

Nareka Jacques

Subject: FW: Request for Letter of support from DoCS for TGoC funding proposal to purchase Blackwater Pump Vessel

From: Mark Brajer <mbrajer@tsartlipgoc.com>
Date: October 4, 2024 at 12:39:02 PM PDT
To: Christine Culham <Christine.Culham@csaanich.ca>
Cc: Jarret Matanowitsch <Jarret.Matanowitsch@csaanich.ca>, admin@tsartlip.com
Subject: Request for Letter of support from DoCS for TGoC funding proposal to purchase Blackwater Pump Vessel

Hi Christine ...

As you know the Tsartlip Group of Companies (TGoC) is assembling a proposal (in conjunction with the Tsartlip FN) to receive REDIP (Rural Economic Diversification & Infrastructure Program) funding for the purchase of a new Blackwater Pump Vessel for the purpose of pumping out vessels on Brentwood Bay (WSÁNEĆ Inlet), in order to improve the environmental issues in the Brentwood Bay area..

We are working to provide a funding proposal by 10.31.

We are requesting a letter of support from the District of Central Saanich for the Tsartlip Group of Companies could be invaluable toward the effort to receive funding.

Below is some of the information that will be a part of the submission.

BACKGROUND

Tsartlip (WJOLELP) First Nation ("Tsartlip") is part of the WSÁNEĆ Peoples who have lived on and around the Saanich Peninsula and its surrounding waters since time immemorial. The WSÁNEĆ Peoples are a "saltwater people". Traditional life was derived from the Salish Sea and foreshore areas of our traditional territory. As WSÁNEĆ Peoples, Tsartlip ancestors had a traditional diet and way of life centered on seasonal and sustainable harvesting of marine-based species in and around the WSÁNEĆ (Saanich) Inlet (the "Inlet"). Since the 1950s, increasing marine traffic and pollution in the Inlet have negatively impacted both the population density and health of the local marine species. This has had a significant impact on the ability of present-day Tsartlip members to live in accordance with our traditional ways. Tsartlip's long-term strategic vision is to resume control and management of the lands and waters of our traditional territory. In the short-term, Tsartlip has identified marine pollution in the Inlet as an urgent priority. A significant source of pollution in the Inlet is the discharge of black water by pleasure crafts. Reasons for this include the lack of enforcement and lack of pump-out services for pleasure craft users. As such, the Tsartlip Group of Companies (TGoC) has prioritized the purchase of a blackwater pump out vessel.

THE NEED

Historically, Butchart Gardens provided pump out services in the Inlet. However, they ceased to provide this service and donated their pump out vessel to Tsartlip in September 2022. The donated vessel allowed Tsartlip to train members and other staff on the delivery of pump out services and to confirm that there is a demand for these services in the area. However, the aged vessel is no longer functional. The engine and the pump itself are at the end of life and the vessel needs to be replaced. Currently no one is offering these services in the Inlet and there are growing concerns of pollution. Tsartlip Group of Companies plans to purchase a new vessel that will be used for

environmental stewardship of the Inlet and WSÁNEĆ traditional territory. Tsartlip sees the need as being immediate and would like to start using the vessel by Spring 2025 when we see more boat traffic with the start of the tourist season. Black water is often dumped directly into the Inlet from these and other vessels.

The Blackwater has caused many negative impacts to aquatic habitat and marine life, which adversely impacts our traditional sustenance, social, ceremonial, and commercial activities. In recent years, there have been various partial and year-round shoreline closures for shellfish harvesting in the Inlet. In 2021 alone, there were multiple temporary and annual closures in various areas of the Inlet for butter clams, geoducks, horse clams, littleneck and manilla clams, cockles, razor, softshell and varnish shellfish, and scallops. Despite the closures, many members still consume shellfish and other marine species from the Inlet which may be linked to adverse health impacts. Both the District of Central Saanich (DoCS) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) have communicated to Tsartlip that they are interested in seeing this service delivered and enforced. Further, there have been requests from Parks Canada and other communities to provide these services in and around Mill Bay and Cowichan Bay. There is much interest by other communities in providing this service.

BENEFITS

Tsartlip Group of Companies sees the benefits of acquiring a pump out vessel as being numerous, including providing revenue for Tsartlip FN, employment opportunities for members and others, contributing to decreasing marine pollution, and restoring aquatic habitat and species to the point that Tsartlip and other WSÁNEĆ communities can harvest as provided for in the Douglas Treaties. Further, Tsartlip FN is negotiating with Canada and BC at a Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination (RIRSD) table. One of Tsartlip's strategic priorities expressed at the RIRSD table is to revitalize and live in accordance with our traditional ways of life, subsistence practices, and stewardship of our lands and waters. While Tsartlip has long-term strategic goals related to assuming greater jurisdiction over, and environmental stewardship of, Brentwood Bay and the Inlet, Tsartlip has identified the protection of the Bay and the Inlet as short-term goals as well. Given the centrality of the waters and marine species of the Inlet, Tsartlip is prioritizing the sanitation and health of these polluted waters.

SUMMARY

Tsartlip Group of Companies sees acquiring a pump out vessel as allowing TGoC to be leading the effort to keep the Inlet clean for future generations, and the entire region. Tsartlip places extremely high value on having a pristine and clean Inlet which we have inhabited since time immemorial. We see the purchase and operation of a pump out vessel to alleviate some of the current pressure Tsartlip and neighbouring communities are facing from black water and other pollution in the Inlet.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

HÍSWŪŪ SIÁM (Thank You) ... Mark

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I respectfully acknowledge that I live on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen speaking Peoples, currently being the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, and have acknowledge that I have the privilege of working with gratitude, on the unceded, traditional territory of the WJOLELP and WSÁNEĆ Peoples.

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