



Vancouver Island Regional Library

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Central Coast Regional District

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April 16, 2014

The Honourable Todd Stone
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
P.O. Box 9055 Stn Prov. Govt.
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

Original sent via email: todd.stone.mla@leg.bc.ca

Re: Impact of Proposed BC Ferries Service Reductions on VIRL Branches and Services

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL), I would like to submit the following report: Impact of Proposed BC Ferries Service Reductions on Vancouver Island Regional Library Branches and Services. The report is an assessment of impact following a recent BC Ferry service reductions proposal.

According to the report, the currently planned reductions in ferry services will have an impact on our branches' hours of operation and delivery of services provided to communities we serve.

Vancouver Island Regional Library is comprised of 38 branches, servicing over 430,000 community members on Vancouver Island, Haida Gwaii, Central Coast (Bella Coola) and the neighbouring gulf islands. With over 360 employed within our system, many of our staff reside in rural areas or small islands. In addition, our large regional library system (the fourth largest in British Columbia) networks with dozens of public and academic libraries throughout Canada through the interlibrary loan program; a valuable and cooperative initiative that grants greater access to literature and materials for smaller, rural communities and library systems. In sum, staff, the community and other libraries are dependent on VIRL's ability to facilitate library services and the exchange of materials.

Board Meeting
MAY 08 2014
CCRD ITEM F(a)

Strong Libraries ■ Strong Communities

We would ask to have an opportunity to represent our 38 branches unilaterally in a discussion that will mitigate or reduce the negative economic and social impact these reductions will have for the benefit of the communities we serve.

Thank you for your consideration, on behalf of all of our constituents.

Regards,



Bruce Jolliffe
Chair, Vancouver Island Regional Library Board of Trustees

Cc: Vancouver Island Regional Library Board of Trustees
Rosemary Bonanno, Executive Director
Adrian Maas, Director of Finance
Harold Kamikawaji, Director of Human Resources



Impact of Proposed BC Ferries Service Reductions on Vancouver Island Regional Library Branches and Services

Background:

BC Ferries has announced a number of reductions in ferry service on its minor and northern routes as part of an initiative to save \$19 million. The proposed changes are expected to be implemented between April 2014 and April 2016 and will impact several communities to which Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) provides service. This report identifies the potential impact to VIRL branches and operations.

Vancouver Island Regional Library serves 430,000 people on Vancouver Island, Haida Gwaii and the Central Coast (Bella Coola) through 38 branch libraries, an eLibrary and a *Books by Mail* service. Many of VIRL's branches are located in communities that depend on ferry service to access and receive resources. The communities of Gabriola Island, Hornby Island, Quadra Island, Cortes Island, Bella Coola, Sandspit, Port Clements and Queen Charlotte City will be impacted directly by the planned reductions in ferry service.

Conclusion:

The currently planned reductions in ferry services will have an impact on branch hours of operation and delivery of services provided to communities impacted by the cuts. For example, the proposed changes to ferry service to Gabriola Island will require employees to put in a 13 hour day to cover an 8 hour shift when travel between Nanaimo and Gabriola Island is required.

It is unlikely and unreasonable to expect that employees would accept shifts under such circumstances. As such, work schedules and hours of service may have to be altered. There are also concerns of limited access for library members and other staff who are dependent on ferry service to / from Campbell River, Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland, Gabriola Island, Union Bay and any branch in a community close to a ferry service that is subject to reductions. In these situations, members and staff may have reduced hours available to them to visit or work at a library branch.