 1883, 8,000 sq kilometers of south-east Vancouver Island representing 20% of the island land base was granted to Robert Dunsmuir in exchange for the construction of the E&N Railway, and the E&N Land Grant has impacted Indigenous rights and title, community drinking watersheds, and the ability to protect and conserve biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems.

AND WHEREAS the federal and provincial governments have committed to the protection of 30% of the land base by 2030 as part of the provincial, national and international commitments to protect biodiversity.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT on this 140th anniversary of the E&N Land Grant, the AVICC call upon the Governments of Canada and British Columbia to identify areas within the E&N Land Grant as a priority for the protection and conservation of biodiversity for their 2030 targets, and engage with impacted First Nations, local governments and land owners in a process to protect and restore the biodiversity of the southeast region of Vancouver Island with a focus on community watershed catchment areas, riparian areas along fish-bearing rivers and streams, sensitive ecosystems and habitats, and culturally significant areas.