

GLASS SPONGE REEF PROTECTION

The Comox Valley Regional District board, on occasion, elects to support province-wide concerns and issues in the form of a board resolution. These resolutions are normally forwarded first to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities (AVICC) for consideration but may also be forwarded directly to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Based on the nature of the concern, UBCM will either endorse or not endorse the recommendation and if endorsed, will present the concern to the provincial or federal government on behalf of all BC municipalities and regional district.

Date of Board meeting: November 27, 2006

Board Resolution: WHEREAS reef forming glass sponges were thought to have gone extinct during the age of dinosaurs millions of years ago, recent discoveries show that reefs of these living rare glass sponges exist in nine places along the coast of BC;
AND WHEREAS these are the only known glass sponge reefs in the world, and 50% of the reefs in Hecate Strait have been destroyed by trawling activities and research indicates that those sections of the reefs may never regenerate;
AND WHEREAS the federal government has closed the reefs to bottom trawling in 2002 by implementing fishing closures, these closures must be renewed annually and do not provide permanent legislated protection;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans implement permanent legislated protection to protect the glass sponge reefs along the coast of BC;
AND FURTHER THAT this request be forwarded to Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities for consideration and subsequently forwarded to Union of British Columbia Municipalities and Federation of Canadian Municipalities for consideration;
AND FINALLY THAT the Comox Strathcona Regional District write to the Honourable Loyola Hearn, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans requesting permanent legislated protection to protect the glass sponge reefs along the coast of BC.

This resolution was referred to AVICC on, February 7, 2007

A response was received on April 23, 2007

Response from AVICC: On motion, ENDORSED at AVICC annual convention and REFERRED to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Convention.
WHEREAS reef forming glass sponges were thought have gone extinct during the age of dinosaurs millions of years ago, recent discoveries show that reefs of these living rare glass sponges exist in nine places along the cost of British Columbia;

WHEREAS there are the only known glass sponge reefs in the world, and 50% of the reefs in Hecaste Strait have been destroyed by trawling activities and research indicates that those sections of the reefs may never regenerate; and

WHEREAS the federal government has closed the reefs to bottom trawling in 2002 by implementing fishing closures, these closures must be renewed annually and do not provide permanent legislated protection;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities urge the federal government to implement permanent legislated protection to protect the glass sponge reefs along the coast of British Columbia.

Comox Strathcona Regional District,

British Columbia

2007 FCM ANNUAL CONFERENCE DECISION: Category A1;

RESOLUTION ADOPTED