

April 9, 2020

Happy Easter. No doubt, none of us will be doing what we might have anticipated or planned for on a lovely long weekend in the spring.

Over the past week, the SLRD has closed trails, beach access and playgrounds where we have jurisdiction to do so, as our member municipalities do the same to discourage groups, both intentional and informal, from gathering, and to help enforce the need to stay apart, to keep those in our communities throughout the region safe.

As Canadians, in this day and age, we are used to enjoying so much freedom, but right now, we're being asked to match that with accountability -- to each other. We may feel it as a loss, as a frustration, as a stoppage. But from another view, it's a powerful act of solidarity, of kindness and comfort.

We're one month in to redefining hospitality and comfort. Given the importance of tourism in our region, we're pretty well-practiced at hospitality. Closing the doors, and asking people to stay away, is not our go-to. And it's difficult. It's all difficult. Adapting to online schooling and meetings and form-filing – difficult! Having to think so carefully about what you're touching when you get gas or groceries – difficult! It's difficult to comfort a child because they can't play with their friends (and we can't assure them that it will be all be fine tomorrow), or they can't burn off some energy at the skate park or the swings. It's difficult to comfort a friend who is stressed when not able to touch each other. But it occurs to me that the biggest absence of comfort is taking place when someone has to die alone, without family or loved ones at their side, without physical touch, because we're all facing a global outbreak of a novel virus, and they contracted it. That's hard to think about. So I take comfort in the science that says – if we all hunker down at home, in our home communities, even with our cabin fever and frustration and thwarted plans, even if we're dreaming of our favourite bike ride or vista or camping spot, then we are actively preventing people from dying alone and without comfort. That's the good fight, my friends.

And while it might not look like the long weekend you had envisioned, give the gift of safety and comfort this long weekend, to all those in our region and beyond. Stay at home. Stay safe.



Tony