



Peter Luckham
Thetis Island Local Trustee

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February 25, 2015

Via email: TIACS.minister@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Amrik Virk
Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services
PO Box 9068
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9K4

Dear Minister Virk:

Re: Request for support for improved internet service on Thetis Island

I am writing to you as an Islands Trust Trustee, an elected representative in my community of 350 citizens. I would like to thank you for your work towards ensuring that all British Columbians have access to the Internet. I am writing to bring your attention to my community on Thetis Island, a small Gulf Island, 50 km west of Vancouver, 30 km south of Nanaimo and 60 km north of Victoria (see map below).

From the Thetis Island Official Community Plan I find I am called upon, from section 2.12 Public Utilities: "To support cooperation with public utility organizations engaged in providing services on Thetis Island and with their regulatory authorities." The Internet provider to Thetis Island is TELUS.

Some 70 per cent of the residents on Thetis Island have enjoyed high-speed Internet access for at least 15 years. The remaining 30 per cent have suffered with using dial-up service which, as you know, has significant limitations in this digital age. These residents believed that the reason they did not have access to high-speed Internet access was because the length of the copper wire from the TELUS control box on Thetis Island is further than the signal is able to be reliably transmitted. They expected that TELUS would soon overcome this technological limitation. However, instead of investing on Thetis Island, TELUS recently cut off dial-up service to all of its customers, leaving members of my community and many others without affordable Internet access. The only current alternative for these households is satellite service at a very high cost for very low bandwidth.

It appears that despite your Ministry's far-reaching Connecting B.C. Agreement with TELUS, TELUS has made a business decision that reduced Internet access in my community. We are a community that is falling through the cracks.

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I am encouraged that the BC government is committed to ensuring that 100 per cent of British Columbians have access to high-speed Internet connections by 2021 and I know your Ministry has been working hard to close the broadband gap.

It is my hope that the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services could work with TELUS to prioritize bringing improved Internet service to all of Thetis Island so that all the citizens in my community can enjoy the same Internet access that the thousands of British Columbians within an hour's travel of Thetis Island enjoy.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Luckham
Thetis Island Local Trustee

cc: Joe Natale President and CEO, TELUS
Darren Entwistle, Executive Chair, TELUS
Douglas Routley, MLA for Nanaimo-North Cowichan
Mel Dorey, Director Area G - Saltair / Gulf Islands, Cowichan Valley Regional District
Islands Trust Victoria office

Map of Islands Trust Area:

