



April 8, 2024

The Honourable Bruce Ralston
Minister of Forests
PO Box 9049, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister,

Re: Administration of Water Lot Leases in the Lower Fraser River Estuary

I am writing to address a significant concern that impacts not only the Delta community but potentially many coastal communities throughout British Columbia: the administration of water lot leases in the Lower Fraser River estuary.

As you are aware, the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development has responsibility for the administration of Crown land in this vital area. This transition, while essential, has brought to light several challenges affecting the well-being and economic stability of float home owners and others seeking to acquire or renew water lot tenures. Among these challenges are notable delays in the processing of applications, restrictions on permitted uses, and tenure limitations that fall short of providing the long-term certainty required for meaningful investment and development.

Such conditions have not only stifled waterfront development proposals but have also placed undue strain on local government efforts towards community revitalization. More specifically, the float home community faces a dilemma—without the assurance of extended water lot leases, homeowners find themselves unable to secure financing with amortization periods sufficient to ensure affordability and stability. Further, I have been told that some applicants have been informed of processing timeline in the order of years to even have their requests reviewed let alone approved. This predicament threatens not only the economic fabric of our waterfront communities, but also the very essence of a lifestyle cherished by many British Columbians.


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I understand and commend the Ministry's efforts to engage with First Nations, such as the Collaborative Management Agreement signed with the Musqueam First Nation in March 2017, which highlights a commitment to meaningful consultation and stewardship. However, amidst these positive strides, the need for an expedited tenure replacement process that balances the interests of all stakeholders—providing long-term certainty for leaseholders, facilitating waterfront development, and honoring First Nations consultations—remains pressing.

Therefore, I respectfully request that the provincial government intensify its efforts to implement such a process, ensuring that it is both efficient and inclusive. By doing so, we can unlock the full potential of our waterfront areas, bolster economic development, and provide our communities with the stability they need to thrive.

I am eager to collaborate closely with your ministry and other stakeholders to find a resolution that serves the best interests of all parties involved. Thank you for considering this urgent matter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "George V. Harvie", with a horizontal line drawn underneath.

George V. Harvie
Mayor

cc: Delta Council
Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Ian Paton, MLA for Delta South
Ravi Kahlon, MLA for Delta North
WesDel Marina Strata Council