



Message from SLRD Board Chair, Tony Rainbow: COVID-19

October 8, 2020

On March 18, 2020, the Province of British Columbia declared a provincial state of emergency to support the provincewide response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here we are, 29 weeks later, and still in a state of emergency.

We saw spring, and then summer go by, and now we're nearing the final chapter of the year. There is still no end in sight to the pandemic which has changed so many things in its wake.

We were told to keep our distance, limit our interactions, keep our bubbles small and avoid unnecessary travel. Schools were shuttered. Non-emergency medical procedures were postponed and we were not able to visit our family members in long-term care facilities. Collectively, we did a good job and followed the rules and advice set out by B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, and we began to flatten our curve. We moved into Phase 3 of the Province's Restart Plan. Surgeries were re-scheduled. Schools re-opened in June with modified schedules and we were given the green light to explore the province over the summer.

In September, schools re-opened fully and although the number of cases continues to rise in our province, it appears as though we are well prepared to handle it. But let's be clear – COVID 19 will be with us for some time and nothing is the same as it was prior to March 18, 2020.

As Thanksgiving approaches, we might not feel that there is much to be thankful for this year. And that's understandable, but this year we need to dig deep, to see the positive and find that gratitude. Some of the things we can be grateful for include the leadership of Dr. Bonnie Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix, that we live in such a beautiful area which has made isolation more palatable, especially the ability to get outdoors and exercise; the low rates of infection in B.C., in general, but throughout the regional district in particular; and the way that our communities have pulled together to help the less fortunate.

This holiday, in particular, is one where we can, and should, make time to pause for reflection, to find some gratitude, and to be empathetic towards others.

Let's take a breath, and even if they aren't at our table, connect with those who may need to hear from us. This Thanksgiving, take a moment to make that phone call – connect with a loved one; check in on a neighbour.

We're all in this together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Rainbow". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Tony Rainbow

Chair, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District