



April 23, 2021

File: 5280.31

<p>The Honourable John Horgan Premier of BC PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9E1 Via email: Premier@gov.bc.ca</p>	<p>The Honourable Lana Popham Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries PO Box 9409, Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9V1 Via email: AGR.Minister@gov.bc.ca</p>
<p>The Honourable Katrine Conroy Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development PO Box 9049, Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9W2 via email: FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca</p>	<p>The Honourable George Heyman Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy PO Box 9360, Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9M2 via email: ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca</p>

Dear Mr. Premier, Minister Popham, Minister Conroy and Minister Heyman:

RE: Lack of funding – Invasive Plant Management

At its April 15, 2021 meeting, the Board of the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) discussed growing concerns that the Province is not recognizing the economic contribution agriculture makes to the province of BC.

It has come to the Board’s attention that, due to an oversight in funding allocations, there are no funds available for treatment of invasive plants on public lands by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operation and Resource Development (FLNRORD). These non-funded activities include the ongoing treatment work targeted towards known, existing, high priority areas in our region as well as the rest of the province. This dramatic oversight will result in the spread of invasive plants on FLNRORD lands going unchecked and affecting neighbouring agricultural lands.

The PRRD respectfully requests answers to the following questions from each Ministry’s perspective:

1. How can \$12 million dollars be allocated from the office of the Premier, under FLNRORD, to assist with the detection and removal of invasive plants, without allocating funds to hire trained contractors to engage in treatment activities on Crown lands?
2. Given that the funding is meant for job creation and invasive plants are continually trying to invade Crown lands (which include much needed grazing areas that support the agriculture industry); why is funding not being directed towards reinstatement of those pre-existing jobs that would normally conduct the aforementioned treatment works through contract?

It is extremely concerning that the overarching Ministry which maintains the *Noxious Weeds Act* would neglectfully be unprepared to treat invasive plants found on Crown occupied lands. Without treatment, we would respectfully point out that invasive plants know no borders and, if unchecked, will encroach neighbouring lands containing vital agriculture.

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PLEASE REPLY TO:

Box 810, 1981 Alaska Ave, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4H8 Tel: (250) 784-3200 or (800) 670-7773 Fax: (250) 784-3201 Email: prrd.dc@prrd.bc.ca
 9505 100 St, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4N4 Tel: (250) 785-8084 Fax: (250) 785-1125 Email: prrd.fsj@prrd.bc.ca

The Province should be aware that the PRRD not only has an Invasive Plant Bylaw that enforces the procession of invasive plants within the entire area of the BC Peace, it also employs staff and contractors which are designated under the *Noxious Weeds Act* to enforce on the Crown's behalf. Further, additional seasonal staff are hired annually to assist with the vast number of complaints that are received regarding invasive plant infestations on public and private lands.

This leads us to our final question: in good faith, how can a local government enforce such invasive plant removal when the Ministry housing the legislation is not even engaging in such activities?

In closing, the agricultural industry in the north provides economic benefits for the entire province. Lack of funding and cancellation of any invasive plant treatment strategy will be detrimental, resulting in increased costs of treatment work when funding does become available.

We look forward to receiving a favourable response to our concerns and questions.

Yours truly,



Brad Sperling
Regional Board Chair

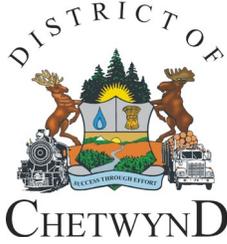
Yours truly,



Leonard Hiebert
Invasive Plant Committee Chair

c: Mr. Mike Bernier, South Peace MLA, via email: Mike.Bernier.MLA@leg.bc.ca
Mr. Dan Davies, North Peace MLA, via email: Dan.Davies.MLA@leg.bc.ca
Mr. Bob Zimmer, MP for Prince George-Peace River-Northern Rockies, via email: Bob.Zimmer@parl.gc.ca
NCLGA via email: admin@nclga.ca
UBCM via email: ubcm@ubcm.ca

Enclosures: April 21, 2021 Letter of Support, District of Chetwynd



District of Chetwynd

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April 21, 2021

Peace River Regional District
P.O. Box 810
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4H8
By email: leonard.hiebert@prrd.bc.ca

Attention: Director Leonard Hiebert – Electoral Area “D” Director

Dear Mr. Hiebert:

Re: Invasive Weed Control on Crown Land

As you described during a recent Peace River Regional District Board meeting, invasive weeds are a serious threat to biodiversity because they can spread quickly, outcompete native species and destroy the habitat, dominate natural and managed areas, and in so doing harm biological communities.

As BC's environment, people and economy can be negatively impacted by the unchecked spread of invasive weeds, we support you in urging the Provincial government to continue to provide invasive weed control measures on crown land.

Yours Truly,

Allen Courtoreille
Mayor