

From: [Katie Norris](#)
Subject: WLRS: End of Day Media Request Report
Date: August 17, 2023 4:43:38 PM

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal
ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development
STATUS: With GCPE

Amanda Follett Hosgood - The Tyee
ISSUE: Babine Steelhead
STATUS: With Program Area

Jim Thomson - Freelancer
ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat
STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer
ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou
STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer
ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing
STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media
ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program
STATUS: With GCPE

From: [Norris, Katie GCPE:EX](#)
To: [Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX](#); [Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX](#); [Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX](#); [Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX](#); [Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX](#); [Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX](#); [Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX](#); [Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX](#); [Mack, James WLRS:EX](#); [Muter, David WLRS:EX](#); [Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX](#); [Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX](#); [Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX](#); [Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX](#); [Wey, Melody GCPE:EX](#)
Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Thursday, Aug. 17, 2023
Date: August 17, 2023 4:45:00 PM

IN PROGRESS:

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal
ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development
STATUS: With GCPE

Amanda Follett Hosgood - The Tyee
ISSUE: Babine Steelhead
STATUS: With Program Area

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Quinn Bender - Black Press Media
ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program
STATUS: With Program Area

From: [Norris, Katie GCPE:EX](#)
To: [Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX](#); [Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX](#)
Cc: [McInnis, Nigel GCPE:EX](#); [Koehle, Leah GCPE:EX](#); [Tollman, Jason GCPE:EX](#); [Lacatusu, Octavian GCPE:EX](#); [Lee, Peter O GCPE:EX](#)
Subject: RE: Media request from The Narwhal regarding permit process related to Galloway Lands development project
Date: October 24, 2023 2:34:00 PM

FYI

Katie Norris

Senior Public Affairs Officer & Media Relations Contact,
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Mobile: 250 896-7365 | Email: Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca

From: Tollman, Jason GCPE:EX <Jason.Tollman@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 2:33 PM
To: 'Mike De Souza' <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Cc: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX <Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca>; McInnis, Nigel GCPE:EX <Nigel.McInnis@gov.bc.ca>; Koehle, Leah GCPE:EX <Leah.Koehle@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Media request from The Narwhal regarding permit process related to Galloway Lands development project

Good afternoon Mike,

As discussed, I've looped in Katie Norris on this who handles media relations for Water, Lands & Resource Stewardship.

Regarding the lack of response in 2022/23 I'll have to look into that for you. Once I get some info, I can pass that on to Katie to send over to you.

Finally, here is the press release explaining the shift in ministerial responsibilities:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023WLRS0060-001618>

Thanks,

Jason

Jason Tollman *(he/him)*
Public Affairs Officer
Government Communications & Public Engagement
Ministry of Forests
Cell: 250 896-7359

I would like to acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen people, including the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations, whose land I am grateful to live, work and play on.

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>

Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 2:16 PM

To: Tollman, Jason GCPE:EX <Jason.Tollman@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Binder, Stephen GCPE:EX <Stephen.Binder@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Re: Media request from The Narwhal regarding permit process related to Galloway Lands development project

Importance: High

You don't often get email from mike@thenarwhal.ca. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hello,

I'm following up on this media request sent by email, two months ago. Did the Ministry of Forests receive this request and are you able to provide me with an explanation for the lack of response? Or is there a response I did not see?

My report on this issue was published in August and you can find it at this link:

<https://thenarwhal.ca/bc-galloway-lands-fernie-donations/>

I also have some additional questions for the ministry and for the minister.

I have reviewed emails suggesting that ministry officials were asked to provide feedback and their assessments of the project by a government biologist from the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship in the spring of 2022 and again one year later. This biologist also suggested that no one from the ministry of forests responded, either in 2022 or during the subsequent referral of the revised project in 2023. Are you able to provide me with an explanation for this?

Can you provide me with any details about the Ministry of Forests familiarity with the Galloway Lands Development project?

Who, within the ministry, was responsible for reviewing the initial referral?

How many people from the ministry are involved in, or were involved in reviewing this project?

What are their roles, titles and names?

Does the ministry have anyone available for an interview to discuss these and other questions?

Also, I understand that the ministry was facing a difficult situation in recent months due to wildfires, but wondering if there's any other reason to explain the absence of any response or acknowledgement of my questions, or whether something was sent to the wrong email address?

Please confirm or acknowledge that you have received this email and please get back to me before the end of the business day tomorrow, Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023.

Mike De Souza

Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

On Aug 16, 2023, at 4:36 PM, Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca> wrote:

Hello,

I'm a journalist with The Narwhal.

I have also sent some questions to the Ministry of Water regarding these issues and they mentioned to me in an initial response that permits related to Section 11 of the Water Sustainability Act fall under the jurisdiction of the the Ministry of Forests.

Based on that, I was wondering if the ministry or minister would be able to provide a comment regarding the process related to one of the permits that is likely required as part of the Galloway Lands development project in the Regional District of East Kootenay, near the Fernie ski hill.

Here are my questions:

1) According to one of the covenants signed by the Galloway Lands project developer, the residential subplot division for this housing project cannot proceed until the developer builds a new road/bridge that crosses Lizard Creek. An environmental overview report that was commissioned by the developer notes that a Section 11 authorization under the BC Water Sustainability Act would be required for any stream crossing work. The overview report by the consultants notes that construction of this bridge could cause harm or disruption to the at-risk cutthroat trout population in the creek. The report also notes that ongoing use of the road and pollution — such as road salt runoff — could also cause harm to the fish population. Would your ministry be involved in assessing WSA permit? Or would a review of any permit request be done by one of the existing water managers listed on the ministry website?

2) Given that this could relate to a species that is also listed under the federal Species at Risk Act, and given the provisions of the federal Fisheries Act, can you tell me whether the B.C. government is consulting with federal fisheries or environmental officials regarding any potential application of the federal Fisheries Act on the proposal to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek? If no consultations have taken place yet, could any take place related to the potential impacts of the proposed bridge in the future?

If you require any further context or clarification on these questions, please let me know. I'd like to know whether an interview is possible before the end of the day Friday. If you need more time, please let me know.

Thanks very much,

Mike De Souza
Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)

To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca); Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX (Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca); Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX (Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca); Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX (Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca); Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX (Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca); Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX (Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca); Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX (Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca); Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX (Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca); Mack, James WLRS:EX (James.Mack@gov.bc.ca); Muter, David WLRS:EX (David.Muter@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca); Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX (Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca); Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX (Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca); Wey, Melody GCPE:EX (Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Thursday, Aug. 17, 2023

Sent: 08/17/2023 23:45:00

Message Body:

IN PROGRESS:

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal
ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development
STATUS: With GCPE

Amanda Follett Hosgood - The Tyee
ISSUE: Babine Steelhead
STATUS: With Program Area

Jim Thomson - Freelancer
ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat
STATUS: With GCPE

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer
ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou
STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer
ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing
STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media
ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program
STATUS: With Program Area

From: Sean Leslie (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca)
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca)
Cc: Sinclair, Murray GCPE:EX (Murray.Sinclair@gov.bc.ca); Duffus, Robert GCPE:EX (Robert.Duffus@gov.bc.ca); Karn, David GCPE:EX (David.Karn@gov.bc.ca); Borghese, Matthew GCPE:EX (Matthew.Borghese@gov.bc.ca); Tollman, Jason GCPE:EX (Jason.Tollman@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: WLRs Follow-up Media Request: Galloway Lands Development
Sent: 08/18/2023 21:27:40
Message Body:

Reporter

Mike De Souza, Editor
The Narwhal
mike@thenarwhal.ca
514-621-0552

Deadline Monday, August 21, 2023 5:00 PM

Request

1) In Minister Cullen's mandate letter, Premier Eby stated that the minister had a mandate to "lead cross-government work to improve the timing and transparency of permitting processes to support sustainable economic development, housing and infrastructure while maintaining high levels of environmental protection" and that the minister also had a mandate to "protect wildlife and species at risk, and work collaboratively with First Nations, other ministries, and the federal government to protect and enhance B.C.'s biodiversity through implementing recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review and the Together for Wildlife Strategy." Can the minister tell me how this mandate applies to the Galloway Lands project and the required permit on the Water Sustainability Act to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek in the Elk Valley?

2) According to one of the covenants signed by the Galloway Lands project developer, the residential subplot division for this housing project cannot proceed until the developer builds a new road/bridge that crosses Lizard Creek. In addition, the environmental overview report that was commissioned by the developer notes that a Section 11 authorization under the BC Water Sustainability Act would be required for any stream crossing work. The overview report by the consultants notes that construction of this bridge could cause harm or disruption to the at-risk cutthroat trout population in the creek. The report also notes that ongoing use of the road and pollution — such as road salt runoff — could also cause harm to the fish population. Will the ministry be involved in assessing WSA permit? And if so can you provide some examples of how the minister will address concerns about the timing and transparency of this process (as described in his mandate letter) as well as how the ministry would ensure that this process provides protection for species at risk?

3) What protections or mitigation measures has the minister or ministry considered regarding the long-term protection of the cutthroat trout in this area in relation to any existing threats as well as potential threats in the future if there is a new road that potentially threatens their habitat from road salt runoff?

4) Is the B.C. government consulting with federal fisheries or environmental officials regarding any potential application of the federal Fisheries Act on the proposal to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek?

If you require any further context or clarification on these questions, please let me know. I'd like to know whether an interview is possible before the end of the day Friday. If you need more time, please let me know.

Recommendation

Background

This is a follow-up to a media request from July 25, 2023.

REQUEST:

Her email — released by the RDEK — said that the ministry recommended against the Galloway Lands project. Can you tell me who else was consulted within the ministry prior to reaching that position? Can you confirm that this is still the position of the ministry or has anything changed?

RESPONSE:

Provided Statement

At the Regional District's request, the ministry provided information for consideration as the local authority undertook its decision making. We have no further information to provide.

From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)

To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca); Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX (Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca); Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX (Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca); Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX (Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca); Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX (Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca); Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX (Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca); Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX (Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca); Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX (Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca); Mack, James WLRS:EX (James.Mack@gov.bc.ca); Muter, David WLRS:EX (David.Muter@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca); Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX (Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca); Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX (Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca); Wey, Melody GCPE:EX (Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Monday, Aug. 21, 2023

Sent: 08/21/2023 23:52:41

Message Body:

IN PROGRESS:

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal

ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development

STATUS: With GCPE

Jim Thomson - Freelancer

ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat

STATUS: With Reporter

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou

STATUS: With FOR's Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing

STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media

ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program

STATUS: With Reporter

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca)
To: WLRs FOI WLRs:EX (lwrs.foi@gov.bc.ca); North, Anna WLRs:EX (Anna.North@gov.bc.ca); Richardson, Roari WLRs:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: RE: Call For Records: WLR-2023-32156
Sent: 08/22/2023 21:54:49
Message Body:

Hi Kaz, I'm familiar with this one. Aside from various phone numbers in the redline that may or may not be public, I don't have any harms to recommend either.

Cheers!

Sean Leslie

Communications Director

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

(250) 356-8485(o)

(250) 893-4403(m)

From: WLRs FOI WLRs:EX <lwrs.foi@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 12:34 PM
To: North, Anna WLRs:EX <Anna.North@gov.bc.ca>; Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>; Richardson, Roari WLRs:EX <Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: WLRs FOI WLRs:EX <lwrs.foi@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Call For Records: WLR-2023-32156

Hi Folks,

Forwarding you this request as it has been flagged highly controversial. I've compiled the records into a Clean PDF you can view [here](#).

Tara identifies no harms, but perhaps you will? Please let me know of any harms **by September 1**.

Thank you,

Kaz Sakakibara (he/him)

FOI Analyst

DMO | Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

I acknowledge with respect that I live and work on the ancestral Coast Salish Territory of the Lək̓ʷəṁ̓ən and WSÁNEĆ nations, whose historical relationship to the land and territories continue to this day.

From: Szkorupa, Tara D WLRS:EX <Tara.Szkorupa@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 8:00 AM
To: WLRS FOI WLRS:EX <lwrs.foi@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Turner, Cindy WLRS:EX <Cindy.Turner@gov.bc.ca>; Ng, Trisha WLRS:EX <Trisha.Ng@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Call For Records: WLR-2023-32156

Hi Kaz. I have saved 10 emails and the call for records form in the GeoDrive Folder. I indicated no harms, but since this is highly controversial, would you be able to do an assessment too and provide me with any advice? Much appreciated! Tara

Tara Szkorupa, Director of Resource Stewardship Operations

Kootenay-Boundary Region

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Cell: 250-489-8963

From: WLRS FOI WLRS:EX <lwrs.foi@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2023 10:55 AM
To: Szkorupa, Tara D WLRS:EX <Tara.Szkorupa@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Turner, Cindy WLRS:EX <Cindy.Turner@gov.bc.ca>; WLRS FOI WLRS:EX <lwrs.foi@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Call For Records: WLR-2023-32156

Good Morning Tara,

CFR. If you have trouble accessing the links in this email, please follow the attached instructions.

s.13

Description: *All emails sent and received by Tara Szkorupa between June 1, 2023 and the date the ministry begins processing this request regarding Regional District of East Kootenay bylaws 2313 and 2314 or the Galloway Lands development project near the Fernie Alpine Resort. Please also include any attachments to those emails. (Date Range for Record Search: From 6/1/2023 To 8/17/2023)*

If a fee estimate is required, please complete the fee request section of the form, and upload the form to the [GeoDrive Folder](#). The deadline for fee submission is: August 25, 2023

If a fee estimate is not required and you hold responsive records, please upload a clean pdf copy of the records, as well as a completed CFR, to the [GeoDrive Folder](#).

If you do not have responsive records, please provide ED approval in Section 3 of the CFR. Please provide the reason for your NRR, as this language will be added to the letter to the applicant. Please upload the NRR to the [GeoDrive Folder](#).

-

Please use the table below when responding to this email.

Estimate Due:

August 25, 2023

Records Due:

September 1, 2023

GeoDrive:

[Z:\Records Incoming\2023\WLR-2023-32156](#)

Actions

Please indicate with X and explain reasoning:

Fee Estimate¹ (uploaded to GeoDrive)

Fee Estimate Guidelines – See “Fee Estimate Guideline” and pages 17-19 of “FOI Request Processing Guidelines”

NRR² (uploaded to GeoDrive with ADM sign off)

CFR³ (uploaded to GeoDrive with all sections complete**)

Records³ (uploaded to GeoDrive)

Deduplication Required³

Harms³ (uploaded to GeoDrive – marked HARMS)

No Harms³ (uploaded to GeoDrive – marked CLEAN)

Other

Incl Other Areas

Please indicate with X and explain reasoning:

Include another Division in CFR

External Harms Review Required by:

Details of Review needed (Ie who/pages):

Internal Harms Review Required by:

Details of Review needed (Ie who/pages):

Other

LWRS.FOI@gov.bc.ca **MUST** be notified when documents uploaded to LAN

Detailed Instructions

1. Fee Estimate

- Complete CFR – Sections 2, 4, 5 & 7 – IN FULL – **ensure Sec. 5 provides rationale for fee**
- Go to LWRS-FOI GeoDrive link provided above
- Upload CFR in PDF as 'LWRS-2022-#####-(Div) – FEE ESTIMATE

2. No Responsive Records (NRR)

- Complete CFR – Sections 2, 3 & 7 – IN FULL
- Go to LWRS-FOI GeoDrive link provided above
- Upload CFR in PDF as 'LWRS-2021-#####-(DIV) – NRR

3. Responsive Records

- Complete CFR – Sections 2, 5, 6 & 7 – IN FULL
- Go to LWRS-FOI GeoDrive link provided above
- Upload CFR in PDF as 'LWRS-2021-#####-(Div) – CFR
- If records are submissible as-is – upload to folder in PDF as 'Records'
- If records require **deduplication** – upload to folder as 'Records for Dedup'
- If records contain **harms** – upload to folder as two PDF files
 - 'Records – CLEAN'
 - 'Records – HARMS'
- If records require **internal or external harms review**– indicate on CFR (Sec. 6a) **and** in email to LWRS FOI

Thank you,

Kaz Sakakibara (he/him)

FOI Analyst

DMO | Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

I acknowledge with respect that I live and work on the ancestral Coast Salish Territory of the Lək'wə??ən and WSÁNEĆ nations, whose historical relationship to the land and territories continue to this day.

From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)

To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca); Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX (Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca); Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX (Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca); Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX (Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca); Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX (Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca); Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX (Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca); Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX (Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca); Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX (Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca); Mack, James WLRS:EX (James.Mack@gov.bc.ca); Muter, David WLRS:EX (David.Muter@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca); Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX (Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca); Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX (Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca); Wey, Melody GCPE:EX (Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023

Sent: 08/23/2023 00:04:46

Attachments: image001.png

Message Body:

IN PROGRESS:

Shalu Mehta - Discourse Media

ISSUE: Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project

STATUS: With Program Area

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal

ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development

STATUS: With Program Area

Jim Thomson - Freelancer

ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat

STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou

STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing

STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media

ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program

STATUS: With Reporter (On Hold)

COMPLETED:

Francesca Fionda - The Narwhal

ISSUE: Species-at-Risk Legislation

STATUS: Provided Background

The following is attributable to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship:

We are requesting an update on this promise to introduce species at risk legislation. What is the timeline for the introduction of endangered species legislation? Can you confirm whether or not the government still plans to introduce endangered species legislation? If so, when? If there are no longer any plans to do this, please provide an explanation as to why.

· Protecting populations of species at risk and supporting their recovery in B.C. are key priorities

for our government.

- That's why we're implementing existing regulatory measures to protect critical habitat for species at risk, as well as actively managing threats and enhancing populations, often in partnership with First Nations. Existing regulatory measures include establishing wildlife habitat areas under the Government Actions Regulation of the Forest and Range Practices Act.
- Protection for at-risk species in B.C. is currently provided through a suite of legislation that includes:
 - *Wildlife Act*
 - *Forest and Range Practices Act*
 - *Oil and Gas Activities Act*
 - *Mineral Tenure Act*
 - *Ecological Reserves Act*
 - *Park Act*
 - *Land Act*
- We are reviewing and improving the *Wildlife Act* and have recently changed the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation to improve its application for species at risk habitat management.
- We continue to consult with First Nations rights and title holders to ensure that any changes to legislation lead to additional protections for at-risk species.
- Engagement to develop the content of the proposed Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework (the Framework) is already underway. The Framework will set policy intent and shift the way we think about biodiversity. Phase two of the process will focus on developing or updating legislation to achieve the vision and intent of the Framework.
- We're committed to implementing all 14 recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review report, including Recommendation #2 to "declare the conservation and management of ecosystem health and biodiversity of British Columbia's forests as an overarching priority and enact legislation that legally establishes this priority for all sectors."
- We are already working with Indigenous Peoples and other partners on new approaches to protect ecosystems and species at risk, enhance biodiversity, restore habitat, and strengthen ecosystem resilience to climate change.
- We're also continuing to work with the federal government and First Nations to develop an agreement that will support our mutual commitment to strengthening conservation and stewardship provincewide.

Katie Norris (she/her)

Public Affairs Officer & Media Relations Contact
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and Fisheries

Government Communications and Public Engagement

Government of British Columbia

2975 Jutland Road, Victoria, B.C. V8T 5J9

Mobile: 250 896-7365 | Email: Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca

I respectfully acknowledge that I work and reside in the traditional territories of the lək'wə??ən peoples.

From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)

To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca); Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX (Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca); Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX (Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca); Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX (Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca); Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX (Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca); Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX (Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca); Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX (Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca); Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX (Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca); Mack, James WLRS:EX (James.Mack@gov.bc.ca); Muter, David WLRS:EX (David.Muter@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca); Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX (Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca); Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX (Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca); Wey, Melody GCPE:EX (Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023

Sent: 08/24/2023 00:51:04

Attachments: image001.png

Message Body:

IN PROGRESS:

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal
ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development
STATUS: With Program Area

Jim Thomson - Freelancer
ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat
STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer
ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou
STATUS: With Program Area

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer
ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing
STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media
ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program
STATUS: With Program Area

COMPLETED:

Shalu Mehta - Discourse Media
ISSUE: Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project
STATUS: Provided Background

- 1. The project involves removing a dike that is currently keeping long-standing farmland at Dinsdale Farm from flooding. Community members are concerned about the loss of agricultural land, especially because the farm provides feed for dairy farmers. What, if anything, can the ministry do to try and replace the farmland that is being lost as a result of the project that the ministry is a part of? Can the ministry work with the Ministry of Agriculture to secure other farmland in the Cowichan Valley?**

- The Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project recognizes the important role of farming and local agriculture within the region.
- Nature Trust of BC, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Province have invested 25 years in building relationships with farm license holders on these lands to reach agreement on this project.
- The farm operator voluntarily amended the license agreement to enable the restoration project

to happen and was, as mutually agreed, compensated accordingly.

- The land title for the two parcels of the former Dinsdale Farm were purchased in 1990 by the Nature Trust BC and Ducks Unlimited Canada and those parcels are leased to the Province for 99 years as conservation lands under the West Coast Conservation Lands Management Program.
- The dykes which created land for these farms in the 1900s modified the natural functioning of this estuary. Removing these dykes will allow the estuary to naturalize and will address a persistent flooding risk for the area.
- Without the restoration project, 60% of the marsh habitat in the estuary will be lost under current emission scenarios.
- No land is being removed or lost from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), but a dyke is being removed to allow ecological restoration of the area. The purchase of the lands in 1990 for biodiversity and conservation purposes is a permitted non-farm use.
- This is important work for all of us – revitalizing the health of the estuary will have far-reaching impacts on biodiversity and communities that rely on the estuary today, and in the future.
- Estuaries only make up 2.3% of B.C.'s coast but support over 80% of all coastal fish and wildlife at some stage of life cycle, including wild Pacific salmon, steelhead shorebirds, waterfowl, short-eared owls, grizzly bears, and orcas, as well as many commercially and recreationally important fish stocks, including herring, crabs, clams, oysters, and other forage fish species.
- That's why we're partnering with Nature Trust BC, Cowichan Tribes and other key federal, provincial and NGO partners on the Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project.
- Together, we are working to restore the natural marshland, revitalize the ecological health of this important ecosystem, respect the importance of this historic village site to Cowichan Tribes and improve our resilience to climate change.

2. How much funding did the Province put towards this project?

- Funding for the Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project is provided by the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund a program funded jointly by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), and the Province of BC), the DFO's Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Fund (AERF), and Cowichan Tribes through the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund (AHRF).
- More information about funding for the project is available through Nature Trust BC.

3. Community members are upset over the lack of public consultation with this project, especially when taxpayer money is being used to fund it. How did the ministry engage with the public regarding the Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project? What can be done to better communicate plans in the future?

- The Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project is the culmination of years of consultation, rigorous research, and monitoring work which has made it clear to all partners that this project was necessary to ensure the long-term resilience and health of the Cowichan Estuary.
- This project was made possible by the partnership between the federal and provincial government agencies including the DFO, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the Ministries of Forests and Water, Land and Resource Stewardship.
- Each agency has shared information with the public on the project through websites and other means available to them including social media and community signage.
- Nature Trust of BC, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Province have invested 25 years in building relationships with farm license holders on these lands to reach agreement on this project.
- The farm operator voluntarily amended the license agreement to enable the restoration project to happen and was, as mutually agreed, compensated accordingly.
- Timelines of project implementation and phasing were adjusted to allow the farm operator an additional farming season to transition off the farm.
- Nature Trust BC as the landowner and lead for this project has also erected signage over a number of years to spread awareness about the project and has held meetings and engaged with local farmers, governments and First Nations.

4. **How can the ministry work to steward water, land and natural resources while also protecting rich agricultural land that supports food security?**

- Nature Trust BC, Ducks Unlimited Canada and our West Coast Conservation Lands Management Program partners recognize the incredible importance of the agricultural community in Cowichan and beyond.
- That's why the Province has acquired over 41 conservation areas, tenures and easements (52,887.84 hectares /124,957.04 acres) that support sustainable agriculture and food production.
- Additionally, Ducks Unlimited Canada and its partners support agricultural producers through more than \$300,000 in cost-sharing programs across more than 4,000 acres to support agricultural productivity and economic viability. One example is cost sharing of winter cover cropping, which reduces fertilizer costs and soil erosion, while also providing important forage for wintering waterfowl.
- The Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project supports the protection and restoration of fish populations and shellfish which are both vital to ecosystem health and food security.
- On Vancouver Island, we continue to work with farmers at several conservation areas including: S'amunu Wildlife Management Area, Cobble Hill, Chemainus, Comox and Black Creek.

Katie Norris (she/her)

Public Affairs Officer & Media Relations Contact
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and Fisheries

Government Communications and Public Engagement

Government of British Columbia

2975 Jutland Road, Victoria, B.C. V8T 5J9

Mobile: 250 896-7365 | Email: Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca

I respectfully acknowledge that I work and reside in the traditional territories of the ləkʷəʔən peoples.

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca)
To: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: Re: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023
Sent: 08/24/2023 02:21:06
Attachments: image001.png, image001.png
Message Body:

Thanks Katie!

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From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX <Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 5:58:58 PM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023

Hey Sean,

Please see below for an update on each request. Please let me know if you have any questions!

Cheers,

Katie

From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 5:51 PM
To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX <Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca>; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>; Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX <Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca>; Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX <Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca>; Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX <Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca>; Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX <Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca>; Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX <Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca>; Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX <Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca>; Mack, James WLRS:EX <James.Mack@gov.bc.ca>; Muter, David WLRS:EX <David.Muter@gov.bc.ca>; Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>; Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX <Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca>; Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX <Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca>; Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX <Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca>; Wey, Melody GCPE:EX <Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023

IN PROGRESS:

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal
ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development
STATUS: With Program Area – You were moving this forward, right?

Jim Thomson - Freelancer

ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat

STATUS: Interview needs to be scheduled still (see attachment)

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou

STATUS: With Program Area (with Lori). Please note, Melissa also requires a photo of MNC (see attached).

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing

STATUS: With Program Area (with Lori)

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media

ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program

STATUS: On Hold With Reporter – Quinn will be following up at a later date but this hasn't been approved or submitted to MO.

COMPLETED:

Shalu Mehta - Discourse Media

ISSUE: Cowichan Estuary Restoration Project

STATUS: Provided Background

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Katie Norris (she/her)

Public Affairs Officer & Media Relations Contact
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and Fisheries

Government Communications and Public Engagement

Government of British Columbia

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Mobile: 250 896-7365 | Email: Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca

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From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)

To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca); Lindsay-Baugh, Anna GCPE:EX (Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca); Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX (Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca); Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX (Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca); Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX (Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca); Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX (Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca); Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX (Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca); Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX (Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca); Mack, James WLRS:EX (James.Mack@gov.bc.ca); Muter, David WLRS:EX (David.Muter@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca); Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX (Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca); Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX (Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca); Wey, Melody GCPE:EX (Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Monday, Aug. 28, 2023

Sent: 08/29/2023 15:26:59

Attachments: image001.png

Message Body:

IN PROGRESS:

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal
ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development
STATUS: With Program Area

Alexandre Lamic - CBC - Radio Canada (French Services)
ISSUE: Wolf Cull to Protect BC Caribou
STATUS: With Program Area

Jim Thomson - Freelancer
ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat
STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media
ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program
STATUS: With GCPE

COMPLETED:

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part Two — Forestry, Land Use and Caribou

STATUS: Provided Background

Caribou

1. **The Ministry is accountable for all or key parts of the Wildlife Act. Despite all our efforts, the number of caribou in the Revelstoke area, and the province, is declining. In 2019, the provincial and federal governments signed a Section 11 Agreement (under the federal Species at Risk Act). Has the Ministry had a chance to do any significant work on caribou conservation and recovery? If so, can you share highlights and any future plans?**

- The *Wildlife Act* is enforced under the Ministry of Forests but the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship leads on Together for Wildlife and works with the Ministry of Forests to review the Wildlife Act.
- The B.C. government is committed to helping caribou populations recover.
- That's why we created the Provincial Caribou Recovery Program in 2017. We continue to support this work with an investment of over \$10 million each year.
- The program aims to ensure that self-sustaining herds thrive long into the future by making decisions based on science, engaging with the public, and applying appropriate tools.
- Caribou recovery is a complex challenge, requiring multiple approaches across the landscape to help stabilize and reverse the decline of caribou herds in B.C.
- Long-term actions underway include habitat protection, restoration and management, as well as recreation management.
- Interim actions include:
 - maternity pens,
 - supplemental feeding, and
 - predator reduction in some locations.
- More information about caribou recovery is available here:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/wildlife/wildlife-conservation/caribou>

2. In Revelstoke, area closures for caribou recovery and conservation are common, but do have a potential impact for user groups (e.g. resource-based extraction such as logging or tourism-based activities like snowmobiling). How will the Ministry consider the unique needs of these user groups while also implementing Indigenous values and simultaneously meeting the requirements under the Section 11 Agreement?

- We regularly meet with both snowmobiling club representatives and the British Columbia Snowmobile Federation. These discussions focus on annual compliance and enforcement activities, which are collaboratively supported, and on discussions about the efficacy of the no-go areas.
- Scientific research indicates that, along with predators and habitat loss, disturbance from motorized vehicles (including snowmobiles) can impact caribou populations, creating chronic stress for the herd, affecting calf survival rates, and making it easier for predators to find caribou.
- Snowmobiling activity can displace caribou from their preferred habitat into less suitable habitat where the food supply is not as plentiful.
- Recreation management helps reduce these disturbances by controlling or limiting public access to specified areas of caribou habitat and striking a balance between the needs of winter recreationalists and the need to protect caribou.
- The Province is currently re-examining motorized vehicle closures to ensure they accurately reflect areas currently used by caribou.
- We have under some circumstances amended or swapped areas when new or better information has come available.

Melissa Jameson - Revelstoke Mountaineer

ISSUE: Revelstoke Visit Part One — Ministry Mandate, Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation, and Housing

Ministry Mandate

1. **The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship is a newly created ministry with a broad mandate to work “with other natural resource sector ministries to achieve British Columbia’s goals of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, economic development, and environmental sustainability”. Could you provide a plain language explanation of the scope of the work being completed as part of the mandate?**

- Natural resources are central to B.C.’s economy and are the backbone of many local economies across the Province.
- BC is the most geographically and biologically diverse province in Canada and its ecosystems provide the essential clean water, air and food that people rely on.
- Managing B.C.’s natural resources is one of our government’s greatest responsibilities.
- We all want our natural resource sector to support reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, provide long-lasting economic benefits to communities, and ensure that B.C.’s natural resources are sustainably managed now and into the future.
- The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (the Ministry) was formed to improve collaboration across ministries, and to convene the people needed to tackle the transformative changes that will advance a more integrated approach to natural resource management.
- The primary goals of the Ministry that lay the groundwork for the transformative changes are to:
 - co-develop a vision for natural resources co-management and shared decision-making with First Nations and
 - improve stewardship of land, water (including marine and coastal ecosystems) for reconciliation, environmental protection and economic development.
- To achieve these goals, the Ministry works with First Nations, stakeholders, partners and across government to:
 - strengthen relationships and make real progress towards shared decision making on the land base, use of water, and stewardship of the coast,
 - advance a new approach to land use planning and sustainable natural resource management which brings certainty and predictability,
 - find new solutions to BC’s permitting and authorizations system to speed up approvals and cut down on the backlog of permit applications, and
 - bring decision-making to the landscape level to ensure we’re considering interconnected habitats and the cumulative effects of development.

2. **You visited Revelstoke and had a chance to sit down with Mayor Gary Sulz. What are some of the challenges you see Revelstoke facing in terms of the work the Ministry is doing? What are some successes or positive partnerships you see being created to help meet the goals of the Ministry in partnership with other resource-based ministries in Revelstoke?**

- Revelstoke is diversifying its economy by adding a great mixture of winter and summer recreation opportunities to its traditional transportation and resource focus. This diversification

creates opportunities and challenges.

- For example, with an increasing population there is a need to ensure that water quality and quantity are provided for environmental, economic and residential needs.
- Working with other resource-based ministries allows us to maximize opportunities and minimize challenges on BC's landscape. We look forward to working with partners in local communities and other ministries to provide training and employment opportunities.

Indigenous partnerships and reconciliation goals

1. **One of the objectives listed in the 2023/24 -2025/26 Ministry Service Plan is to “strengthen partnerships and advance engagement with First Nations in the stewardship of B.C.’s natural resource values.” In Revelstoke, we lack the presence of a physical band office or Friendship Centre (although we do have an Indigenous Friendship Society). Does this lack of presence present any challenges when collaborating with other resource-based ministries? If yes, what is being done to work through these challenges?**

- The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship works closely with its partner ministries such as Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.
- For example, ministries are working as a team with First Nations to collaborate on a stewardship vision for the Incomappleux Valley. We plan to invite local residents and stakeholders to add their voices to this vision in the near future.
- The absence of a physical band office or Friendship Centre does not prevent us from working together to steward BC's natural resources.

2. **Revelstoke is part of the traditional territory for four separate nations: the Sinixt, the Secwepemc, the Ktunaxa and the Syilx. How is the ministry ensuring that the voices of all four groups are included? What more needs to be done to ensure inclusivity of all Indigenous voices within the Revelstoke area?**

- The Ministry engages with all Nations whose traditional territories are in the Revelstoke area and listens to – and incorporates - the input provided by their leaders, knowledge keepers and members.
- The Province works with each Nation on a wide variety of topics that are both short and long-term in nature. There are some scenarios, such as the Columbia River Treaty (at the border with the U.S.) when multiple Nations work closely together, and other times where a bi-lateral discussion between the Province and an individual First Nation is more appropriate.
- The Province continues to seek ways to coordinate planning with these four Nations in forums that are both culturally respectful and effective for all parties.

Housing

1. **Housing is listed as a priority for the province with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship leading an initiative to streamline the permitting process for**

provincial housing applications and leading a Housing Action Task Force. Could you explain what the purpose of the task force is, and what work has been done so far to streamline the permitting process? What is the definition of provincial housing?

- We are taking steps to tackle the housing crisis by creating a new Permitting Strategy for Housing across the natural resource ministries.
- We've allocated 42 full-time employees to the B.C. Housing Action Taskforce (the Taskforce) that will work across ministries to speed up approvals and construction to build more homes for people faster.
- The Taskforce is prioritizing Indigenous-led projects, projects that include multiple units, and BC Housing projects.
- Budget 2023 builds on this strategy, providing \$77 million to speed up natural resource permitting.
- This will support an additional 161 staff across several ministries to reduce permit backlogs, allow projects to move forward and unlock economic potential.
- A single housing application service will be released over the coming months. This user-friendly tool will connect people to project experts. And these experts will guide homebuilders through the permitting process and provide a personal, one-stop-shop that will speed up the process.
- As we adapt, we are increasing resources, but also changing how we do business – including working together with First Nations.

2. Housing, particularly the process of obtaining permits and which government (e.g municipal, provincial, federal) is often confusing for the average citizen. Could you explain which government body is responsible for each specific aspect of housing, and how the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship will develop a “one-stop shop approach” to provincial housing-related permitting that will avoid feeling cumbersome or repetitive for individuals or developers?

- WLRS has a dedicated Housing Action Task Force that works across the natural resource ministries and is focused on making the approvals process more efficient.
- Budget 2023 provides \$77 million for additional staff support to help speed up natural resource permitting.
- In March 2023, Permit Connect BC was launched as a one-stop shop to connect B.C. homebuilders with contacts and resources dedicated to housing and the permitting process.
- Permit Connect BC simplifies housing approvals by:
 - providing information and guidance for housing applicants
 - offering direct project support for applicants and
 - coordinating how authorizations are managed.

3. When it comes to housing, regardless of the type, there is often the need for municipal approvals as well as provincial. How is the ministry working with local governments and provincial bodies like BC Housing to ensure these projects are not bottlenecked by bureaucratic processes?

- Everyone should be able to build a good life in B.C. — and it starts with finding a good home, however, B.C. is in a housing crisis, and supply has not kept up with demand.
- We know the best way forward is to work across all orders of government, ministries, and

sectors to address this crisis and act urgently in developing an approach that delivers housing that meets people's needs, faster.

- A single housing application service will be released over the coming months. This user-friendly tool will connect people to project experts. And these experts will guide homebuilders through the permitting process and provide a personal, one-stop-shop that will speed up the process.
- The Housing Action Taskforce has identified relevant applications that have been delayed or are currently sitting in queue. These applications will inform the next step towards prioritization and where accelerated efforts can be best applied.
- At this time, transparency and availability of information are key initial targets. While the single housing application service is being established over the coming months, permit and authorization decisions will be expedited through a cross-ministry team focused solely on processing housing permits.
- We're continuing our work on better tracking housing projects to provide accurate information with respect to turnaround times. With that data we will be able to target improvements in areas where challenges are identified and report out on the progress made.

4. Speaking of housing, BC Housing has yet to begin construction on a proposed 174-unit affordable housing development for Revelstoke. Will the Ministry be supporting this project in any way, so that it is able to be actualized? If so, how and is there a timeline available?

- In many B.C. communities, the local development approvals process has also increased in complexity and length without necessarily delivering better outcomes.
- That's why the Province is also actively working with municipalities to cut red tape and streamline the local development approval processes. The Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR) will help local governments reduce barriers to affordable housing and accelerate the construction of new homes by supporting a more effective and efficient approvals process.
- An efficient and effective development approval process is critical to building the homes people need. To help local governments do this work, we've undertaken early actions including:
 - revised public hearing requirements for zoning matters that are consistent with Official Community Plans;
 - supported local governments with \$15 million in funding to streamline and implement best practices for their development processes; and
 - gave elected officials the ability to delegate decisions on minor development variance permits to staff.
- Further work on increasing the efficiency of development approvals continues, in partnership with local governments and with input from key stakeholders. Our goal is to increase overall housing supply by supporting local government partners to identify local housing needs and to move forward on approving housing as efficiently as possible.
- The Province is working to find solutions to help local governments, developers and housing advocates deliver more affordable housing for everyone in B.C.
- We are also digitizing the building code and building permitting processes to help speed up approvals and construction to build more homes for people faster. Digitization will make the permitting processes quicker, more collaborative and help deliver better outcomes. It will also ensure that permitting improvements are integrated into a shared digital platform that connects provincial and local government approvals processes, allowing data and information to flow efficiently throughout the development process. This step will make B.C. a North American leader in digital permitting and construction.
- On the affordable housing project at 420 Downie St. in Revelstoke, the project continues to progress through the planning phase with a call for partners to build and operate the housing expected later this year. BC Housing expects to apply for development and building permits in

winter 2023/2024, with construction estimated to begin in 2024.

Katie Norris (she/her)

Public Affairs Officer & Media Relations Contact
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and Fisheries

Government Communications and Public Engagement

Government of British Columbia

2975 Jutland Road, Victoria, B.C. V8T 5J9

Mobile: 250 896-7365 | Email: Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca

I respectfully acknowledge that I work and reside in the traditional territories of the lək'wəʔən peoples.

From: Mike De Souza (mike@thenarwhal.ca)
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca)
Cc: Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: Re: Follow up questions/Galloway Lands development
Sent: 08/29/2023 20:41:58
Message Body:

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi,

I don't think I have received any response to my follow up questions. Are you still working on this?

thanks

Mike

On Aug 16, 2023, at 4:01 PM, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

WSA authorizations are a Ministry of Forests responsibility.

In terms of this: **Why did a staffer from your ministry tell a reporter that he wanted to “rap (the reporter’s) knuckles” for reaching out directly to a scientist for comment and does the ministry usually communicate with reporters in this manner?**

While the jocular tone may not be to your taste, the fact remains all public-facing government communications go through GCPE first. It will always be faster to approach us first rather than government staffers, as those staffers are required to circle back to GCPE. We arrange many interviews with ministry staffers on issues that are actually the responsibility of this ministry.

I'll look into your latest batch of questions.

Sean

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX <Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Follow up questions/Galloway Lands development
Importance: High

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hello,

I was wondering if the ministry is able to provide any responses to the questions sent to you on July 26 and again on Aug 8.

I have not received any communication from your office in three weeks.

In addition, I have the following supplementary questions for Minister Cullen and the ministry. Please confirm whether you have a spokesperson who is available to comment and respond to these questions on the record:

1) In Minister Cullen's mandate letter, Premier Eby stated that the minister had a mandate to "lead cross-government work to improve the timing and transparency of permitting processes to support sustainable economic development, housing and infrastructure while maintaining high levels of environmental protection" and that the minister also had a mandate to "protect wildlife and species at risk, and work collaboratively with First Nations, other ministries, and the federal government to protect and enhance B.C.'s biodiversity through implementing recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review and the Together for Wildlife Strategy." Can the minister tell me how this mandate applies to the Galloway Lands project and the required permit on the Water Sustainability Act to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek in the Elk Valley?

2) According to one of the covenants signed by the Galloway Lands project developer, the residential subplot division for this housing project cannot proceed until the developer builds a new road/bridge that crosses Lizard Creek. In addition, the environmental overview report that was commissioned by the developer notes that a Section 11 authorization under the BC Water Sustainability Act would be required for any stream crossing work. The overview report by the consultants notes that construction of this bridge could cause harm or disruption to the at-risk cutthroat trout population in the creek. The report also notes that ongoing use of the road and pollution — such as road salt runoff — could also cause harm to the fish population. Will the ministry be involved in assessing WSA permit? And if so can you provide some examples of how the minister will address concerns about the timing and transparency of this process (as described in his mandate letter) as well as how the ministry would ensure that this process provides protection for species at risk?

3) What protections or mitigation measures has the minister or ministry considered regarding the long-term protection of the cutthroat trout in this area in relation to any existing threats as well as potential threats in the future if there is a new road that potentially threatens their habitat from road salt runoff?

4) Is the B.C. government consulting with federal fisheries or environmental officials regarding any potential application of the federal Fisheries Act on the proposal to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek?

If you require any further context or clarification on these questions, please let me know. I'd like to know whether an interview is possible before the end of the day Friday. If you need more time, please let me know.

Thanks very much,

Mike De Souza
Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

On Aug 8, 2023, at 3:02 PM, Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca> wrote:

Hello again,

I have not yet received a response to my last request.

Would it be possible to get back to me please?

Thanks very much,

Mike De Souza
Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

On Aug 1, 2023, at 9:44 AM, Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca> wrote:

Hello,

Please let me know if you have anyone available who can respond to these questions.

Thanks very much,

Mike De Souza
Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

On Jul 26, 2023, at 2:15 PM, Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca> wrote:

Thanks Sean.

Does the ministry have anyone available for an interview who can explain what is the public benefit of taxpayers spending money for the ministry to do assessments such as this one.

Does the ministry consider this work to be worthwhile, valuable and needed?

If it does, why has it avoided arranging for a scientist to speak about this work and explain what makes it valuable or important or provide any context to help members of the public explain what it is doing and why it is doing it?

Why did a staffer from your ministry tell a reporter that he wanted to “rap (the reporter’s) knuckles” for reaching out directly to a scientist for comment and does the ministry usually communicate with reporters in this manner?

As you know, The Narwhal published an article today about how the province is considering the possibility of creating a chief ecologist position within government, as part of new biodiversity legislation. Is the government considering any efforts to improve or protect scientific integrity or improve how it communicates about science as part of this review?

Thanks again for your help

Mike

On Jul 26, 2023, at 2:03 PM, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Hi Mike, please see the below.
Thanks.
Sean

At the Regional District of East Kootenay's request, the ministry provided information for consideration as the local authority undertook its decision making. We have no further information to provide.

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2023 1:13 PM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Response from Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Thanks! Her email — released by the RDEK — said that the ministry recommended against the Galloway Lands project. Can you tell me who else was consulted within the ministry prior to reaching that position? Can you confirm that this is still the position of the ministry or has anything changed?

On Jul 25, 2023, at 4:05 PM, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Ariana has declined to be interviewed.
Sean

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2023 12:55 PM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Response from Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hello again,

Just following up to verify whether you received this question and intend to

respond. I will likely have other questions after.

Thanks very much,

Mike

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Subject: Re: Response from Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Date: July 24, 2023 at 4:51:24 PM EDT
To: "Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX" <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>

Hi,

Who decided that she is not available for an interview and how long will she not be available for an interview?

Thanks

Mike

On Jul 24, 2023, at 4:50 PM, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX
<Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Ariana is not available for an interview.
Thank you.

Sean Leslie
Communications Director
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
(250) 356-8485(o)
(250) 893-4403(m)

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Response from Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source.
Only open attachments or links that you are expecting
from a known sender.**

Hi Sean,

I am mainly waiting on my request to speak with the biologist from WLRS.

Mike

On Jul 24, 2023, at 2:22 PM, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX
<Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Hi Mike, I understand you still have an outstanding request with a few other ministries. What are you looking for from WLRS beyond what's been sent to you already?
Thanks.

Sean Leslie
Communications Director
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
(250) 356-8485(o)
(250) 893-4403(m)

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2023 6:40 PM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX
<Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Response from Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

?Hello,

I'm a journalist at The Narwhal.

I am resending this message from the morning as I haven't yet received a response from Glen.

Would either of you be able to help?

Thanks very much

Mike De Souza
Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike De Souza <mike@thenarwhal.ca>
Date: July 21, 2023 at 10:39:15 AM EDT
To: "Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX" <Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Response from Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

?Hello Glen,

You explained on the phone yesterday that your job was to find the appropriate subject matter experts who can respond to queries and I'm having trouble understanding how the email you sent me is consistent with your own definition of your job.

The responses you have sent below appear to provide some background about why a biologist sent an email to the Regional District of East Kootenay on March 29, 2023. This was not what I was asking about, so I'm wondering whether it is possible that you didn't understand the nature of my request.

If I wasn't clear yesterday when we spoke on the phone, I put in a request to speak with biologist Ariana McKay because I was hoping she might help me understand and explain what some general statements in her email actually mean. In my experience, it would be most efficient for me to do this by speaking to her, or another scientist directly, so that I can ask questions and follow up questions to ensure I understand responses. If we are forced to do this through back and forth emails that take hours, days or weeks to complete, it is not likely the most efficient use of our time.

In my opinion, this approach would be particularly problematic if those emails wind up looking like the one you sent below, which appears to be designed to avoid questions and provide as little information as possible.

I was hoping to have a more productive exchange of information and some transparency from the government.

Either way, I don't believe your email demonstrates that it is more efficient, as you claimed yesterday, for me to go through a communications office to get information from the Government of B.C.

Please let me know if you can help. If you are unable to help, please let me know if I can speak to your supervisor.

Thanks very much,

Mike De Souza
Managing Editor, The Narwhal
(514)621-0552

On Jul 20, 2023, at 8:30 PM, Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX
<Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Hi Mike,

The following is for background only, not for attribution.

In response to your query:

- Local authorities often reach out to the Province as part of their land use decision making processes, as the regional district did in this instance.
- The Province often provides subject matter expertise on ecosystem values for consideration in decision making.
- Land use decisions within municipal and regional district boundaries are the responsibility of local governments.
- The report referred to in the email was provided by the regional district and questions regarding the report are best directed to the regional district.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Thanks,

Glen

Glen Plummer
Communications Manager
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
250 952-0559 office
250 213-5667 cell

From: Tollman, Jason GCPE:EX (Jason.Tollman@gov.bc.ca)
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca)
Cc: FIN Environmental Media (envmedia@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: RE: WLRS Follow-up Media Request: Galloway Lands Development
Sent: 08/30/2023 18:00:37
Message Body:

Hey Sean,

Can you send me a takeover request for this?

Thanks,

Jason

Jason Tollman (*he/him*)

Public Affairs Officer

Government Communications & Public Engagement

Ministry of Forests

Cell: 250 896-7359

I would like to acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen people, including the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations, whose land I am grateful to live, work and play on.

From: Sean Leslie <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 10:58 AM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: FIN Environmental Media <envmedia@gov.bc.ca>; Tollman, Jason GCPE:EX <Jason.Tollman@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: WLRS Follow-up Media Request: Galloway Lands Development

Reporter

Mike De Souza, Editor
The Narwhal
mike@thenarwhal.ca
514-621-0552

Deadline Monday, August 21, 2023 5:00 PM

Request

1) In Minister Cullen's mandate letter, Premier Eby stated that the minister had a mandate to "lead cross-government work to improve the timing and transparency of permitting processes to support sustainable economic development, housing and infrastructure while maintaining high levels of environmental protection" and that the minister also had a mandate to "protect wildlife and species at risk, and work collaboratively with First Nations, other ministries, and the federal government to protect and enhance B.C.'s biodiversity through implementing recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review and the Together for Wildlife Strategy." Can the minister tell me how this mandate applies to the Galloway Lands project and the required permit on the Water Sustainability Act to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek in the Elk Valley?

2) According to one of the covenants signed by the Galloway Lands project developer, the residential subplot division for this housing project cannot proceed until the developer builds a new road/bridge that crosses Lizard Creek. In addition, the environmental overview report that was commissioned by the developer notes that a Section 11 authorization under the BC Water Sustainability Act would be required for any stream crossing work. The overview report by the consultants notes that construction of this bridge could cause harm or disruption to the at-risk cutthroat trout population in the creek. The report also notes that ongoing use of the road and pollution — such as road salt runoff — could also cause harm to the fish population. Will the ministry be involved in assessing WSA permit? And if so can you provide some examples of how the minister will address concerns about the timing and transparency of this process (as described in his mandate letter) as well as how the ministry would ensure that this process provides protection for species at risk?

3) What protections or mitigation measures has the minister or ministry considered regarding the long-term protection of the cutthroat trout in this area in relation to any existing threats as well as potential threats in the future if there is a new road that potentially threatens their habitat from road salt runoff?

4) Is the B.C. government consulting with federal fisheries or environmental officials regarding any potential application of the federal Fisheries Act on the proposal to build a new bridge over Lizard Creek?

If you require any further context or clarification on these questions, please let me know. I'd like to know whether an interview is possible before the end of the day Friday. If you need more time, please let me know.

Response

Referred to FOR and MOTI.

Background

This is a follow-up to a media request from July 25, 2023.

REQUEST:

Her email — released by the RDEK — said that the ministry recommended against the Galloway Lands project. Can you tell me who else was consulted within the ministry prior to reaching that position? Can you confirm that this is still the position of the ministry or has anything changed?

RESPONSE:

Provided Statement

At the Regional District's request, the ministry provided information for consideration as the local authority undertook its decision making. We have no further information to provide.

From: [Karn, David GCPE:EX](#)
To: [GCPE FOI Coordinator GCPE:EX](#); [Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX](#); [Lowe, Sonia GCPE:EX](#); [Allison, Mike GCPE:EX](#); [Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX](#); [Venn, Tania GCPE:EX](#)
Cc: [Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX](#); [Larabee, Shawn G GCPE:EX](#); [Grewar, Colin GCPE:EX](#)
Subject: RE: New FOI Consultation - WLR-2023-32157 Due: September 19, 2023 - 22 Pages
Date: September 12, 2023 9:10:17 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

No concerns from ENV.

From: GCPE FOI Coordinator GCPE:EX <GCPEFOICoordinator@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 8:38 AM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>; Lowe, Sonia GCPE:EX <Sonia.Lowe@gov.bc.ca>; Allison, Mike GCPE:EX <Mike.Allison@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Venn, Tania GCPE:EX <Tania.Venn@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: GCPE FOI Coordinator GCPE:EX <GCPEFOICoordinator@gov.bc.ca>; Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX <Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca>; Karn, David GCPE:EX <David.Karn@gov.bc.ca>; Larabee, Shawn G GCPE:EX <Shawn.G.Larabee@gov.bc.ca>; Grewar, Colin GCPE:EX <Colin.Grewar@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: New FOI Consultation - WLR-2023-32157 Due: September 19, 2023 - 22 Pages

Good morning,

Please review the attached FOI consultation for harms recommendations.

Your response would be appreciated by the due date of **September 19, 2023**.

Thank you,



Jason Brandt
Information Management Coordinator
Government Communications and Public
Engagement



■ [250-889-9742](tel:250-889-9742)

■ Jason.Brandt@gov.bc.ca

Grateful to be living, learning and working on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen speaking peoples, today known as the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations.

From: IAO Resource and Justice Team CITZ:EX <IAOResourceTeam@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Monday, September 11, 2023 4:30 PM
To: GCPE FOI Coordinator GCPE:EX <GCPEFOICoordinator@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: GCPE_Consultation for WLR-2023-32157 Due: September 25, 2023

Hello,

Note: x-ref with WLR-2023-31872 – similar records in with GCPE executive for sign off.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship received this FOI request from an Individual:
All records generated, reviewed, sent or received by the B.C. Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship in response to any requests for comment or questions from journalists regarding the Galloway Lands development project. This includes records in any format, including emails, text messages, personal notes, calendar appointments, meeting agendas, meeting minutes and meeting notes. (Date Range for Record Search: From 7/18/2023 To 8/17/2023)

They identified the attached document(s) as responsive records and wish to get your views on disclosure. If you need help determining harms, please see the attached harms assessment or contact me directly.

Your program area's response is due September 25, 2023.
IAO may take one to two business days to apply any severing.
Your executive sign off response is due September 25, 2023.

If you are not able to respond by this date, we are required to continue processing this file without your recommendations.

1. Ministry Program Harms Assessment:

Please indicate which applies:

1. *There are no harms in these records. They can be released in full.*
2. *There are harms in releasing all of these records. They should be withheld in their entirety.*
3. *There are harms in portions of the records. Please give details so that IAO can apply the appropriate sections of FOIPPA. Please feel free to write directly on the attached records and send back to IAO. If you are unsure of why it is harmful please call the IAO to discuss the appropriate severing.*

Program Area Approval Authority:
Name, Title, Program

2. IAO's review of harms assessment and recommendations on release

Comments/Recommendations:

IAO will assess the program area's harms and recommend full release, withhold in its entirety or partial release.

3. Ministry Executive approval for release

Comments/Recommendations:

Please indicate which applies:

1. *Approved for release with no changes.*
2. *Approved for release with the following changes... (insert changes).*
3. *Not approved for release and why.*

Ministry Executive (Delegated Signoff):

Name, Title

Note that all general FOI request records that are released to an applicant should be published on the Open Information website unless the exemption criteria apply. The exemption criteria can be found on page 11 of the [Open Information and Open Data Policy](#). Consultations from outside provincial public bodies are not published on the Open Information website.

Exercise of Discretion:

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) contains both mandatory and discretionary exceptions to disclosure. Sections 13 to 20 are the discretionary exceptions. Where Information Access Operations (IAO) has advised the head that a discretionary exception may apply, it is important that the head consider the possibility of releasing the information despite the fact that an exception may apply.

Factors relevant to the exercise of discretion include:

- the general purposes of the legislation: public bodies should make information available to the public; individuals should have access to personal information about themselves;
- the wording of the discretionary exception and the interests which the section attempts to balance;
- whether the individual's request could be satisfied by severing the record and by providing the applicant
- with as much information as is reasonably practicable;
- the historical practice of the public body with respect to the release of similar types of documents;
- the nature of the record and the extent to which the document is significant and/or sensitive to the public body;
- whether the disclosure of the information will increase public confidence in the operation of the public body;

- the age of the record;
- whether there is a sympathetic or compelling need to release materials;
- whether previous orders of the Commissioner have ruled that similar types of records or information should or should not be subject to disclosure; and
- when the policy advice exception is claimed, whether the decision to which the advice or recommendations relates has already been made.

Thank you,

Juliane Letawske, Senior FOI Analyst
Information Access Operations | Ministry of Citizens' Services

From: Norris, Katie GCPE:EX (Katie.Norris@gov.bc.ca)

To: Richardson, Roari WLRS:EX (Roari.Richardson@gov.bc.ca); Spilker, Robyn GCPE:EX (Robyn.Spilker@gov.bc.ca); Dekleer, Lisa WLRS:EX (Lisa.Dekleer@gov.bc.ca); Walters, Hailey WLRS:EX (Hailey.Walters@gov.bc.ca); Moreira, Nicole WLRS:EX (Nicole.Moreira@gov.bc.ca); Scott-Bigsby, Marshall WLRS:EX (Marshall.Scott-Bigsby@gov.bc.ca); Gostelow, Tara GCPE:EX (Tara.Gostelow@gov.bc.ca); Halls, Lori D WLRS:EX (Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca); Mack, James WLRS:EX (James.Mack@gov.bc.ca); Muter, David WLRS:EX (David.Muter@gov.bc.ca); Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX (Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca); Plummer, Glen GCPE:EX (Glen.Plummer@gov.bc.ca); Winterhoff, Thomas GCPE:EX (Thomas.Winterhoff@gov.bc.ca); Arcot, Chitra GCPE:EX (Chitra.Arcot@gov.bc.ca); Wey, Melody GCPE:EX (Melody.Wey@gov.bc.ca)

Subject: WLRS: End-of-Day Media Request Report - Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023

Sent: 09/13/2023 00:17:39

Message Body:

IN PROGRESS:

Sarah Cox - The Narwhal

ISSUE: Spotted Owls - Wild and Captive Birds

STATUS: With Program Area

Quinn Bender - Black Press Media

ISSUE: Interview Request on White Nose Syndrome Surveillance Program

STATUS: Waiting for Reporter to Circle Back

COMPLETED:

Camille Vernet - CBC Radio Canada

ISSUE: Unlicensed Wells

STATUS: Reporter Dropped

- Reporter dropped.

Jim Thomson - Freelancer

ISSUE: Request for Interview w/ Aaron Reid on Importance of Contiguous Caribou Habitat

STATUS: Scheduled Interview

- Interview took place on Friday, Sept. 1, 2023.

Carla Wilson - Times Colonist

ISSUE: Bullfrog harvesting

STATUS: Provided Background

- Section 3.1 of the Designation and Exemption Regulation under the Wildlife Act exempts people from restrictions regarding hunting, transporting and possessing bull frogs. In other words, it is allowed without any authorization required.
- Also, Section 3 of the D&E Regs indicates bull frogs are non-native species and listed under Schedule C of the BC Wildlife Act, meaning they may be captured or killed at anytime, anywhere. A permit is not required but a person must have landowner/occupier permission on private property. People must also abide by local bylaws that may prohibit the discharge of firearms.

Andrew Garland - CTV Vancouver Island - Nanaimo

ISSUE: Lake Cowichan weir

STATUS: Provided Statement

In 2019, the Cowichan Valley Regional District was awarded \$4.1M through the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund to study the engineering requirements of rebuilding the Weir. The

Province We continues to work and meet with the Cowichan Watershed Board to explore opportunities for provincial support for the Weir project.

Healthy watersheds are at the heart of all social, environmental, and economic systems supporting B.C. and our government is committed to protecting and conserving watersheds across B.C.

We understand that the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) watershed is a vital source of fresh water that supports drinking water, critical fish habitat, cultural use and a diverse regional economy for Cowichan Tribes citizens, local residents and the broader community.

In May 2023, B.C. signed a precedent-setting agreement with Cowichan Tribes First Nation to co-develop the Province's first ever Water Sustainability Plan to address the needs of the Xwulqw'selu (Koksilah) Watershed, located within the Quw'utsun (Cowichan) watershed. The Xwulqw'selu (Koksilah) Watershed Planning Agreement builds on three years of government-to-government work and signals a joint commitment from the Province and Cowichan Tribes First Nation to work together in an enduring partnership based on respect and recognition of Cowichan Tribes' inherent authority and teachings.

Ainslie Cruickshank - The Narwhal
ISSUE: FPB species at risk report
STATUS: Provided Background

- We appreciate the Forest Practices Board's report on managing habitat for species at risk under the Forest and Range Practices Act, and specifically for the northern goshawk.
- As noted in the report, the board recognizes that industry is meeting and, in some cases, exceeding requirements of legal objectives related to at-risk species habitat.
- Our government is working on a variety of initiatives related to managing habitat for species at risk, including:
 - updating the list of species at risk associated with the Forest and Range Practices Act and the Oil and Gas Activities Act to better manage species and ecosystems that may be threatened
 - moving forward on land and water planning, including Forest Landscape Planning and Land Use Planning, which include consideration of species at risk
 - working with First Nations and stakeholders on the development of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework which will prioritize biodiversity and ecosystem health across all natural resource sectors and will provide better protection for species at risk. This framework will be followed by the subsequent development of legislation consistent with the recommendation in the Old Growth Strategic Review.
 - reviewing current species-at-risk policies and programs
- Partnership and collaboration with First Nations, in recognition and respect for their title and rights, are key components of our government's approach to habitat and wildlife stewardship — including community-level engagement and additional consultations as required.
- Ministry staff will thoroughly review the Forest Practices Board's report and respond to the board in the coming months.

The report found the B.C. government is not making full use of existing tools under FRPA to protect at risk species. How do the ministers respond to this finding?

- Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship staff are reviewing the current policy framework that guides habitat stewardship under the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA), as well as emerging policy through the Together for Wildlife Strategy and the Old Growth Strategic Review.
- This internal review is intended to ensure that habitat stewardship:
 - is effectively implemented within the new forest landscape planning regime;

- meets the provincial government's responsibilities to uphold First Nations' rights; and
- effectively manage threats to wildlife values and recover species at risk.

Why has the list of at-risk species under FRPA not been updated since 2006, despite an increase in the number of species considered to be at risk by the BC Conservation Data Centre? Are there any species under consideration for being listed under FRPA? if so, which ones?

- Work is underway to update the list of at-risk species under the Forest and Range Practices Act and extend management tools to more at-risk species and ecosystems.
- Species and ecological communities being considered for listing under FRPA are listed at-risk provincially, potentially affected by forest and range activities on Crown land, and located outside existing land use plans that could provide equivalent protection.

The board recommended the province update its policy framework for managing habitat of species at risk and provide a transparent process for how and when government makes decisions to balance timber supply and habitat protection. How will the government act on these recommendations?

- The Together for Wildlife Strategy includes several goals that address how to better integrate wildlife and habitat objectives:
 - Goal 3 includes actions to specifically establish accountable stewardship objectives and assess the effectiveness of designations under the Forest and Range Practices Act and other legislation.
 - Emerging work under Goal 4 of the strategy includes an action to document decision rationales and report out on habitat protection performance.
 - The Province is making progress incorporating socio-economic considerations other than the timber supply into habitat management decisions, including climate change mitigation, and biodiversity conservation goals.
 - With the implementation of the Declaration Act on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Province is also working in partnership with First Nations rights and title holders.

The board notes that northern goshawk WHA have only protected breeding areas and not foraging areas. Why have foraging areas not been protected?

- Work is progressing on providing guidance, prescribing requirements, and reviewing other protection options for northern goshawk foraging areas.
- To make a more informed decision on foraging habitat management, the Province has invested in additional research that includes occupancy analysis, telemetry tracking, and habitat modeling.
- Addressing key knowledge gaps allows us to make the most effective decisions on the amount, quality and spatial configuration of foraging habitat that's required to support a viable home range for northern goshawks.

The board also notes that the province had targeted a total of 123 WHAs for northern goshawk by 2020 but to date just 95 are in place. When is the province expecting to put the remaining 28 in place?

- Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHAs) for northern goshawk are anchored on known nest sites, which requires extensive inventory and monitoring efforts and consultations with First Nations and stakeholders.
- Since the 2018 Implementation Plan for the Recovery of Northern Goshawk, the Province has

established 102 WHAs (or equivalent reserves), including the approval of 19 new goshawk WHAs earlier this year.

- The government continues to make progress on establishing additional WHAs for northern goshawks.

Matt Simmons - The Narwhal
ISSUE: IPCA's
STATUS: Provided Statement

- We respect and acknowledge the efforts of First Nations to protect ecosystems within their territories and care for the water, land, animals and other natural resources that their communities have relied on for millennia.
- My ministry is committed to working together with First Nations on a co-managed approach to land and resource management.
- Where possible, our preferred approach is for Indigenous-led stewardship interests, such as IPCAs, to be addressed through government-to-government collaborative processes like modernized land use planning.
- This ensures that economic, environmental, social, and cultural values are considered, that collaborative processes can be built with First Nations and that robust engagement can be undertaken with stakeholders, local government and the public.
- Our government welcomes the opportunity to work with First Nations to better understand and share our collective perspectives and to jointly develop an approach to land stewardship
- BC is actively engaged with Gitanyow Nation on a number of files, including land use planning, and relationship-building between First Nations. I'd like to offer my thanks and congratulations to the BC public servants who are an important part of this work. A number of staff from WLRs and MIRR attended the celebration in this context.
- BC is committed to Indigenous-led land stewardship and recognizes Gitanyow's work to advance their vision for the Meziadin area.
- BC has a responsibility to respectfully work with other First Nations with respect to Gitanyow's proposed Meziadin Indigenous Protected Area and with communities and stakeholders that may be impacted.

Alexandre Lamic - CBC - Radio Canada (French Services)
ISSUE: Wolf Cull to Protect BC Caribou
STATUS: Provided Statement

Protecting and recovering threatened woodland caribou populations is important to British Columbians and an imperative for this government. Caribou recovery is a complex challenge and requires multiple approaches to help stabilize and reverse the decline of caribou herds in B.C. The decision to include predator reduction as part of our caribou recovery approach was not made lightly. Our approach is based on science and sound wildlife management principles and we're conducting this work as humanely as possible. All predator management operations follow strict procedures with oversight.

Wolves are a primary predator of caribou in most herds and for some herds, the current predation pressure is at levels that caribou cannot sustain. Without addressing high predation pressure from wolves, many caribou herds could face the risk of local extinction (extirpation). Extensive research has shown that predator management is an effective, temporary measure for halting and reversing caribou population declines.

Predator reduction is just one tool used to support the recovery of caribou herds. Habitat protection, habitat restoration, maternal penning, recreation management, supplemental feeding and population augmentation are also key parts of our caribou recovery strategy. Predator reduction is only implemented where these additional long-term measures are also in place. If predator pressure on caribou is not addressed in the short term, the effectiveness of longer-term measures could be limited.

We continue to work with First Nations, local communities, industries, and other interested parties

to expand existing habitat conservation measures and long-term caribou recovery efforts.

Mike De Souza - The Narwhal

ISSUE: Galloway Lands Development

STATUS: Referred to Third Party

- Referred to FOR and MOTI.