

April 24, 2013

The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia
Box 9041
Station PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC

premier@gov.bc.ca

Dear Premier Clark:

Re: LRMP needed for Howe Sound Region

Howe Sound is the gateway to the Sea to Sky corridor with Highway 99 following its eastern coastline. Millions of visitors each year travel the water and the Sea to Sky Highway on the way to Whistler and beyond. It is also the ferry and marine route leading to Langdale and the Sunshine Coast.

Howe Sound is a truly remarkable region of unique biodiversity. It is a magnificent blend of ocean, mountains, forests and wilderness all located at the edge of Vancouver a major cosmopolitan and world class city, and yet to date there is no Land & Marine Resource Management Plan that covers this entire region. The Sea to Sky LRMP completed in 2010 leaves significant portions of Howe Sound very vulnerable.

The Future of Howe Sound Society is a non-profit society formed by a group of concerned citizens who recognizes this gap in planning. A proposed large scale industrial gravel mine at McNab Creek, one of only three estuaries in Howe Sound threatens not only the remarkable recovery of the Sound but the socio-economic benefits that are based on this beautiful, natural environment.

Our Society was formed with the mission to encourage the development of a co-ordinated, comprehensive management plan for Howe Sound that recognizes and protects the social, environmental and cultural value of this beautiful, natural area which is the Traditional Territory of the Squamish Nation while encouraging the development of sustainable industries to promote economic growth.

On Saturday April 13th this year, our Society invited and hosted organizations with an interest in Howe Sound to attend a Forum on the topic of an overall management plan for Howe Sound. The response was excellent and representatives from 65 organizations were in attendance. Industry, business, municipal leaders, Provincial leaders, government agencies, non-profit groups and community groups came together for the day to learn about each other's perspectives, to share what they value about Howe Sound and how they think we should move forward.

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The common ground amongst all attending was:

- Howe Sound is a natural community for families and we need to promote knowledge and respect for our backyard.
- We have an incomparable wilderness home and we value a healthy holistic ecosystem

There was a consensus from all who attended:

- Create a comprehensive management plan that is collaborative; is stakeholder-driven - involves all key players, including youth; is sustainability-based, science based.
- Build awareness of the issues
- Establish an appropriate marine and terrestrial park or protected area.

Who will do this?

- Howe Sound Community Forum members
- A grassroots committee
- An organization or coalition or committee to be created to initiate and move forward in developing this proposal and obtaining coordinated government support

We believe that Lower Howe Sound can benefit from the processes in place that developed the Sea to Sky LRMP. This process involves First Nations, industry, all levels of government, and local community groups. We believe that an effective management plan must not only address economic issues but must take into account environmental, cultural and social factors which are so critical to the livability of this region.

We urge you to start an LRMP process for the remainder of Howe Sound (the Sea to Sky LRMP that covers the northern end and east side of Howe Sound). In the meantime, there should be a moratorium imposed on approvals of any heavy or non-renewable industry in Howe Sound.

We look forward to hearing back from you on this matter in the near future. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Simons,
Executive Director,
Future of Howe Sound Society

c.c:

The Honorable Steve Thompson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
The Honorable Keith Ashfield, Minister of Fisheries & Oceans
The Honorable Terry Lake, Minister of Environment
Mrs. Joan McIntyre, MLA West Vancouver, Sea to Sky
Mr. Jordan Sturdy, MLA Candidate, West Vancouver, Sea to Sky

