NEWSOME CREEK
Watershed
Action Group

Honourable Doug Donaldson
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
PO Box 9049 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC, V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Donaldson,

We are writing you to ask you to take actions immediately which will help ensure we do not lose our lives, homes, businesses or properties when the 2019 spring freshet occurs in Newsome Creek in Sorrento BC. The current situation is quite serious, and our concern is if actions are not taken before the 2019 freshet we will see our properties destroyed as they tumble into Newsome Creek ravine.

It seems to us that the Province is not living up to its responsibility in this matter. We understand that the Newsome Creek bed, and the water itself, is under the authority and responsibility of the Province as outlined in the Water Act. Would this responsibility not fall under your Ministry? It is also our understanding that we couldn't even begin to do any mitigative works on our own, without substantial interactions and approvals from the Province. This certainly suggests that it is the Province, in fact, that has the authority and responsibility here.

We have met with local representatives from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, and they indicated that there was nothing they could do to help us. We are also aware of the correspondence your office has exchanged with our local CSRD director, Paul Demenok, and we are very disappointed that the urgency of our predicament does not appear to be a consideration. The various funds you suggested that we should access don't address our problem in the required timely manner. Again, if the 2019 freshet is similar to those seen in 2017 and 2018, we will lose our property. This is an emergency works scenario requiring immediate actions.

EMBC, to their credit, has funded several studies in 2017 and 2018 which have recommended that mitigative actions be immediately taken in Newsome Creek. Why has no action occurred to date?

In your letter to Director Demenok you note that it is the local government which is responsible for land use planning, bylaws, zoning and develop permits. Please note that these lands were approved for subdivision by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. It should also be noted that this subdivision would not meet current standards. Your letter also noted that *"British Columbia has no legislation or policy that mandates any individual, entity of level of government to undertake hazard mitigation".* But in a previous section your letter stated that *"The Province recognizes that flood*

protection is a shared responsibility and its success is dependent on support from all levels of government as well as private property owners". We are prepared to do our part as we will absorb the costs of removing the danger trees identified in the EMBC funded study. We have already contacted a logging firm and are moving forward with a Section 11 request with DFO. We understand that the CSRD will act on our behalf to project manage and administer any further studies and mitigative works. We are now asking your ministry to step up and do its part.

What we are asking for is that emergency works funds be released to the CSRD to undertake an Emergency Erosion Mitigation Workplan which can be put into effect prior to the 2019 freshet. We are also asking that your Ministry actively assist us with all required approvals and permits to get this work done in a timely manner, and we are asking that funds be released to implement the workplan. Again, we must emphasize that we believe these emergency works need to occur before the 2019 freshet.

We would encourage you to consider the broader perspective by accessing our website at www.newsomecreek.ca. Please respond at your earliest convenience. Thank you very much for your kind and early consideration of our urgent requests.

Sincerely,

[signature]

WES & BARB BERG
2817 CHEN ROAD
SORRENTO BC
V0E 2W0