



Minister George Heyman

PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Gov
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
By Email: ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca

November 12, 2021

Re: Land application of biosolids

Dear Minister Heyman,

Over the past 12 months I have been in regular contact with the Peninsula Biosolids Coalition and its members regarding their concerns over the continued use of land application to dispose of biosolids on the Saanich Peninsula.

The coalition's members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including local businesses, farmers, long-time residents, environmental organizations, and elected officials from numerous levels of government. They are a collection of unlikely allies and their diversity is a strong indicator of the community concern with the continuation of the current biosolids treatment strategy.

Their interests have aligned in the name of public health and safety regarding the potential contamination of local farms, fields, and forests resulting from the land application of biosolids at Hartland landfill. However, I am concerned that through requirements that you have created, the Capital Regional District (CRD) continues to use land application without proper review or public consultation.

The Saanich Peninsula is home to several creeks and waterways that have substantial run-off into the surrounding ocean waters. The continued use of land application of biosolids to dispose of waste elevates the dangers of harmful contaminants entering local ecosystems and water supplies.

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE

9828 Fourth Street
Sidney, BC V8L 2Z3
Adam.Olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca
250-655-5600
saanichnorthandtheislands.com

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

Room 101, Parliament Bldg
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
250-387-8347
bcgreencaucus.ca

I share the Coalition's strong support of the CRD's ban on land application. In my former role as a Central Saanich Councillor, appointed to the CRD's Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission, I worked with my colleagues to get the ban on land application in place.

Our work was very much in the spirit of your quote from a letter dated April 26, 2011 in your former role at the Sierra Club. You wrote, "the land application of bio-solids seems to directly contradict the responsibility of the CRD to protect the region's farmland, natural environment and public health."

In October 2019, in response to submissions from CRD Chair Plant and directors concerning the CRD's Biosolids Beneficial Use Strategy, you said that for land application to be considered as a long-term solution, there must be consultation of citizens, local government and Indigenous communities. I am concerned that this consultation did not happen as recommended. Can you confirm that the CRD undertook the consultation process as per the Ministry's requirements?

The October letter also affirms the Ministry's position that land application is a safe and beneficial use, as justified by it meeting Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR), and being widely accepted as a form of waste disposal through British Columbia, Canada, and International jurisdictions.

The OMRR, the standard for which land application must meet, is outdated and has long been under review. If my memory serves me correctly this process was underway a decade ago when I served as a Central Saanich Councillor. It appears there is no end in sight. Ultimately, there is no guarantee that it will either prescribe the monitoring or reasonable limits to an ever-expanding list of chemicals of concern, including PAHs, PFAS, microplastics, pharmaceuticals, and other contaminants.

The CRD had a long-standing ban on land application of biosolids but recently had to rescind it due to your intervention and requirement that they consider land application.

Will you 1) reverse the requirement for the CRD to consider land application of biosolids, 2) notify the CRD that they are no longer obliged to proceed with land application, and list other potential alternative options that would satisfy provincial regulations; and 3) re-examine the practice of land application of biosolids and the OMRR that justifies its continued use as an accepted practice.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters which my constituents are deeply concerned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Olsen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line through the middle of the name.

Adam Olsen, MLA
Saanich North and the Islands