



March 18, 2020

Honourable John Horgan, Premier  
Province of British Columbia  
West Annex, Parliament Buildings  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier,

The University of Victoria is a long-standing member of the Western Canadian Universities Marine Sciences Society that owns and operates the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre (BMSC). BMSC provides life changing and award winning education and research in the remarkable community of Bamfield. For more than 40 years, UVic faculty and students have travelled to the community of Bamfield and participated in research, undergraduate and graduate-level credit courses, workshops and field trips. As you know, the tragic bus this past September resulted in the deaths of two of our undergraduate students, Emma Machado and John Geerdes, and significant injuries to many of the other students on the bus. Since the accident, the UVic community, with our colleagues at BMSC, have been working together to support one another through extremely difficult times.

We applaud you for visiting the community and driving the road last November and having the foresight to recommend that the Bamfield Road Reconciliation Working Group be brought together. We appreciate the advocacy for critically required road improvements of the Bamfield community, and in particular the leadership of local First Nations, including Chief Councillor Robert Dennis from the Huu-ay-aht First Nations, as well as local municipal government (Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District) and the BMSC.

We understand you have the recommendations made for improvements to the road and the University of Victoria would like to add its strong support for these improvements. As others have publicly stated, an immediate investment in infrastructure improvement to this essential transportation corridor is required. Such a crucial investment is required to address risks, promote safety and community cohesion, support academic and research excellence, and honour relationships and reconciliation with our First Nations communities. The recommendations put forward have addressed all issues, including jurisdiction, and there is a plan ready to implement. All that is required from the Government of BC is the funding to act now.

An investment in the vital corridor will ensure an appropriate response to the current concerns regarding the risk and safety of the road. We appreciate there are pressing matters that require the Government of BC's care and consideration and we respectfully request that this investment is made in a timely manner.

We would be very willing to meet to discuss this matter further.

With respect,

Jamie Cassels, QC  
President and Vice-Chancellor

c: Minister Melanie Mark, Minister for Advanced Education, Skills and Training  
Minister Claire Trevena, Minister for Transportation and Infrastructure

