
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2018PREM0002-000252
Feb. 22, 2018

Office of the Premier

B.C. government moves forward on action to protect coast

VICTORIA – The provincial government will be moving forward with consultation around four bitumen spill safeguards while referring to the courts the outstanding issue around B.C.’s right to protect B.C.’s coast, Premier John Horgan announced today.

“We believe it is our right to take appropriate measures to protect our environment, economy and our coast from the drastic consequence of a diluted bitumen spill,” said Premier Horgan. “And we are prepared to confirm that right in the courts.”

Premier Horgan says his government will be retaining expert legal counsel to ready a reference to the courts, adding that it may take several weeks to bring the reference forward. This reference will seek to reinforce B.C.’s constitutional rights to defend against the risks of a bitumen spill.

Premier Horgan says this safeguard has generated disproportionate and unlawful reactions from the Alberta government, specifically their decision to ban the import of wines from British Columbia.

“The actions by the Alberta government threaten an entire industry and the livelihoods of people who depend on it,” said Premier Horgan. “We have taken steps to protect our wine industry from the unwarranted trade action by the Government of Alberta.”

“It’s not about politics. It’s not about trade. It’s about British Columbians’ right to have their voices heard on this critical issue,” said Premier Horgan. “And it’s about B.C.’s right to defend itself against actions that may threaten our people, our province and our future.”

The Premier adds that consultations will begin soon on the remaining four safeguards announced in January by Environment and Climate Change Minister George Heyman. These safeguards include:

- Spill response time
- Geographic response plans
- Compensation for loss of public and cultural use of land
- Application of regulations to marine spills

Contact:

Jen Holmwood
Deputy Communications Director
Office of the Premier
250 818-4881

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect