



Hon. Doug Donaldson, BC Minister of Forests, Lands,
Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development
Room 248 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

September 10, 2018

Dear Minister Douglas:

The Fraser River runs through our two communities where the members of the Abbotsford Mission Nature Club live, volunteer and advocate for nature. As such, we are very aware of the Fraser River's ecological diversity, significance, and vulnerability, particularly the gravel reaches from Mission upstream to Hope, branded as the Heart of the Fraser by conservationists, recreationists, and tour operators. We know that this reach is one of the most productive stretches of river anywhere in the world. The Heart of the Fraser is a prime spawning habitat for salmon and the endangered white sturgeon, and it supports valuable cultural, aesthetic, and recreational opportunities. We have enjoyed first hand its salmon, ancient sturgeons and the flocks of waterfowl and shore birds that depend on this environment during migration and year around.

While this part of the river deserves the highest level of protection there are sadly many serious threats. We are aware of the recent extensive clearing of two islands in the Heart of the Fraser - Herrling and Carey Islands. We have now learned about plans to develop these islands facilitated by new bridges. It is hard for us to imagine, given all we know about the value of this reach that there would even be the possibility of development of any kind, including agriculture, in this critical spawning habitat. So much work has been done over the past decade to increase public awareness of the importance of the Fraser River through inspirational visions including Heart of the Fraser and Experience the Fraser, multi-faceted initiatives to help celebrate the Lower Fraser River and foster stewardship.

We call upon the Province of BC and Canada to seize this opportunity to not only reject the bridge proposals but defer development of these islands permanently by acquiring and protecting them in collaboration with local First Nations, local communities and supporters of the river.

Yours respectfully,

Hank Roos
President,
Abbotsford Mission Nature Club

c.c. Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Hon. Mike De Jong, MLA Abbotsford West
Jati Sidhu, MP Mission-Matsqui-Fraser Canyon
Jason Lum, Chair, Fraser Valley Regional District