



Naturally Yours

414 Woodlawn Drive, PO Box 280 Shelburne, NS BOT 1WO, Phone: (902) 875-3544 - Fax: (902) 875-1278

June 16, 2023

Department of Natural Resources and Renewables
3rd Floor, Founders Square
1701 Hollis Street
P.O. Box 698
Halifax, NS B3J 2T9

Attention: Honourable Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables
Email: mindnr@novascotia.ca

Dear Minister Rushton,

Re: BURN BAN LIFT

On behalf of the Council of the Municipality of Shelburne, I am writing to express Council's grave concerns regarding your department's recent decision to lift the burn ban as it relates to our municipality.

In discussion yesterday with staff at your department (Forest Protection), I was advised that the decision to lift the burn ban is done through a "science-based approach". I can completely understand and appreciate this; however, there is a "human based approach" that must be considered as well.

Only seven short days ago, the remaining evacuation order that was in place in response to the Barrington Lake wildfire was lifted in our Municipality. A phased approach to re-entry was implemented to allow those residents with damaged or lost properties priority access to the evacuation zone. We also requested that the public refrain from driving through the area for a few days following to show respect for these residents and be sensitive to their need for privacy as they tried to come to terms with their loss.

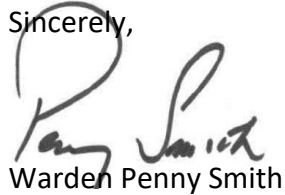
Since the lifting of this ban, a number of our Councillors have received phone calls and texts from our residents, expressing their concerns and fears about your department's decision.

I have firsthand knowledge of the tremendous pain and grief residents are feeling right now. People are experiencing a myriad of emotions - shock, guilt, anger, anxiousness, sorrow, disbelief, relief, fear, uncertainty, and many more. Even though the wildfire is now classified as being contained, our residents continue to experience profound psychological trauma from this event.

Our community has only just begun the healing process with trying to come to grips with the devastating loss; a loss for some that may take years, if ever, to recover from. Council firmly believes that lifting the burn ban at this time will have a detrimental effect on our residents' and our community's overall health and mental well-being as we deal with our loss and try to find a way to move forward together.

On behalf of Council, I implore you to reinstate the burn ban for our area until at least June 25, 2023, to be reviewed again at that time. I would also respectfully request that the Municipality of Shelburne be made aware of future decisions on this matter so that we may advise our residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Penny" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Smith".

Warden Penny Smith

c: Premier Tim Houston
c: Rick Perkins, MP - South Shore-St. Margarets
c: Nolan Young, MLA - Shelburne
c: Shelburne County Municipal Units