April 08, 2014

Ralph Drew, Mayor
Village of Belcarra
4084 Bedwell Bay Road
Belcarra, B.C.
V3H 4P8

RE: WCMRC Emergency Response Plans for Oil Spills in Burrard Inlet

Dear Mayor Drew,

Further to our discussions and phone calls, we really appreciate that you share the same passion and interest in protecting the environment that we all call home. Although we have talked on the phone, I wanted to formally reply to your letter of February 25th and specifically address the points you raised.

As noted during our discussions, WCMRC is undertaking a major upgrade to the mapping system that was developed back in the late 1990's. Our long range plan is to update all our Area Plans for the entire 27,000 km of B.C.'s coastal shoreline. Our strategy is to address the higher risks areas first such as Burrard Inlet, Southern Georgia Strait, Port of Prince Rupert, Douglas Channel and Juan de Fuca Strait. We will continue to concentrate our efforts on these areas in 2014/15/16 and then expand to the inside passage and west coast of Vancouver Island. We believe it is critical to engage First Nations and municipal communities in this process and have committed to do this through their emergency planners.

I appreciate your comment on the professionalism that you witnessed as part of our day together. We are proud of our operations and the state of readiness of all our personnel and equipment. We work hard to ensure the interests of our members and the public are addressed in all the activities we undertake. This includes, but is not limited to, our commitment to exceed all regulatory requirements, to always look at opportunities to continuously improve our operations, to manage the balance between full-time and part-time staff. We are continually updating our Geographic Response Plans and strategies (GRS's). We train in-house and contracted support teams on our equipment and conduct an annual review of the strategic locations of our vessels and our equipment caches. All of these commitments ensure we are better prepared in the event there is an incident.

Regarding personnel, WCMRC will be hiring 16 additional staff in 2014, a number of which are operational roles. As for the future, WCMRC was contracted by Trans Mountain to develop an operational plan if shipping volumes were to increase due to the pipeline expansion project. WCMRC completed this plan and it forms part of Trans Mountain's submission to the National

Energy Board. Included in the plan is an increase in personnel, 24-hour operation in Vancouver Harbour & southern Georgia Strait, additional equipment and a proposal to open other equipment bases along the tanker route. All of which will enhance our capability on this coast.

As to your point of having a home base dock, I don't disagree. We are continually looking at opportunities to improve our service level. Having a home base dock with an office and small warehouse on the water would be a nice addition for WCMRC. As part of our planning for the future, we have been looking at different options and opportunities for Vancouver Harbour, the Juan de Fuca Strait and other high-traffic locations along the coast.

However, our current strategy of multiple bases with vessels moored throughout Burrard Inlet has served our on-call structure very well, as evidenced by our history of response times.

To your final point of having a land locked warehouse. Our current warehouse serves as a hub for Burrard Inlet, Fraser River, Deltaport, southern Georgia Strait, the Sunshine Coast and as back up for other coastal community packages. Unless there was an ideal site on the water, I do not foresee us not having a secondary warehouse, which includes our training facility and a large enough yard to store the multiple trailers full of equipment that are ready to be dispatched anywhere.

Ralph, I hope this summarizes our conversation. I really do appreciate our conversations and your support in helping raise our profile and effectiveness in Burrard Inlet. We look forward to your next visit.

Sincerely,

Kevin Gardner
President, WCMRC