



# Stop Ocean Sewage!

## Protect the Salish Sea from the RDN

### Marine Ecosystem Integrity Threatened:

The RDN is planning to construct a sewage treatment plant and pipeline that will process raw sewage to minimal government standards and then dump the waste water into the Salish Sea.

The current RDN plan is to run pipeline about 2 km south of Bowser Village Centre 'needlessly endangering two sensitive salmon bearing creeks' to an area close to Nile Creek where it will then be routed into the ocean. The planned outfall will lie 2.2 km off shore and 400 meters from the Island Scallops shellfish lease. The pipe, as planned, could potentially handle up to about 1,600,000 liters of effluent a day and about 1,600 homes.

The ocean bound effluent will contain environmentally harmful and bio-accumulative substances such as chemicals, detergents, plastics, pharmaceuticals, grease, heavy metals and potentially certain pathogenic organisms. **SOS Bowser** is concerned that once in place this sewage system will be expanded to make Bowser a waste water hub for the surrounding area and that as outfall volumes grow so will environmental health degradation.

The cumulative effect of pollutants typically found in waste water could lead to serious degradation of our marine ecosystem food chain. Micro-plastics in laundry waste water are known to be among the worst environmental offenders. These substances are consumed by the smallest zooplankton which mistake them for food. If zooplankton (the food base for juvenile salmon and other small fish) are dying off, then what will happen to the rest of the marine food chain and the marine mammals that depend on it? How will our filter feeder shellfish resources be affected? <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/wastewater/pollution.html> ; Canadian Geographic Dec. 2016, page 64, citing Dr. Peter Ross - Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Center, 2015.

The RDN continues to believe that 'dilution is the solution to pollution' and has adopted a 'desktop' engineering report from Stantec which claims that marine disposal of effluent is the only viable option due to "challenging soil conditions" in the area. We have acquired several engineering reports that were commissioned in the past to study the issue of land based sewage treatment in the area. The opinions in these engineering reports are that a land based disposal system is indeed entirely possible. Subsequently the SOS team has researched several modern green land based solutions and presented them to the RDN planners. We do not believe marine disposal constitutes either sustainable development or appropriate environmental protection.

The Salish Sea near Bowser is one of the few remaining down-Island areas not closed for unsanitary shellfish harvesting by DFO at this time and deserves protection.

## **Lack of Consultation:**

Despite overwhelmingly negative sentiment and lack of proper consultation with the residents of the affected area, and a petition signed by 17% (644) of Area H residents in opposition to this project presented to the Regional District of Nanaimo in August, bylaws were passed to proceed on Dec 12, 2017. Shamelessly, \$400,000 has just been budgeted to RDN staff to proceed with detailed engineering, design and completion of the Environmental Impact Statement for BC permitting purposes.

## **Call to Action to help protect our ocean!**

**Email or write the Federal and BC Ministers of Environment and Climate Change and the Federal and BC Ministers of Infrastructure and ask them to lead by changing funding and permitting conditions to keep Area H GREEN by stopping ocean sewage dumping! Contact your MLA your MP, the RDN and AREA H Director. Tell them your vote depends on action now! See contacts below.** (Mail can be sent postage free to any Member of the Canadian Parliament at: House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6)

**-Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change**

[Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca)

**-Honourable George Heyman, BC Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy**

Room 112 Parliament Buildings, Victoria BC V8W 9E2

[ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

**-Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities**

[Amarjeet.Sohi@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Amarjeet.Sohi@parl.gc.ca)

**-Honourable Selina Robinson, BC Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

Room 312 Parliament Buildings, Victoria BC V8V 1X4

[MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

**-Honourable Gord Johns, Member of Parliament Courtenay – Alberni**

[Gord.Johns@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Gord.Johns@parl.gc.ca)

**-Honourable Scott Fraser, BC Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation**

Room 323 Parliament Buildings, Victoria BC V8V 1X4

[IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

**-Bill Veenhof, Board Chair & Director Electoral Area H, Regional District of Nanaimo, BC**

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