October 15, 2026

David Muter
Assistant Deputy Minister
Land Use Planning and Cumulative Effects Division
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS)
Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Sent via email: david.muter@gov.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Muter,

Re: Private Managed Forest Land – Watershed Protection, Enforcement and Data Sharing

On behalf of the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC), thank you to you and your colleagues from the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS); Ministry of Forests (FOR); and Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) for meeting with AVICC and local government representatives on September 9, 2026 regarding challenges for local governments associated with Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL).

As discussed during our meeting, watershed protection, regulatory oversight, emergency preparedness, and access to information cross several provincial mandates – a coordinated approach will be essential to identifying practical solutions for communities located adjacent to Private Managed Forest Lands. The discussion identified data sharing as a promising area for further collaboration. We appreciated your willingness to explore the possibility of a multi-stakeholder working group, as well as the commitment from Ministry of Forests staff to follow up with the BC Wildfire Service regarding local government access to wildfire-risk information.

Following up the action items identified during our meeting, AVICC would welcome:

- information about next steps in establishing a multi-stakeholder working group focused on watershed data sharing and risk management. How can AVICC and our member local governments help support the creation of a working group?

- an update from the BC Wildfire Service regarding controlled access to wildfire-risk information for local governments, and/or the option of identifying an appropriate interim risk designation for local governments to use where information is unavailable;

- information on the existing *Water Sustainability Act* tools that may be available beyond Water Sustainability Plans, and how those tools could be applied more broadly to support sustainability and protection of watersheds located in Private Managed Forest Lands; and

- opportunities to improve clarity and coordination among ministries, agencies, and the Managed Forest Council regarding the reporting, investigation, and resolution of concerns.

We recognize that the Province is currently operating under the caretaker convention and understand that matters requiring new policy direction or significant commitments may need to await the formation of the next government. In the interim, we would appreciate any information that staff can provide regarding existing processes, potential administrative next steps, and an appropriate timeline for resuming more substantive discussions.

For reference, we have enclosed the meeting brief provided in advance of the September 9 discussion. AVICC remains committed to working constructively with provincial ministries, First Nations, local governments, the Managed Forest Council, and Private Managed Forest Landowners to improve watershed resilience, emergency preparedness, and information sharing.

Thank you again for your time, your engagement, and your willingness to serve as the coordinating contact for this work. We look forward to continuing the discussion. If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact Theresa Dennison, AVICC Executive Director, at 236-237-1202 or tdennison@avicc.ca.

Sincerely,



Vanessa Craig
AVICC President
Director, RD Nanaimo, Area B (Gabriola, Mudge, and DeCourcy Islands)

cc:
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Attachment: 2026-09-09_AVICC-WLRS-FOR-EMCR_MACC Meeting - PMFL_BRIEFING.pdf