

RESOLUTION

DATE: MAY 16, 2011

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NEUMANN:

SECONDED BY:

6.1 By-law to Ban the Possession, Sale and Consumption of Shark Fin and all Derivative Products – Councillor Neumann

WHEREAS sharks world-wide are being slaughtered at the rate of 75-80 million a year to satisfy the market for shark fin soup and other shark fin products; and

WHEREAS sharks could be extinct in 10-15 years if the slaughter continues throwing the ecosystem of Oceans in to turmoil affecting bio-diversity; and

WHEREAS the practice of "shark finning" is a wasteful and brutal type of fishing that has been banned in Canadian waters since 1994; and

WHEREAS "shark finning" is a cruel practice that is contrary to the good morals of the citizens of Brantford; and

WHEREAS the consumption of shark fins and derivative products by humans may cause serious health risks, including mercury and toxic poisoning, and

WHEREAS the City of Brantford, being a small city far from the Oceans, appreciates the important role that sharks play in the eco-system around the world;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Staff be directed to prepare a By-law for Council's consideration to ban the possession, sale and consumption of shark fin and all derivative products.



	YES / NO
COUNC. J. VANDERSTELT	_____
COUNC. V. BUCCI	_____
COUNC. D. DIGNAN-RUMBLE	_____
COUNC. D. WROBEL	_____
COUNC. D. NEUMANN	_____
COUNC. M. CESCHI-SMITH	_____
COUNC. R. CARPENTER	_____
COUNC. D. McCREARY	_____
COUNC. J. UTLEY	_____
COUNC. L. KINGS	_____
MAYOR C. FRIEL	_____

WILDAID

To: Members of Brantford City Council

From: Phil Gillies on behalf of WildAid Canada

Re: Banning Shark Fin

Date: April 15, 2011

Dear Members of Council –

WildAid Canada, part of a worldwide conservation society, is asking your support for a motion being brought before Council by Councilors Utley and McCreary, with the support of Councilor Neumann. By adopting this motion, Brantford will become the first municipality in North America to ban the trade and possession of shark fin. The trade in this food product and its derivatives is driving shark populations towards extinction, with dire consequences for the ocean ecosystems and for mankind.

Brantford is not a coastal community; in fact it is hundreds of kilometers from the nearest ocean. But by banning shark fin, Brantford will be heralded by conservation groups worldwide as the most ecologically conscious of communities. We believe other jurisdictions will be quick to follow Brantford in taking this vital, progressive step.

- Sharks worldwide are being slaughtered at a rate of 75 to 80 million a year to satisfy the market for shark fin soup and other shark fin products, largely in China and other Asian markets. The trade is burgeoning because of the growth of a moneyed middle class in China.
- If this slaughter continues at this rate, many species of shark could be extinct within 10 to 15 years, throwing the oceans' ecosystems into turmoil and posing real problems for humanity.

- The practice of “shark finning” is a wasteful and brutal type of fishing, which consists of fishermen removing fins from the shark (which can be alive or dead at this point) and throwing the animal’s carcass back in the ocean. The prized, and very profitable fin is then brought back to port. This practice has been illegal in Canadian waters since 1994, European Community waters since 2003 and US waters since 2009. This illegal practice does continue, however, worldwide.
- Shark fin, and indeed shark flesh generally, is unhealthy for human consumption. Because sharks live a long time relative to other species of fish, and because they are a top predator that consumes other species of fauna, they accumulate very high levels of mercury and other toxins.
- The possession, sale and consumption of shark fin has been banned in Hawaii, the Marianas Islands, the Marshall Islands and Guam
- Legislation banning the possession or sale of shark fin passed the legislature and senate in the State of Washington on April 6, 2011 and is awaiting the Governor’s signature to become law. Similar legislation is going through process to passage in California and Oregon. These measures should become law between late May and October in all three states. WildAid is working with other Canadian jurisdictions to initiate legislation across Canada.
- Public opinion is pretty solidly in support of such bans, increasingly even in North American Asian communities.
- WildAid proposes that the City of Brantford fast track a bylaw to become the first jurisdiction in North America to ban the possession, sale and consumption of shark fin. Because Brantford is far from any oceans and has no obvious self-interest in this, we believe the introduction and passage of such a bylaw would demonstrate that Brantford is one of the most progressive cities on the continent with regard to conservation issues.
- WildAid would bring resources to bear to ensure that this initiative would be publicized throughout the world. Possibilities include local advertising/psa campaign, and media relations. WildAid international has offices or representation in San Francisco, London, Beijing, New Delhi, and the Galapagos Islands, as well as Toronto.

- There will be no negative economic impact of such a ban on the Brantford area. There are 10 Chinese restaurants, and 2 Japanese restaurants in Brantford and none of them serve shark fin. One Asian market in the city informs us that they used to stock shark fin, but no longer do so. There could be positive economic impact from Brantford becoming well known for taking such a positive environmental stand.

I will be in Brantford to present to Council at your meeting on Monday, May 16th. and look forward to discussing our proposal with you. Please contact me at 647-385-8474 or at philgillies@hotmail.com should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours truly,

Phil Gillies
WildAid Canada

WildAid Canada Society, B-162 John St., Toronto, ON., M5V 2E5, 647-348-WILD