



10 July, 2019

Dear Regional District Chair,

As co-chairs of the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan steering committee, we are writing to request that you appoint a member of your Regional District to serve on this steering committee.

The idea to form a steering committee was developed from a climate workshop that took place at the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities convention in April. Fifty elected officials from across the island and coast attended. Key findings from the workshop include:

- This is the issue of our generation and we must take action.
- The impacts of climate change are already being felt in communities large and small, rural and urban in the form of droughts, floods, fires, storms. Forests, lakes, rivers, and shoreline are at increased risk. Water supply is threatened by bacterial blooms. There are ocean water quality concerns. Salmon runs are suffering.
- Small communities don't have the resources to take action or even to know what to do first; very few communities have baseline data or the ability to set targets.
- Prioritization of actions based on data was seen as critically important. Local governments have limited financial resources; knowing where to spend money that will have the biggest climate impact is key to be fiscally prudent as we take climate action.
- First Nations communities are feeling the effects of climate change disproportionately; our plan must integrate and take into account their deep knowledge of and connection with the lands and waters of their territories.
- The idea for an Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan received strong support provided that there is funding to undertake the work. There was also a sense of urgency; the plan should be in place by the end of 2020 at the latest and should be a ten-year plan to 2030.

At the end of the meeting, the group agreed to create a working group comprised of one elected official from each sub-region to be co-chaired by Mayors Helps, Staples, and Osborne. We hope you will join the Regional Districts of CRD, Comox Valley District, Strathcona Regional District and Mount Waddington Regional District. At this point the steering committee does not have terms of reference; these will be developed at the first few meetings and will be shared with your board for information.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mayor Helps
mayor@victoria.ca

Mayor Osborne
osborne@tofino.ca

Mayor Staples
mayor@duncan.ca