

Delivered by hand at the February 2, 2026 Regular Council meeting

Maintain the Moratorium: Presentation to Esquimalt Council, Monday, February 22

Mayor Desjardins and members of Council, thank you for this opportunity to address an issue raised poignantly yesterday in the minds of all who read the Islander article in the Times Colonist.

I am sure all of you are familiar with the process of risk assessment. It involves weighing two factors of a risk: Its likelihood (ranging from very likely to very unlikely) and its Severity (ranging from Negligible to Severe). The likelihood of a tanker suffering a severe loss of power in the midst of a rapid tide change in a winter storm at night, over a fault line between two tectonic plates is very unlikely, overall. But in the northwest corner of the Pacific Ocean, on the lee side of a 300 km long island the tide comes in from both directions: from the west in the Dixon Entrance, and from the South through Hecate Strait. When two waves coming from opposite directions meet, their height is the sum of the height of each wave. Two three meter waves meeting become a 6 meter wave: over 20 feet. High tides happen twice a month, during new and full moons. The highest tides happen twice a year – in May and November around here. The likelihood moves up from very unlikely to unlikely. And should it happen in the Dixon entrance in the vicinity of the Butterworth Rocks (as Stefan Labbe imagines), the damage would be absolutely catastrophic. So, what does the risk assessment matrix tell us about risk level in this case? It is a medium-high level risk. As public servants, would you want to take on that risk?

Risk assessment matrix

		Severity →				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Likelihood ↑	Very Likely	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	High	High
	Likely	Low	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	High
	Possible	Low	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	Med Hi
	Unlikely	Low	Low Med	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi
	Very Unlikely	Low	Low	Low Med	Medium	Medium

Risk Matrix Example Likelihood X Severity = Risk Level

Thank you for your time. We urge you to Join other coastal municipalities in officially opposing any softening of the Northwest Coast oil tanker ban. Thank you.

*Bruce Lemire - Elmore Esp. United Church
Justice Team*