

Debbie Schulz

From: Info E-Box
Sent: March 18, 2021 12:53 PM
To: Debbie Schulz
Subject: FW: Purchase and protection o fthreatened Sickle Point, Skaha Lake, Okanagan Valley.B.C.

From: margaretha hogeling
Sent: March 9, 2021 12:43 PM
To: FLNRMinister@gov.b.c.ca
Cc: Rob.Fleming.MLA@leg.b.c.ca; ENV.Minister@gov.b.c.ca; Info E-Box <info@rdos.bc.ca>; Roly.Russell.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Richard.cannings@parl.gc.ca; savesicklepoint@gmail.com
Subject: Purchase and protection o fthreatened Sickle Point, Skaha Lake, Okanagan Valley.B.C.

From: Margaretha Hogeling
Penticton. B.C.

To Honourable Katrine Conroy,
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Dear Minister Conroy,

I am writing to you to request your Ministry's and the B.C. government's financial support for the purchase of the Skaha Lake foreshore marshes and riparian habitat that constitute Sickle Point. This is the last piece of such land remaining on Skaha Lake and one of the few still left in the South Okanagan. At present, the 4.8 acres are privately owned, but in receivership and other private developers are showing interest. The local community has been strongly against the private development of the Point since the 1990s. We now have what is likely the last opportunity to have this important wildlife habitat, also of considerable cultural significance for the Syilx First Nations, preserved in perpetuity primarily for its natural features.

I feel that conservation of Sickle Point is urgent for the following reasons:

Sickle Point is a unique wetland-riparian area left on Skaha Lake, loved by the local population, including birders and naturalists from all over the region.

I would hate to see more damage done to this unique property that has (Red-Listed) Water Birch-Wild Rose vegetation, which is critical habitat for the Federally listed (Endangered) Yellow-breasted Chat. Other species at risk at Sickle Point are Lewis's Woodpecker, Western Rattlesnake, Pallid Bat, gopher snake, and Western Screech-Owl.

As well, the Point has areas of shallow water that support cattail and bulrush stands now rare along the Okanagan Lakes chain and critical habitat for a wide range of wildlife and fish.

Sickle Point is culturally important to the people of snpink'tn, Syilx Nation having been used for hundreds of generations for a variety of purposes.

An **unauthorized** road built by a developer through the Crown wetlands between the KVR right-of-way and the lake to Sickle Point should never have been allowed in my opinion. Who let this happen? Was this developer fined, I wonder?

To date over 200 people, some who do not even live in the immediate area, have pledged almost \$300,000. While this amount is a long way from the approximately \$2.5 million asking price for the property, it indicates the importance of this piece of land to people in the South Okanagan. To save this precious, increasingly rare, type of lakeshore land in the South Okanagan before the opportunity disappears, we need the help of your government to purchase it so that it may be restored to its former glory as wildlife habitat.

If possible, I also request that there be an immediate stay on any development of sickle Point under the Environmental and Land use Act, to protect this last example of rare habitat before it is lost forever.

Yours truly,
Margaretha Hogeling

CC:
Hon. Rob Fleming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Hon. George Heyman, Minister Environment and Climate change
RDOS Board of Directors
Roly Russell, MLA Boundary Similkameen
Richard Cannings, MP, South Okanagan West Kootenay