

From: whaig@telus.net [mailto:whaig@telus.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2008 1:05 PM  
To: Transportation, Minister TRAN:EX  
Cc: OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; Vancouver sun; Povince; delta  
optimist; south delta leader; Guy Gentner; Lois Jackson; Michael Sather  
Subject: Re: 163107 - South Fraser Perimeter Road

Dear Mr Falcon,

Thank you for your reply to my letter. I find it curious that you believe I need a better understanding of these projects. I assure you I have taken care to educate myself and wish to address the folly of your plans for Delta. In Delta we do not believe construction of the SFPR will alleviate traffic congestion as you suggest. Since 40% of trucks from Deltaport head through the Massye Tunnel, how will a highway going in another direction ease traffic?

The SFPR is planned to go close to homes, schools and playgrounds and will affect the health of all our residents. The Livable Region Coalition has recently released a report which states in part, 'Public comments by Premier Gordon Campbell that the Gateway program will improve air quality are not borne out by any analysis made available to date. All air quality improvements claimed under Gateway would happen even if the mega-project did not go ahead, due to policies already in place, whereas the project will actually reverse some of these projected air quality improvements. In its critique of a Gateway study on air pollution, Health Canada asserts that, "the misdirected focus of this assessment is inappropriate and may be misleading to the general reader." '

It is important for you to realise, Mr Falcon, that the need for such massive port expansion is highly questionable. If you go to [www.againstportexpansion.org](http://www.againstportexpansion.org) you will find a thoroughly-researched analysis which demonstrates that Terminal 2 is not needed now nor in the foreseeable future. It states, 'There is potential port capacity on the BC West Coast of 10.7 mill. TEUs per year, with between 6 - 6.7 mill TEUs of that capacity at Vancouver area ports. This is more than enough to handle expected container growth.'

Furthermore, I am astonished that you claim to be working closely with local municipalities. I refer you to a presentation by Delta Mayor Jackson to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Communications. She said, 'We have also expressed our concerns regarding the many negative impacts on the lives of Delta residents, the disregard and devastation of heritage sites and buildings, the possible alienation of ecological communities on land and in waters, and the lack of meaningful consultation with and participation by Delta and Lower Mainland residents and voters in what should be, but is not, a democratic process.' Do those sound like the words of a local politician who was enjoying a close and satisfying relationship with your government? Delta residents do not share your confidence in the environmental review process. The approval of Deltaport's 3rd berth proposal clearly exposed a deeply flawed system. Terminal 2 should not have been withdrawn from the assessment of cumulative effects but should have been taken into account, along with the SFPR, proposed container storage lots and railyard. An independent assessment of all those projects has not been carried out and needs to be ordered immediately. Given the sheer magnitude of what is proposed, it is difficult indeed, to understand how removal of thousands of acres of farmland from the ALR will 'enhance the area's agricultural productivity.' We will need that farmland. A recent report by the National Geographic Society warns that studies predict the Southwestern U.S. is descending towards drought conditions, making it vital that we protect all farmland for a sustainable food supply. Scientists report that the world's food situation is bleak. Already we see food prices rising with rising oil prices and the trend towards using farmland to produce biofuels will be disastrous. As the New York Times' editorial in yesterday's edition states, 'The human costs of this diversion of food into energy are all too evident.' and 'Prices have gone so high that the World Food Program, which aims to feed 73 million people this year, said it might have to reduce rations or the number of people it will help.' Clearly this is not the time to be paving farmland. Lastly, considering the devastation your government plans to impose on this community, it is unbelievable to me that you and the Premier have not yet convened a public meeting in Delta to hear for yourselves the concerns and frustrations of its residents. I look forward to continuing this dialogue with you in that format,

yours truly,  
Wilma Haig  
Ladner BC

Dear Wilma:

Premier Gordon Campbell has asked me to respond on his behalf to your recent correspondence regarding the South Fraser Perimeter Road (SFPR), a project under my ministry's Gateway Program.

I'd like to briefly address the points you raise and also provide you with a better understanding of this project, why it's so important and why we've made the decisions we have.

As I'm sure you're aware, the population in the Lower Mainland has been growing steadily, and so has road congestion. This congestion has had a significant impact on people in Delta and Surrey, particularly from the truck traffic travelling along Highway 17 and River Road. A better route to connect the port to Highway 1 has been talked about for a long time, and our government has chosen to act. Our plans will alleviate current traffic problems and provide the infrastructure necessary to meet the region's transportation needs well into the future.

It's also important to note that increased Asia-Pacific trade is creating opportunities for expanding the economy. Realizing these opportunities requires the expansion of ports in British Columbia. As a result, container traffic through B.C. ports is expected to increase by 300 per cent over the next 15 years. We will need all of our ports to handle that level of trade, and we'll need safe, efficient infrastructure in place to move the people and goods effectively. The SFPR and the expanded Deltaport will play a key role in capturing opportunities to expand the economy and improve the quality of life in British Columbia.

Many people believe that increased trade will mean more pollution, as there will be more trucks on the road and more diesel particulate in the air. The fact is, over the long term, cancer risks from vehicle emissions are expected to decrease and human health is expected to improve, whether the SFPR is built or not. This is due, in part, to changing statutory requirements and better emission control technology.

That said, we still need to be sure developments that affect local communities are done responsibly, and social, environmental and agricultural impacts must be taken into account. My ministry is committed to making sure those needs are met. As a part of the SFPR, for example, we're working closely with local municipalities, TransLink and other important stakeholders. Throughout this process we're also holding public consultations, so we can be sure to hear everyone's views and take them into consideration as the project progresses.

The provincial government is also working to protect the environment, and we're regularly reviewing our plans to see if they can be improved upon. After extensive consultations with the Greater Vancouver Regional District, the Ministry of Environment and the Canadian Wildlife Service, a portion of the SFPR's alignment has been shifted farther to the west of Burns Bog in order to further minimize any potential effects of this project. In addition, we've developed more detailed design concepts for the portion of the SFPR that will be located near Burns Bog, and these concepts include proposals for mitigating environmental impacts.

To ensure we have as little impact on the environment as possible, all Gateway projects will undergo a thorough environmental review, and issues like pollution, noise and the effects on vegetation and wildlife will be addressed rigorously. Environmental applications, accompanying studies and reports are available on the BC Environmental Assessment Office web site at <http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca>.

I'm also pleased to tell you that our Gateway team has been meeting with representatives from the Delta Farmers' Institute and local farming community. They're working together to mitigate any negative effects the SFPR may have on agricultural land and enhance the area's agricultural productivity.

Finally, I'd like to address the alternate alignment proposed by Mr. Hoover and Mr. Naas, as some feel that their ideas were not given due consideration. That, again, is not the case. The Hoover/Naas plans have been analyzed thoroughly, as have other proposals, to determine whether they're appropriate for the South Fraser Perimeter Road.

Based on as the results of extensive and in-depth internal and independent studies, we've found the Hoover/Naas proposal simply does not meet the transportation and safety needs of the region nor our goals for this important project

On the other hand, the SFPR will decrease travel times and reduce congestion on other routes such as Highway 91 and River Road. It will ease traffic concerns by moving more trucks and ferry traffic away from the existing Highway 17 and Ladner Trunk Road, better separating this regional traffic from local traffic in the community.

The SFPR provides a significantly faster and more efficient route to Delta's key industrial areas along River Road as well as increased safety for all traffic in the area. The Hoover/Naas proposal to limit truck access to the George Massey Tunnel would significantly impact the transportation services necessary for a strong economy.

I hope this has helped to address your concerns. However, if you have any further questions or concerns about this matter, you may wish to visit my ministry's web site at <http://www.gatewayprogram.bc.ca>. If you can't find the answers you're looking for, Gateway Program staff would be pleased to assist you. You can contact them by telephone at 604 775-0471 or by e-mail at [info@gatewayprogram.bc.ca](mailto:info@gatewayprogram.bc.ca).

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Best regards,

Kevin Falcon  
Minister

Copy to: Premier Gordon Campbell