



April 11, 2022

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Dear Members of the (M.ovi) Ministers' Advisory Group,

First and foremost, I wish to thank you for your participation in the Ministers' Advisory Group to develop recommendations which will help to mitigate the transmission of *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (M.ovi) from domestically produced sheep and goats to (wild) Bighorn and Thinhorn sheep. This group was established with leadership and key technical staff from the Ministries of Agriculture and Food (AF) and Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLRNORD), as well as representatives of the BC Sheep Federation, BC Goat Association, the Wild Sheep Society, and the BC Sheep Separation Program (the Program). The leadership provided by AF has ensured that the delicate balance of livestock production and wild species conservation are observed and considered within the recommendations you have submitted.

As you are aware, efforts to mitigate and eradicate the presence of this bacteria in domestic and wild sheep populations have been underway for many years. I share the widely held concern of the risk that this bacterium presents to wild species, with equal concern to the barriers that conservation efforts can place on agricultural livestock production. I thank you for your perseverance in bringing this challenging topic to an important milestone, in such a thoughtful manner. My acceptance of the recommendations presented to me on January 25, 2022, signifies the continued commitment of the Ministry to develop a policy framework to affect mitigation efforts, and to support the implementation of the 'voluntary' actions proposed by the Ministers' Advisory Group.

Further, as recommended, January 25, 2022 also marked the dissolution of the Ministers' Advisory Group, as the membership of the group now forms part of the broader Program. Ministry staff remain committed to participating in the Program, particularly in providing guidance to the future leadership role of this Program to implement and/or advise upon 'voluntary' actions such as subsidized PCR testing, education, and producer awareness initiatives. Key staff from AF and FLNRORD will continue to collaborate internally on this subject, to ensure the continuation of the progress to date.

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As you are aware, Georgina Beyers has taken on a temporary role within AF as Director, Strategic Initiatives, with responsibility for the Regenerative Agriculture and AgriTech portfolio(s). While Georgina will surely remain interested and involved in the progression of this work (as needed), I invite you to engage with Mark Raymond, Executive Director, Extension and Support Services Branch as your interim contact on M.o.vi mitigation efforts.

I look forward to the continuation of our collective effort to mitigate M.o.vi transmission and hearing of the progress made.

My sincere thanks to you again, for your commitment and dedication to the purpose of the Ministers' Advisory group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lana Popham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture and Food

cc: Peter Pokorny, Deputy Minister  
Arif Lalani, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Mark Raymond, Executive Director  
Georgina Beyers, Director  
Terri Giacomazzi, Team Lead