



MAY 11 2017

Mr. Alistair MacGregor M.P.
Cowichan–Malahat–Langford
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6



Dear Alistair,

Thank you for your correspondence of March 7, 2017 regarding the Government of Canada's commitment under the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP) to build six new lifeboat stations and to partner with Indigenous and coastal communities. I regret the delay in responding.

The OPP's historic investment of \$1.5 billion over five years will help Canada develop a world-leading marine safety system for our country's three coasts that protects marine ecosystems. Canada's partnership with Indigenous and coastal communities under the OPP is a critical element of the country's marine transportation safety system.

Engagement, meaningful consultation and partnership with Indigenous and coastal communities, including the Pacheedaht First Nation and Port Renfrew, are of utmost importance to the Government of Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG). We value and need Indigenous traditional knowledge and local community expertise to better protect our coasts and waterways.

The OPP will provides significant new opportunities for Indigenous and coastal communities to partner with the Government of Canada in marine safety, training in emergency response, and the protection, preservation, and restoration of Canada's oceans and sea routes. These opportunities also include proactive vessel management, where Indigenous and other coastal communities can help create local vessel control areas to minimize safety risks and/or environmental impacts. Indigenous communities will be also be engaged in decision-making in order to play a meaningful role in emergency response and waterways management, and will participate in shared leadership opportunities in several areas.

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As announced in the Oceans Protection Plan, the Government of Canada has committed to building six new lifeboat stations across the country, including one in the Port Renfrew area. The final program details and exact location of the lifeboat stations have not yet been determined, and the Government of Canada and the CCG will meaningfully engage with Indigenous and other coastal communities before making any final decisions in this regard.

The Government of Canada looks forward to working with the Pacheedaht First Nation and the Port Renfrew community to implement the Oceans Protection Plan. We are confident that such collaboration and partnerships will lead to safer, more responsible marine shipping, and cleaner, healthier marine ecosystems that benefit Indigenous peoples and all Canadians.

Thank you for writing. I appreciate you sharing your views on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

c.c.: The Honourable Marc Garneau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport
The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Mr. Terry Beech, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard