



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

July 22, 2025

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin
Minister of Environment and Climate
Change Government of Canada
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The Honourable Tamara Davidson
Minister of Environment and Parks
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The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
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The Honourable Joanne Thompson Minister
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Mario Pelletier
Commissioner, Canadian Coast Guard
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Dear Ministers and Commissioner,

Re: Urgent Call for the Restoration and Expansion of a Derelict Vessel Removal Program

As the Mayors of the City of Mission and the City of Maple Ridge, we write in the wake of two recent fires aboard derelict ferries in Mission and the sinking of the former McBarge in Maple Ridge. These incidents underscore the worsening crisis of abandoned and derelict vessels in our waterways, a challenge that increasingly burdens many coastal and inland communities across Canada.

These vessels pose growing threats to the environment, public safety, and economic development in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. They remain indefinitely in rivers and moorage areas, often due to unclear jurisdiction, ineffective enforcement, and the absence of accessible funding for removal.

Until senior governments take coordinated and meaningful action, municipalities will continue to bear the costs of an unsolvable burden - responding to costly emergencies, securing sites, policing vandalism, trespassing, and squatting. For these reasons, we urge the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia to collaborate—alongside municipalities and First Nations—to restore and expand a robust **Derelict Vessel Removal Fund**, with the following key components:

1. Reinstatement of a Dedicated Removal Fund

Many vessel owners are no longer financially capable of maintaining or removing their boats. Without a well-funded and accessible removal program, local governments are left to absorb the environmental, legal, and economic costs.

2. A Collaborative, Team-Based Approach to Enforcement

The current patchwork of authority creates confusion and inaction. We recommend establishing clear structures for **intergovernmental response teams**, including local, provincial, and federal officials, the Coast Guard, and Transport Canada, to coordinate and expedite removals.

3. Strengthened Enforcement and Accountability

We ask that you increase penalties for vessel owners who abandon or neglect their vessels and consider requiring bonding or insurance to ensure future removal costs can be covered. We ask also that you consider redirecting fine revenues to expand enforcement capacity and fund removals.

These vessels do more than degrade our shorelines. They obstruct navigable waters, limit development, deter tourism, and impact adjacent property owners and businesses. More and more communities are confronting these challenges without a clear path forward.

We believe that a renewed, well-resourced program—backed by clear policy, shared leadership, and a collaborative approach—will protect our waterways, support economic development, and uphold public safety.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further. We encourage your ministries to work with the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), the Fraser Valley Regional District, Metro Vancouver, and local First Nations to bring more voices and solutions to the table.

Sincerely,



MAYOR DAN RUIMY
CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE



MAYOR PAUL HORN
CITY OF MISSION

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CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE | CITY OF MISSION

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