



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Josie Osborne, MLA
Mid Island-Pacific Rim
3945B Johnston Rd
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 5N4

December 9th, 2020

Eleanor Haine-Bennett
150 Elgin Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5V8

Dear Ms. Haine-Bennett,

It gives me great pleasure to provide this letter supporting the continued designation of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (“the Biosphere Reserve”), established in 2000.

The creation of the Biosphere Reserve was the culmination of years of effort to recognize the incredible landscapes, histories, and cultures of the region – and the commitment of our communities and people to the principles of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve program.

Some 20 years later, the Biosphere Reserve has become an absolutely fundamental part of the region’s identity and pride. Having been a resident of Tofino for over 20 years and a political leader for almost eight years, I have personally witnessed and experienced the many and diverse positive impacts this designation has had and how it is inspiring an entire generation of children and youth who have lived their entire lives in a Biosphere Reserve.

The people of our region – in both First Nations and non-Indigenous communities - have worked together over the past decade to advance the objectives of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve program, particularly through the programs of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust. Three particular highlights to me include:

- The creation and establishment of volunteer advisory committees to guide decision-making around programs and investments into the region in areas such as research and monitoring, language and culture, and youth. These committees have become models of citizen engagement.
- The Vital Signs report series, a biennial publication of data that are critical to understanding the health and wellness of people and landscapes in the Biosphere Reserve, and have become instrumental in decision-making for municipal and First Nation governments alike.
- The September 2017 Regional Gathering, a gathering of community members from across the Biosphere Reserve that was grounded in the spirit of reconciliation and peace building. This significant event helped address a need for ongoing healing and reconciliation within and between the communities of the region.

As mayor of Tofino from 2013-2020 I was always proud to say I was mayor of a community in the heart of a Biosphere Reserve, and now I am even more privileged to be MLA of a riding that overlaps with both of British Columbia's two Biosphere Reserves.

Please consider this letter as my full support of the continued designation of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region.

Should you have any questions about this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at josie.osborne.MLA@leg.bc.ca.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Josie', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Josie Osborne, MLA
Mid Island-Pacific Rim

jo:am
BCGEU

cc: Clayoquot Biosphere Trust