



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA



Sonia Furstenuau, MLA
Cowichan Valley

July 15, 2020

Honourable Premier
Honourable Minister of Finance
Honourable Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategies
Honourable Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture
Honourable Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources and Rural Operations

RE: Small Ship Tour Operators Association Marine Debris Removal Initiative

I am writing to express my support for the Small Ship Tour Operators Association (SSTOA)'s Marine Debris Removal Initiative.

This is an example of exactly the kind of innovative approaches we want to encourage in this time of economic uncertainty. As a tourist-based industry, the SSTOA has recognized the need to pivot its activities to adapt to the current situation, and have proposed an initiative that will put more than 100 employees back to work right now, work collaboratively with and support the goals of First Nations, and help the marine ecosystems of BC's central and north coast by removing untold tonnes of marine debris and associated risks to marine mammals and biodiversity. This is a win-win-win situation.

I hope that all of you are able to do whatever you are able in order to help ensure that this initiative moves forward.

Sincerely,

Sonia Furstenuau
MLA for Cowichan Valley

cc: Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health
Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer



Kitasoo/Xaixais First Nation



June 26th, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Small Ship Tour Operator Association Marine Debris Removal Initiative

On behalf of the Kitasoo/Xai'xais Nation, located in Klemtu on the Central Coast of British Columbia, please accept this letter of support for the Small Ship Tour Operators Association of BC (SSTOA) Marine Debris Removal Initiative.

SSTOA has respectfully engaged with our Nation and has met and/or surpassed all of our concerns and interests regarding COVID-19 preparedness and response, and emergency planning. SSTOA will maintain adequate buffers in their initiative operations, and will not be travelling to or near our community of Klemtu or community use areas. The SSTOA has also agreed to prioritize for debris removal those areas, which are a concern to our Nation.

In these trying and uncertain times, the proposal and initiative from the SSTOA provides a rare opportunity and good news story. It is a commendable initiative that our Nation can support wholeheartedly. Marine debris is an on-going challenge and a removal initiative at this scale - to clean up a large remote coastline - is an undertaking that will provide significant environmental benefit to Kitasoo/Xai'xais territory and beyond. The outcome of this initiative, if the SSTOA proposal is successful, is truly something that we can be grateful for.

We sincerely hope the SSTOA Marine Debris Removal Initiative proposal is successful.

Respectfully,

Chief Roxanne Robinson



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