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January 18, 2016

File Number: 3070-20

Honourable Todd Stone
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
PO BOX 9055 STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister:

Re: Denman Island Cross Island Trail – “Denman Hill” Section

It has been brought to the attention of the Denman Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) that due to the identification of a “permanent shoulder failure” along the Denman Hill road grade that no further infrastructure improvements, including trail development, will be supported by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) until such time as that issue has been rectified.

It is further understood that due to the expected costs, estimated to be between \$400-500,000, and current budget constraints that the completion of the cross island trail connection up Denman Hill is on hold indefinitely. The Denman Island Trustees discussed this matter at their December 1, 2015 regular meeting and wish to register their concerns regarding this delay and encourage the Ministry to work with the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) to identify a viable solution.

The Ministry will be aware the cross island trail along Denman Road has become a critical corridor for non-motorized traffic across the island with an increasing level of use. It is the view of the LTC that the current conditions on Denman Hill are unsafe for non-motorized users of the trail a circumstance which is exacerbated by ferry traffic flows between the Denman West and Gravelly Bay ferry terminals. The Denman LTC’s work with the CVRD to develop the cross island trail has greatly reduced the potential for traffic incidents between non-motorized users and motor vehicles along the Denman Road corridor. It is the view of the LTC that completing the Denman Hill portion of the cross island trail is an important safety issue that should not be unduly delayed given the risks the current road conditions present to trail users.

Denman Ambulance Station Unit Chief Jeremy Cartier has confirmed there have been a number of traffic incidents on the hill which have required an ambulance to respond and transport people to hospital. Chief Cartier stated:

The steep grade, poor visibility and lack of cyclist/pedestrian paths are big safety concerns. When I’m responding in the ambulance or driving my personal vehicle, I’m very aware of how dangerous it is for people riding bikes or walking on either side of the road.

The LTC encourages the Ministry to work proactively with the CVRD to identify a viable solution which will allow for the connection of the cross island trail sections separated by the Denman Hill road grade in a timely fashion.

Yours truly,

Susan Morrison
Chair, Denman Island Local Trust Committee
Trustee, Lasqueti Island

pc: Denman Island Local Trust Committee
Comox Valley Regional District