



December 7, 2022

Honourable Nathan Cullen
Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Cullen:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

Ensuring that we are operating on the land in a way that ensures sustainability for future generations is essential. We have seen the impacts of short-term thinking on the British Columbia land base – exhausted forests, poisoned water, and contaminated sites. These impacts don't just cost the public money to clean up and rehabilitate, they threaten the ability of entire communities to thrive and succeed.

By planning carefully, we can ensure our province enjoys the best of economic development while conserving wild spaces. Indigenous partners in this critical work can bring their expertise, knowledge, and priorities to the table to ensure this effort lasts for generations.

Working with business and industry, along with local communities, First Nations, and other key stakeholders, we will be able to ensure the reasons we're all proud to be British Columbians – our rugged nature, remarkable outdoor spaces, our wildlife and ecosystems – continue to survive and thrive for the enjoyment and sustainability of countless future generations of British Columbians.

Since your ministry was established in February 2022, your ministry, with partner ministries, has built on our government's significant progress on important initiatives including:

- Protecting wild salmon, and supporting fish and seafood innovation projects, including doubling funding for the Pacific Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund.
- Amending the *Wildlife Act* to support the integration of Indigenous Knowledge in the stewardship of our ecosystems.

- Funding coastal cleanup, clearing 4000 km of B.C.'s coastline of debris and pollution under the Clean Coast, Clean Waters initiative – totalling over 1000 tonnes of debris cleared, including 86 derelict vessels, 65% of which was recycled or upcycled – and creating close to 1300 well-paying jobs.
- Working with the Ministry of Forests to begin implementation of the recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review.

As you continue to make progress on items in the February 2022 mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Lead cross-government work to improve timing and transparency of permitting processes to support sustainable economic development, housing and infrastructure while maintaining high levels of environmental protection.
- Continue to transform the management and stewardship of our waters, lands and resources, together with First Nations, and work toward modern land use plans and permitting processes rooted in science and Indigenous knowledge that consider new and cumulative impacts to the land base.
- Lead B.C.'s work on water, watersheds, and our coast, including work to:
 - Co-develop, complete, and launch the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund and the Coastal Marine Strategy, and continue implementation of the Wild Salmon Strategy; and
 - Develop and deliver a long-term vision for the Clean Coast, Clean Waters program.
- Protect wildlife and species at risk, and work collaboratively with First Nations, other ministries, and the federal government to protect and enhance B.C.'s biodiversity through implementing recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review, and the Together for Wildlife Strategy.
- With support from the Ministers of Forests and Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Environment, develop a new conservation financing mechanism to support protection of biodiverse areas.
- Partnering with the federal government, industry, and communities, and working with Indigenous Peoples, lead the work to achieve the Nature Agreement's goals of 30% protection of BC's land base by 2030, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.

- Support the Minister of Forests to work together with First Nations to complete work to improve the protection and stewardship of forest resources, habitats, biodiversity, and cultural heritage in the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries and Aquaculture and a Parliamentary Secretary for Watershed Restoration. You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretaries receive appropriate support to deliver on the priorities outlined in the mandate letter issued to them.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Eby", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Eby, KC
Premier