

May 28, 2014

Ref: 206135

Sheila Malcolmson, Chair
Islands Trust Council
Via Email: smalcolmson@islandstrust.bc.ca

RE: Letter from Islands Trust Council Chair Sheila Malcolmson re Cooperating to Develop New Derelict Vessel Legislation and Programs (206135)

Dear Ms. Malcolmson:

Thank you for your letter of April 24, 2014, regarding the management of problem vessels in British Columbia. Dealing with problem vessels is a complex, time-consuming and costly job that often involves multiple agencies and levels of government depending on the circumstances. However, over the last couple of years there have been improvements in how the governments and agencies are working together.

The inter-jurisdictional staff working group is one example of where our collaborative efforts are helping, with the forthcoming province guide on the role of federal and provincial agencies expected in the near future. I acknowledge the Islands Trust for providing their staff resources to participate in this effort and for their continuing support in working with provincial and federal governments, and Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

Your letter acknowledges that reaching real solutions for the administration of problem vessels continues to be limited by fiscal limitations. Ministry staff are aware of the Washington State Derelict Vessel Removal Program that is referenced in your letter. As well, Transport Canada recently provided an update to the inter-jurisdictional working group on their policy work and research in this area. Transport Canada has completed an inventory of problem vessels along the coast of British Columbia that will serve to understand better the magnitude of the overall problem in the province. They are continuing work to identify options for vessel collection, and disposal. I view Transport Canada's actions and their participation in the working group as positive steps.

I look forward to the continued support of the Islands Trust as we continue to work collaboratively to make progress on this effort to reduce the risks posed by problem vessels. If you would like to discuss the status of the shared efforts for administering this issue, please contact Ward Trotter, Director of the Land Tenures Branch directly by phone at 250 356-2166 or by email at Ward.Trotter@gov.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

Steve Thomson
Minister of Forests, Lands
and Natural Resource Operations

pc: The Honourable Lisa Raitt, Minister of Transport
Honourable Don McRae, MLA, Comox Valley
Michelle Stilwell, MLA, Parksville – Qualicum
Jordan Sturdy, MLA, West Vancouver – Sea to Sky
Ward Trotter, Director, Land Tenures Branch