



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02083**

By: **Ms. Blaney** (North Island—Powell River)

DATE: **FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE CATHERINE MCKENNA**

Response by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Protection of the environment

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

World Heritage Sites represent some of humanity's most outstanding achievements and nature's most inspiring creations. In order for a property to be nominated as a potential World Heritage Site, it must first be included on a country's Tentative List. Canada is home to 18 UNESCO World Heritage sites. They represent the very best that Canada has to offer and provide opportunities for Canadians and international visitors to experience nature and learn more about our country's rich and diverse heritage.

In August 2016, for the first time ever, Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast were invited to nominate Canada's most exceptional places to be future candidates for UNESCO World Heritage Sites. A Ministerial Advisory Committee of Canadian experts in the field of natural and cultural heritage was tasked with reviewing all 42 applications received, and recommending to me which sites should be added to Canada's Tentative List. A Tentative List application for the Salish Sea was received by Parks Canada from the Salish Sea Trust.

This was a competitive process and the expert Ministerial Advisory Committee was asked to only recommend sites that they believed had the strongest potential to meet World Heritage standards and criteria. Upon review of the Committee's consensus recommendations, on December 20, 2017, I had the pleasure to announce eight additions to Canada's Tentative List. These join six places that have remained on Canada's tentative list.

While the Committee did not recommend that the Salish Sea be added to Canada's Tentative List for World Heritage Sites it did remark that the Salish Sea is rich in natural diversity and has been home to First Nations for thousands of years. The Committee also noted that Parks Canada and the Government of British Columbia are advancing a proposal for the establishment of a national

marine conservation area reserve in the southern Strait of Georgia, which encompasses a portion of the Salish Sea. The Committee further commended the Salish Sea Trust for their considerable outreach and engagement efforts and recognized the high degree of public support for the application. Non-selected sites will have an opportunity to submit a proposal again for the next Tentative List.