



Reference: 31967

November 30, 2023

VIA EMAIL: info@avicc.ca

Vickey Brown, Mayor of Cumberland
Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC)
P.O. Box 28058
Victoria, British Columbia
V9B 6K8

Dear Mayor Brown:

Thank you and your staff for taking the time to meet with me at this year's UBCM Convention in Vancouver to discuss your concerns regarding the impacts of the E&N land grants on eastern Vancouver Island, community drinking watersheds, the protection and conservation of biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems, and data sharing with private forestry companies.

Through our engagement on the Watershed Security Strategy (the Strategy), we have consistently heard about the impacts of privately managed forest land on watersheds. The Strategy intends to address foundational priorities for holistic watershed management and protection of aquatic ecosystems, as well as options for co-governance. A \$100 million investment in a Watershed Security Fund (the Fund) was also announced earlier this year. The Fund is being co-developed by the Real Estate Foundation of B.C. (REFBC) and First Nations – more details are expected soon, and questions can be directed to REFBC.

Additionally, the Province is committed to partnering with the federal government, industry and communities, and working with Indigenous Peoples, to protect 30% of B.C.'s land base by 2030. As discussed during our meeting, one means of achieving this could be through Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas. Areas of high biodiversity, such as watersheds, are key in these considerations.

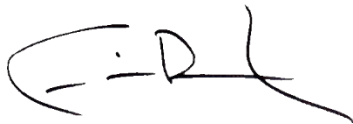
We encourage you to continue the good work being done to collaborate with First Nations in your area and building your knowledge base through data collection. If you would like to continue the discussion please reach out to James Mack, Assistant Deputy Minister, Water, Fisheries and Coastal Policy & Planning Division (james.mack@gov.bc.ca).

Vickey Brown, AVICC

Since meeting in September, the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship has become responsible for additional water, land, fish, and wildlife authorities. The attached outlines those changes in detail. Engagement sessions will be held with local governments, First Nations and stakeholders in the coming months to review these changes and to continue on work together in these priority areas.

Thank you for your time. I am pleased we had the opportunity to meet about topics important to both provincial and local government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Donnelly', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fin Donnelly
Parliamentary Secretary
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Attachment (1)

pc: Honourable Nathan Cullen, Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty
Reduction, MLA Nanaimo
Adam Walker, MLA, Parksville-Qualicum
James Mack, Assistant Deputy Minister, Water, Fisheries and Coastal Policy &
Planning Division

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Existing Functions and Responsibilities:

- Provincial water leadership:
 - Watershed Security Strategy & Fund; Coastal Marine Strategy; Wild Salmon Strategy
 - Water sustainability planning
 - Lead coordination on government’s strategy on source to tap, including drinking water
 - Water quality objective setting
 - Marine use policy and planning
- Integrated land management frameworks to guide land use decisions in B.C., modernized land use policy and planning and land base objective setting
- Provincial cumulative effects regime
- Strengthen partnerships, collaboration, and engagement with Indigenous Peoples on the management of natural resources and the land base (e.g., Collaborative Indigenous Stewardship Forums)
- Development of a co-management/shared decision-making regime with First Nations
- Consultation and accommodation policy, including the Area Based Approach & First Nations Consultation System
- Fish and wildlife leadership:
 - habitat/ecosystems; fisheries, aquaculture & wild salmon strategic policy
- BC/CAN Nature Agreement
- Integrated, science-based land, aquatic, terrestrial, resource data/information, and geographic/geospatial data, systems and analysis
- Strategic marine, land and resource management policies to support the effective operationalization of DRIPA in the natural resource sector
- Permitting Solutions Office
- Support for governance, organizational effectiveness, performance monitoring and reporting on progress
- Corporate Services for the Natural Resource ministries
- Natural Resource Information & Digital Services
- Crowns, Agencies, Board and Commissions:
 - Wildlife Advisory Council
 - Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board
 - Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission
 - Mackenzie River Basin Board

NEW From FOR

Water Management Functions:

- Full suite of authorities for managing water use, authorizations and orders for drought (e.g., Water Comptroller)
- River Forecast Centre & Flood Safety
- Flood strategy, policy and management
- Dams, Dam Safety and Utility Regulation (e.g., BC Hydro)
- Dikes, drainage and ditches
- Water allocation
- Source water protection

Fish and Wildlife Functions

- Fish and wildlife policy, research, allocations and authorizations
- Fisheries licensing
- Fish stock assessments
- Rivers and lakes management
- Data and reporting
- Wildlife and aquatic specialists
- Provincial wildlife veterinarian

Land Functions:

- Full suite of authorities and for lands authorizations (and related permitting support functions, including business transformation and First Nations engagement).
- FrontCounter BC
- Crown Land Opportunities and Restoration (including Contaminated Sites)
- Land programs
- Policy (Crown land and strategic)
- Land returns

NEW Crown Responsibilities (From FOR):

- Creston Valley Wildlife Management Authority
- Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC
- Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation
- Association of BC Land Surveyors
- Integrated Cadastral Information Society
- *BC Land Title and Survey Authority to FIN*

Ministry of Forests

Ongoing Functions and Responsibilities:

- Modernize forest sector and support a sustainable and innovative forest economy:
 - Forest sector policy including, tenures, economics and trade, value-add, softwood lumber, pricing, competitiveness, compensation, forest worker safety, and private managed forest lands
 - BC Timber Sales
- Forest management:
 - Old Growth Strategic Review
 - Forest Landscape Planning
 - Office of the Chief Forester including, forest research, investment, practices, planning, inventory, and health, Allowable Annual Cut decisions and seed orchard/seed centre, bioeconomy and forest products innovation
- Strengthen partnerships, collaboration, and engagement with Indigenous Peoples on the management of forest resources
- Integrated authorizations, permitting for archeology, forestry & range
- Multi-disciplinary research support for natural resource management
- Provincial Engineering Program
- *Heritage Conservation Act* transformation
- Range
- BC Wildfire Service including all hazards response
- Natural resource compliance and enforcement

Crowns, Agencies, Board and Commissions:

- Coastal Logging Equipment Support Trust
- Forest Enhancement Society of BC
- Forest Practices Board
- Private Managed Forest Land Council
- Timber Export Advisory Committee