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Elizabeth May

Member of Parliament / Député(e)
Saanich — Gulf Islands

Circonscription

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The Honourable Julie Dabrusin
Minister of Environment and Climate Change

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Transport

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault
Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture

June 16, 2025

Re: Rebuilding the Historic Beaver Point Wharf on Salt Spring Island, BC

Dear Ministers,

I am writing to ask for your support for federal funding for the reconstruction of the historic Beaver Point Wharf on Salt Spring Island, BC. Located on Ruckle Heritage Farm, a working farm and Class A park, this initiative is a matter of cultural and historical significance for settler and Indigenous residents and visitors to Saanich-Gulf Islands. It also has importance for emergency preparedness and maritime activities.

Beaver Point Wharf served Salt Spring Island and neighbouring communities from approximately 1890 until its decommissioning in 1951 and removal in 1960. Once a hub of transportation and trade, it supported a three-day-a-week steamship service, cargo



transport, tourism, and emergency services. It was a place where members of the WSÁNEĆ First Nations and Cowichan Tribes gathered, sold their catch, and camped along the beaches. The Wharf provided essential infrastructure for connectivity and community-building – central goals of the vision for its reconstruction in 2025, too.

Reconstructing the Beaver Point Wharf presents a unique opportunity for the federal government to invest in an infrastructure project that serves multiple critical purposes:

1. **Emergency Evacuations** – providing vital sea access for medical evacuations by boat and helicopter, which may be especially needed in intensifying wildfire seasons, when 1,000+ people camp in this National Park with limited road access.
2. **BC Hydro Access During Power Outages** – ensuring a reliable sea access point for BC Hydro crews during outages, helping expedite power restoration for residents.
3. **Recreational Boating** – offering much-needed infrastructure for local and visiting boaters, including kayakers and canoers, enhancing sustainable eco-tourism and maritime activities (*note*: Hydro cable in the cove prohibit anchorage).
4. **Indigenous Uses & Cultural Activities** – facilitating Indigenous cultural activities and sea tours, reviving traditional uses of the land and waters.
5. **Gulf Islands National Marine Park Operations** – serving as a dedicated point for Park Personnel to conduct conservation efforts, enforcement, and education programs.
6. **Park Visitor Experience & Heritage Appreciation** – creating opportunities for visitors to Ruckle Provincial Park and surrounding areas to engage with the site’s historical and cultural significance.

BC Parks’ Heritage Conservation Plan supports this reconstruction. The federal government’s role in supporting Canadian culture, administering ocean-front public wharf construction and maintenance, as well as building local emergency and climate change preparedness, makes it an appropriate initiative for federal support, too.

Recent comparable projects, such as the Russell Island dock, provide a cost reference. The \$246,849.89 spent in 2010-11 translates to approximately \$342,588.76 today – just over one third of a million. A similar investment at Ruckle, using a metal substructure with a historically appropriate wooden superstructure, would provide both modern resilience and aesthetic authenticity.

Funding from federal infrastructure and heritage programs can supplement other fundraising efforts, including contributions from provincial, regional, and local partners. Please champion Beaver Point Wharf as a meaningful contribution to



Indigenous cultural connections, Canadian heritage, environmental stewardship, and community resilience.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth May". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Elizabeth May, O.C.
Member of Parliament
Saanich-Gulf Islands
Leader of the Green Party of Canada

