



DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN AGENDA

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

February 27, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

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District of Metchosin

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Select Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Bill Cave, Garry Fletcher (Chair), Councillor Steve Gray, Anna Hall, Merrilee Hoen, Andy MacKinnon (recorder), Ric Perron, Erin Van de Water

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval

Moved and Seconded by Steve and Merrilee that the Committee approve the agenda with these changes: add 9e) Natural Assets Initiative

Carried

2. Presentations

Ernie Chang, Metchosin Natural History Clubhouse Proposal

One room in Old Metchosin School could be a natural history clubhouse. Much natural history expertise in Metchosin. No Board, no management. Ernie could coordinate. Ernie would like MEASC to support this initiative. Council discussed this last night. They're still trying to sort out rooms among competing interests for space (incl. for the preschool) as part of the visioning process.

3. Public Participation

Brent Donaldson. Material removed from Metchosin's ditches has to be tested, and potentially treated as potential toxic waste and hauled to Nanaimo. Also, ditches always get wider, and we lose road shoulders, and have reduced opportunities for roadside trails. Brent feels that we need to do a better job with ditching in Metchosin with the introduction of bioswales where appropriate.

Steve says that Council members were interested in a trial in a few areas. It could be part of Metchosin's next Road Management Plan.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Steve and Ric that the Committee approve the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held on November 28, 2023.

Carried

5. Review of Minutes

a) Council and Standing Committee Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Erin that the Committee receive the Council and Standing Committee Minutes for information.

Carried

b) Advisory Committee Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Garry and Bill that the Committee receive the Advisory Committee Minutes for information.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

Councillor Gray provided updates on Business Arising from MEASC's November 2023 Minutes.

a) Climate Action Plan

Councillor Gray presented the draft Climate Plan Evaluation Framework to Environment Committee. Council received the draft framework with interest and thanks. Steve will now work with the Planner to consider next steps. Big thanks to Merrilee for her excellent work on this.

MEASC had recommended that Metchosin's Environment Committee invite the ReImagine West Shore Community group to address them. ReImagine West Shore will address Environment Committee on February 12.

b) BC Government 30% Protected Land by 2030 Commitment

Councillor Gray provided some background materials to Mayor and Council on the Draft BC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework for their consideration in providing individual input to the Province.

c) Tanker traffic in the Strait of Juan de Fuca

Garry is preparing another op-ed submission.

d) Predator Strategies, Lessons Learned from other Communities

MEASC recommended to Environment Committee that they invite Nitya Harris and Peter Pauwels to make a presentation to them. Nitya Harris and Peter Pauwels have been invited to address the February 25 Environment Committee on Predator Strategies.

7. Reports: None

8. Correspondence: None.

9. Other Business

a) Proposed natural history room in the old school

Moved and Seconded by Bill and Anna that MEASC supports establishment of a natural history room at the Old School.

Carried

b) Mapping of potential sensitive areas in Metchosin

Garry brought out the old environmental inventory maps and tables, from approximately 30 years ago.

Moved and Seconded by Erin and Andy that Andy, Garry and Anna will meet with Jacqueline Clare to capture the useful information on these maps. Andy will take the lead on this.

Carried

c) DRAFT B.C. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Framework

- Email from Councillor Gray to biodiversity.ecosystemhealth@gov.bc.ca
- DRAFT B.C. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework: Submission Guide
- DRAFT B.C. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework

Moved and Seconded by Merrilee and Ric that MEASC members send their input re: the Framework ASAP, to meet the deadline.

Carried

d) Dark Sky Draft Proposal

- How Blue is Your Night
- International Dark Sky Community Program Guidelines
- Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Dark-Sky Site Application Requirement

Ted White is putting together a proposal to certify Metchosin as a Dark Skies community, headed by Healthy Communities Advisory Committee. (See attached material.) He would like a MEASC representative on the Committee, also Bill Weir.

Moved and Seconded by Steve and Andy that Steve bring up with our CAO that we're not currently compliant with our existing municipal policy re: Dark Skies.

Carried

Moved and Seconded by Garry and Bill that Anna Hall work with Ted and group (including Healthy Communities Advisory Committee) in crafting a Dark Sky proposal.

Carried

e) Natural Assets Initiative

Moved and Seconded by Erin and Andy that MEASC invite a representative from NAI to make a presentation to MEASC.

Carried

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

Moved and Seconded by Bill and Ric that the Committee adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Carried

The next MEASC meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Environment and Natural Areas Committee Meeting
January 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**

Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

PLEASE NOTE: The meeting has been recorded.

Present: Councillor Gray in the Chair, Mayor Little, Councillors Shukin, Donaldson and Epp. Also present was Bob Payette, Chief Administrative Officer, Stephanie Dunlop, Fire Chief, and Jennifer Miller, Legislative Services Assistant (recorder).

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

Councillor Gray took the opportunity to acknowledge that the Environment and Natural Areas Committee meeting was taking place on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples and our neighbours the Scia'new First Nation and T'Sou-ke First Nation.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval

The agenda was approved with the addition of committee discussion following the presentation from Neil West and the following correspondence as supplemental information:

- Bev Bacon, re: District of Metchosin Bullfrog Management Results, 2023, Stan Orchard
- Sue Stevens, Victoria Resident, re: the Use of Glue Traps for Pest Management

Carried

2. Presentations

a) Neil West, Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC), Treatment of Invasive Holly in Metchosin Parks

Neil West, Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC), provided an overview of his PowerPoint presentation including the following:

- History of holly in District parks
- Overview of dead zones in the District
- Invasive Species Council of BC
- Soil impacts due to the invasion of holly
- Volunteer activities, input from local experts, and equipment used for holly removal in District parks
- Formation of the Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC)
- Grant funding from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation
- Future efforts
- Request to bring holly back under control to avoid damage to local ecosystems
- Pressuring other levels of government to stop the sale of holly
- Potential to work with BC Hydro

Committee discussion:

- MISC recommendations
- Staff time and resources

- Collaboration between MISC and Public Works regarding the work plan, removal methods, and timing
- Pesticide certification and training
- Volunteer contributions

Moved and Seconded by Councillors Gray and Donaldson, to recommend that Council direct staff to work with the Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative on the removal of holly from Metchosin road Rights of Ways and boulevards.

Carried

Action: Councillor Gray to discuss the issue of disallowing sales in local nurseries and florists with the Coastal Invasive Species Committee (CRISP).

Moved and Seconded by Mayor Little and Councillor Shukin to recommend Council write a letter to neighbouring municipalities to encourage them not to plant Holly and other invasives such as Ivy and Daphne.

Carried

3. Public Participation

Katie Nelson, resident, commented that the letter regarding not planting invasive species should not be limited to just nurseries and florists, but to broaden the scope to also retail outlets such as Canadian Tire and Lowes where Holly is sold.

Pattie Whitehouse, resident, spoke in favour of Stan Orchard's recommendation to continue and intensify the bullfrog program in 2024 and noted that bullfrogs are a danger to our ecosystem.

Nicole Shukin, resident, commended Neil and Brenda West and noted what a difference their work has made. Ms. Shukin appreciates the report on Metchosin's Climate Action and supports tracking climate actions as they unroll as noted in the action plan. Ms. Shukin inquired about having the results of last year's survey posted to the website prior to a poll unrolling.

Diana Smith, resident, lives near a Holly Forest. Ms. Smith recommends that when Holly is on private land, talking to the property owners and suggesting that volunteer groups could help with work parties if the owner is interested as Holly removal requires a lot of work.

Bev Bacon, resident, encouraged continuing with bullfrog extermination and commended MISC for their excellent work. Ms. Bacon supports the big picture and provided her top proposed actions from the action plan, but expressed concerns that the plan relies too much on volunteers. Ms. Bacon encouraged Council to liaise with other municipalities and levels of government and to consider implementing a land acquisition budget.

Sandra Lamb, resident, is in favour of protecting Wild Spaces, untamed areas with minimum human interference that are wind buffers, water shed protectors, air filters, and home to animals, birds, and insects. Ms. Lamb encouraged the protection of unique ecosystems and corridors for the safe movement of wildlife as well as Metchosin's bicultural identity against development and neighbouring municipal growth.

Brent Donaldson, resident, gave accolades to Neil and Brenda West for their work and looks forward to working with them in the future. Mr. Donaldson noted the importance of an education component in relation to Enhanced Riparian Area Protection versus bylaws which require resident awareness, staff time and enforcement.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Councillors Shukin and Epp that the Committee adopt the minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Committee meeting held November 27, 2023.

Carried

5. Receipt of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Councillors Epp and Shukin that the Committee receive the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held November 28, 2023.

Carried

6. Business Arising

Environmental Advisory Select Committee Recommendations (November 28, 2023 meeting):

Councillor Gray provided an overview of the Metchosin Advisory Select Committee (MEASC) recommendations, and the related correspondence received.

a) Bullfrog Management Project Results 2023

Councillor Gray provided an overview of the Bullfrog Management Project results including the following:

- Contract with Stan Orchard
- Report provided for the past year
- Progress and budget

Committee discussion:

- Bullfrogs that were identified but not responded to will be addressed in 2024
- Potential use of students and employee recruits

Moved and Seconded by Councillors Gray and Donaldson to recommend that Council support Stan Orchard's recommendation that Metchosin continue bullfrog control work in 2024.

Carried

b) Enhanced Riparian Area Protection

Councillor Gray provided an overview of the Enhanced Riparian Area Protection and the potential for the District to go beyond the minimum setback to protect larger distances from the streamside.

Committee discussion:

- Concern regarding staff time
- Potential to ask MEASC or other groups to provide more information
- Available resources from other districts
- Timelines and other planning obligations
- Setbacks, existing flood plain restrictions, development proposals, and the Official Community Plan
- Streamside Protection and Enhancement Areas (SPEA)
- Development and housing density
- Alignment with Strategic Plan and Climate Action Plan

- Moving from preservation to protection
- Provincial Riparian Areas Protection Regulation
- New developments and increasing protected areas
- Suggestion to gather information from other municipalities as a starting point

Moved and Seconded by Councillors Gray and Epp to recommend that Council request a staff report on the measures available to the District under the provincial *Riparian Areas Protection Act* to strengthen riparian protection in Metchosin.

Carried

7. Reports

a) District of Metchosin Bullfrog Management Results, 2023, Stan A. Orchard

Councillor Gray noted that the report was discussed under Business Arising.

b) Evaluation Framework for Metchosin's Climate Action Plan

Councillor Gray clarified that the evaluation framework provided in the agenda package is not actually the Climate Action Plan, but rather a document to reflect how the District can evaluate the actions taken on the plan. Councillor Gray provided an overview of the action plan, presented examples of items already underway or complete, and illustrated the types of work that can be done to move the plan forward while being mindful of staff resources. Councillor Gray confirmed that the public comments have been registered and will be discussed with the planner.

Committee discussion:

- Confirmation that the item regarding the investigation of a waste gasification facility for the District had originated from a public input session and that this is not one of the leading items that would be pursued due to the size of the District
- Thank you to MEASC members for their work

c) Councillor's Update

Councillor Gray provided the following updates:

- Budget meetings continue with the next meeting scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on January 25th. Everyone is welcome and public input is appreciated.
- The Capital Regional District (CRD) presented to Council on a Regional Water Supply Development Cost Charge (DCC). Correspondence was received from the development community raising concerns regarding the charges, rationale, and decision-making process. Further updates will be provided after an upcoming water commission meeting.
- Feedback can be submitted up until the end of today on the Provincial Draft Ecosystem Health and Biodiversity Framework. Council members are encouraged to offer input and MEASC members are also working on providing input.

8. Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

- Lavina Rojas, Victoria Resident, Use of Glue Traps for Pest Management
- Bev Bacon, District of Metchosin Bullfrog Management Results, 2023, Stan Orchard
- Sue Stevens, Victoria Resident, re: the Use of Glue Traps for Pest Management

Committee discussion:

- Request to bring an end to the use of glue traps
- District's role
- Research and investigating options

Action: Councillor Gray to work with MEASC to prepare a proposed resolution on the use of glue traps for pest management for Council's consideration to put forth to the book of resolutions at the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities by the February 7, 2024 submission deadline if possible.

9. Adjournment

Moved and Seconded by Mayor Little and Councillor Donaldson that the meeting be adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Carried

Certified Correct:

Chair

Corporate Officer

District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.
Council Chamber, Municipal Hall**

Present: Ron Aubrey (meeting chair), Ryan Carter, Karen Hoffman, Jim Nan, Councillor Jay Shukin, Gord Stodola (recorder)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval: add 9e) Winfall Road

Moved by Gord that the Committee approve the agenda as presented. **Carried.**

2. Presentations: N/A

3. Public Participation: Avril Yoakam, Winfall Road, requested clarification on PTASC recommendations documented in the minutes of November 21, 2023, specifically that ‘... the road from the end of Winfall Road should be designated as a trail;’ To be discussed under **9e) Winfall Road.**

Patty Williams: thanked Ron, Ryan and Jay for their efforts on the Duke Road East initiative. Also, wondered if, in addition to memorial benches and tables, public donations of money and land could be added to the Parks Donation Program.

Tamara Ballard – again asked for an update on the installation of a trailhead sign for Sea Bluff Trail on Wootton Road.

4. Adoption of Minutes

a) Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee, November 21, 2023

Moved by Jim that the Committee approve the minutes of the Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee meeting held on Tuesday, November 21, 2023, with the amendment noted in **9e) Winfall Road.** **Carried.**

5. Receipt of Minutes

a) Community Planning Committee, October 16, 2023

b) Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee, September 26, October 24 and November 28, 2023

The highlights of the above-noted minutes as they relate to PTASC were discussed. Noted that the September 26 minutes were presented and reviewed at the last PTASC meeting. Gord noted the October 24th presentation to MEASC regarding Metchosin’s Dark Sky Policy and the presenter’s suggestion that Metchosin should become a Certified International Dark Sky community. He thinks this is a worthy pursuit and would like PTASC to address this topic at a later meeting, perhaps by inviting the presenter or engaging MEASC.

Moved by Jim that the Committee receive the above-noted minutes for information. **Carried.**

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

- a) **Parks Donation Program:** Ryan had previously circulated the draft Parks Donation Program document to Committee members for final comments.

Moved by Ryan that the Committee approve the amendments to the Parks Donation Program.
Carried.

Action: Ryan to forward Parks Donation Program document to the CAO.

- b) **Metchosin Park Trail Repairs:** the fall window for repairing a section of trail in Metchosin Wilderness Park was missed. This will be looked at in the spring.

Action: request to staff to remove this item from the agenda.

- c) **Memorial Bench Sponsorship Request:** discussion regarding how donated asset maintenance funds are accounted for, whether as part of an initial acquisition or a renewal of a maintenance agreement. Members felt these funds should be tracked separately, both for drawdown when maintenance on a bench or table is required, but also to track when a ten year maintenance agreement expires.

Action: Councillor Shukin to follow up with Finance.

- d) **Feasibility Study on Duke Road East Trail:** the Chair invited a representative of the Duke Road project to the table to share their vision. Erin Ronsse agreed. She presented a comprehensive overview of the project including project phases, ownership of certain road right of ways, safety concerns and possible improvements such as advisory shoulders, survey options, costs and challenges, smart development and potential liability issues.

Specific to routing and phases, it's proposed that Phase one would be a trail on the west side of Duke Road from the end of the existing trail to Chapel Heights Drive. Phase two is proposed to be on the east side of Duke Road from Chapel Heights Drive to 3737 Duke Road. Phase three is proposed to be on the east side of Duke Road up to Metchosin Road.

There was a broader discussion that possible external funding sources may be available. The Chair advised that any external funding requests are required to be initiated by the district.

Phases two and three may require expertise beyond what PTASC and Albert Head volunteers are able to provide.

Moved by Karen that PTASC recommends major capitol allocations of \$10,000 for surveying and \$10,000 for Duke Road East roadside trail Phase 1 construction be approved for 2024.
Carried.

Action: Jay to put together draft feasibility report for February 20th PTASC meeting, including content provided by Albert Head residents.

7. **Reports**

a) **Parks and Trails Coordinator Report Verbal Report:** Ryan reported the following:

- Jim and Gord have both been active in Metchosin Wilderness Park, Blinkhorn Nature Park, Eleanor Mann and Buckbrush Swamp. It's believed that all fallen trees were cleared within a day of this past windstorm as no reports came via the District email;
- Gord cleared a fallen tree on Lisandra Trail, reported via the District email;
- Ryan has participated in two Duke Road events since last meeting;
- Total volunteer hours since June are 226.

b) **Council Liaison Verbal Report:** Councillor Shukin reported the following:

- A joint council / PTASC meeting will be held February 20th;
- Weir Beach stairs – there are concerns about the project lagging. Liability issues are under discussion.
- PTASC recruitment – there will be another ad in the Muse in February.
- Provincial housing – the district appears to be exempt from many of the regulations recently enacted due to lack of sewers and municipal water. The district will be required to undertake a housing needs assessment.
- Buffer land - PTASC may have an advisory role for this property in the future.

c) **Chair Verbal Report:** The Acting Chair was leading his first meeting, thus nothing to report.

Moved by Gord that the Committee receive the above reports for information. **Carried.**

8. **Correspondence:** N/A

9. **Other Business**

a) **Budget - Capital:** as per 6d), PTASC is recommending that \$20,000 be allocated for surveying and Phase 1 construction of the Duke Road East roadside trail.

b) **Council Meeting:** A joint Council / PTASC meeting will be held February 20th.

c) **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:** deferred to the March, 2024 meeting

d) **Past Member Recognition:** discussion of how to recognize past members was undertaken.

e) **Winfall Road** – the PTASC minutes of November 21, 2023 erroneously recommended that a trail be designated from the end of Winfall Road to the Galloping Goose. PTASC had evaluated this possibility years ago and had discounted it for technical and environmental reasons.

Action: November 21, 2023 minutes to be amended, deleting ‘... the road from the end of Winfall Road should be designated as a trail;’ under 9b).

10. **Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**

Moved by Jim to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. **Carried.**

The next meeting will be held on February 20, 2024.



MEMORANDUM

To: Environment and Natural Areas Committee

From: Councillor Steve Gray

Date: February 12, 2024

Re: **District of Metchosin Environmental Year-in-Review (Partial List)**

1. **Climate change and biodiversity**

- Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis Declaration adopted
- Climate Action Plan adopted
- Agricultural Plan funded
- CRD Navigator program for energy retrofits promoted
- BC Energy Step Code adopted
- Zero Carbon Step Code bylaw amendments pending
- Climate Action Plan Evaluation drafted
- Fire Smart program ongoing
- Extreme Heat plan – Fire Dept.
- Climate Hazard grant – Fire Dept.
- 2023 UBCM Resolution on supporting biodiversity carried
- 2023 UBCM Resolution on protecting BC's old growth forests carried
- Removal of black knapweed and other invasives with CRD
- Promoting removal of holly, ivy and tansy ragwort
- Removal of invasive rabbits
- Supporting no fee and lower fee transit for youth
- Promoted individual Council member responses to provincial draft Ecosystem Health and Biodiversity Framework

2. **Watersheds and Aquifers**

- Independent hydrologist review of draft storm water plans for Centre Mountain Estates (CME)
- CAO to engage a green infrastructure specialist to advise on best practices for CME storm water management, as needed.
- Council to petition the Province for additional observation wells in Aquifer 606.
- Staff report requested on best practices for approving water in new subdivisions.
- Staff report recommended on strengthening riparian area protection.
- Liaison with volunteers in BWHPA, APRM, Metchosin Foundation and newly established Metchosin Ratepayers and Water Protection Association.

3. **Ocean and Shoreline**

- 2023 UBCM Resolution on reducing anchorages outside the Port of Vancouver carried
- Promoting Green Shores training.

- Planning with Sc'ianew Nation on spill response priority locations and discussing development of shoreline response plan (incl. Fire Chief).
- Response to Trans Mountain EAO Condition - Behaviour of Bitumen in marine environment.
- Response to Trans Mountain EAO Condition – Human Health Risks related to Spill.
- Response to Trans Mountain EAO Condition – Existing Shoreline Condition.
- Letters to Province recommending no tanker traffic when weather does not allow marine spill response.

4. **Mary Hill**

- Mary Hill Steering Committee with Sc'ianew Nation, HAT and Pearson College
- Mary Hill Finance Subcommittee (concluded)
- Mary Hill Communications Subcommittee

5. **Subdivision and re-zoning applications review by MEASC**

- Section 40
- Beckingham Road

Premier David Eby
PO BOX 9041 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1
Email. premier@gov.bc.ca

SENT VIA EMAIL DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

Dear Premier Eby:

**Implementation of UBCM Resolutions EB32 and NR38: Establishment of
Local Natural Areas Protection Fund and Provincial Biodiversity Law**

I am writing on behalf of my Council to indicate Metchosin's strong support for the Province moving forward with UBCM Resolutions EB32 and NR38, as adopted by delegates at the 2023 and 2022 conventions, respectively.

Let me begin by expressing appreciation for the Province's leadership in establishing the Conservation Financing Mechanism and Tripartite Framework Agreement on Nature Conservation.

We now write to encourage the Province to continue with this important work by establishing a Local Natural Areas Protection Fund, as endorsed by UBCM delegates, and enacting an overarching provincial law to protect biodiversity and ecosystem health.

A dedicated funding mechanism accessible to municipalities like ours would contribute towards more resilient and healthy local communities as we face rising climate impacts. It would help with cooling heat-island effects, promoting healthy watersheds, airsheds, and plant and animal species. These nature-based solutions would enhance the wellbeing of all who benefit from the services intact and restored ecosystems provide.

In addition to the creation of the Local Natural Areas Protection Fund, we urge the Province to move forward with other actions to safeguard biodiversity, including enacting an overarching provincial law to protect biological diversity and ecosystem health. As you are aware, enactment of this legislation was recommended by the Old Growth Strategic Review (2020) and has been endorsed by resolutions of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs in 2021 and UBCM in 2022.

In our opinion, the new provincial law should (1) prioritizes biological diversity and ecosystem health; (2) recognizes Indigenous jurisdiction and perspectives; (3) adopts a definition of ecosystem health that includes restoring ecological integrity, maintaining fully functioning ecosystems and managing for resilience, and (4) is accompanied by resources

to alleviate economic impacts of ecosystem protection on Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

In closing, we express appreciation for the Province's leadership in establishing the Conservation Financing Mechanism, and the Tripartite Nature Agreement, and we encourage the Province to continue this important work by establishing the Local Natural Areas Protection Fund and enacting the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Law in a timely manner. We welcome an update on the Province's actions in this regard.

Sincerely,

DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

cc. George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Nathan Cullen, Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Josie Osborne, Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation
Mitzi Dean, MLA



Federal NDP push to cap how long freighters can anchor in B.C. waters

Posted: Jan. 31, 2024 7:11AM

CHEK

They're not a new sight, but for some, they are a sore one. Cargo ships are idling, waiting their turn to unload or load up and ship out.

"We've had them in Cowichan Bay for as long as 84 days before," said Peter Holmes, President of the Cowichan Bay Ship Watch Society.

"Why are we looking out our windows and seeing out coasts, which are marine sensitive, being used as an overflow industrial freighter parking lot for the port of Vancouver?" asked

Nanaimo MP Lisa Barron.

The federal NDP is taking up the issue in Ottawa. They have added an amendment to Bill C-33 to create a maximum two-week stay for freighters off our coast.

“We’re hoping it’ll stay intact going through the final reading. Any step is a good step,” said Holmes.

It’s a good step, says Holmes, but it still doesn’t answer the question of why so many cargo ships are sitting there for so long in the first place.

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“It seems long-range planning hasn’t taken place, and the supply chain is very inefficient,” said Holmes. “There’s been no plan for them to arrive in any schedule.”

In 2022, in a study measuring global port efficiency, [the port of Vancouver named the second least efficient port in the world](#), with some cargo ships waiting weeks to get in.

In October of 2023, the port of Vancouver launched [a new centralized active vessel transportation system](#) which coordinates ship traffic and creates a schedule for the arrival of these ships.

The port says these new measures have resulted in a one-fifth reduction in the number of anchorage-related complaints compared to 2022, and 44 per cent fewer nighttime arrivals and departures from anchorages in the area compared to fall 2022.

But then there’s the concern of the lack of rules and regulations the ships face when they are sitting.

“Noise, light, emissions, and discharge,” said Holmes.

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The port of Vancouver currently asks ships anchored in B.C. waters outside of the port to voluntarily follow their code of conduct, but it's not monitored or enforced.

"There's some adherence, some not," said Holmes.

The port of Vancouver, however, says more than 2,000 ship operators 'acknowledge' their code of conduct at 33 anchorages throughout B.C.'s waterways, many near Ladysmith, Cowichan Bay, Trincomali, and Plumper Sound.

The bill aimed at restricting how long freighters can anchor in B.C. to 14 days is currently facing a committee review, with no timeline yet known for its final reading.

The Chamber of Shipping did not respond to CHEK News' request for comment on how this might impact business.

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Kori Sidaway