



Reference: 32071

November 28, 2023

VIA EMAIL: info@rdos.bc.ca

Matt Taylor, Electoral Area "D" Director
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
101 Martin Street
Penticton, British Columbia
V2A 5J9

Dear Matt Taylor:

I am writing to thank you and your staff for taking the time to meet with me at this year's UBCM Convention in Vancouver, and to recap the topics discussed and commitments made at our meeting.

I am pleased we had the opportunity to discuss short-rayed Alkali Aster (SRAA) at length. During our meeting we heard your concerns about the negative perception of tourists and residents alike, due to the local beach looking unkept, based on the growth of SRAA. We discussed the possibility of reducing the SRAA footprint; identifying better ways to maintain the area and refreshing interpretive signage as possible solutions.

We commend the measures that Okanagan Falls has taken to maintain the federally-designated habitat for the SRAA. As mentioned, the work by Okanagan Falls led to the number of plants flourishing over the past fifteen years, from an estimated 15 to 1,000 plants. We agree that this deserves further consideration, and we will work with the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen and Environment and Climate Change Canada on possible next steps.

Additional concerns were raised regarding silt and milfoil in Vaseux and Skaha Lake; and it was speculated that a reduction in milfoil harvesters was linked to mussels and the Okanagan Basin Water Board policies. Deputy Minister Lori Halls and I are informed by staff that increased summer temperatures and extended summers have increased aquatic plant growth, including milfoil. It might be helpful to direct further questions regarding milfoil to the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

Since meeting in September, the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship has become responsible for additional water, land, fish, and wildlife authorities. The attached

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outlines those changes in detail. Engagement sessions will be held with local governments, First Nations and stakeholders in the coming months to review these changes and to continue on work together in these priority areas.

Again, thank you for your time. I am pleased we had the opportunity to meet about topics important to both provincial and local government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Greene". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kelly" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Greene".

Kelly Greene
Parliamentary Secretary
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Attachment (1)

pc: Honourable Nathan Cullen, Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Spencer Coyne, Vice Chair, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen