

## Debbie Schulz

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**From:** Info E-Box  
**Sent:** April 13, 2021 9:19 AM  
**To:** Debbie Schulz  
**Subject:** FW: URGENT: Purchase and protection of threatened Sickle Point, Skaha Lake, Okanagan Valley, BC

**From:** Shira Newell-Wallace  
**Sent:** April 12, 2021 1:41 PM  
**To:** FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca  
**Cc:** Premier@gov.bc.ca; Rob.Fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca; ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca; IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca; Roly.Russell.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Richard.cannings@parl.gc.ca; Info E-Box <info@rdos.bc.ca>; Save Sickle Point <savesicklepoint@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** URGENT: Purchase and protection of threatened Sickle Point, Skaha Lake, Okanagan Valley, BC

**From:**

Shira Newell Wallace

Kaleden BC V0H 1K0

April 12, 2021

**To:** The Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, [FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

**Subject:** URGENT: Purchase and protection of threatened Sickle Point, Skaha Lake, Okanagan Valley, BC

Dear Minister Conroy:

I am increasingly saddened and disheartened that the BC government has not actively addressed the over 100 letters sent, pleading for help with saving the important Sickle Point wetlands from development. Acting quickly is of great importance as this is the last piece of such land remaining on Skaha Lake and one of the few still left in the Okanagan. At present, the 4.8 acres are privately owned, but in receivership, with **private developers showing interest**.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW.**

Please allow me to outline two key issues, as I see them:

1. firstly, obstruction of the Kettle Valley Railway (KVR) trail and
2. secondly, destruction of the Sickle Point wetlands, an historically important area.

The KVR trail which was intended to be a walking and cycling path, would become an active driveway for vehicles as the designated easement to Sickle Point.

Can you imagine walking with small children, bird watching or riding your bike, and suddenly a car drives past you or a truck goes by pulling a trailer, or what about a large RV? Any development at Sickle Point would mean there would be motorized traffic on the KVR trail.

### **Is the BC government concerned about this safety issue?**

The historic KVR, part of the Great Canadian Trail, formally the Trans Canada Trail, is one of the gems of the area. In Kaleden, homes have recently been built on the original KVR trail, which has already diverted cyclists and walkers onto the roadway. It is a slippery slope before more areas of the KVR become unsafe to walk and cycle along.

### **Does the BC government consider protecting the KVR trail a priority?**

Sickle Point is the last intact wetland and riparian ecosystem remaining on Skaha Lake. It is home to Red Listed and Species at Risk, plants and birds including the endangered Yellow-breasted Chat.

**Can you help me understand why the BC government has remained silent** even though the South Okanagan Similkameen Biodiversity Conservation Strategy has given its highest ranking for Ecological values to Sickle Point. Also, the hydrological study (February 2020) by the Okanagan Basin Water Board concluded that flooding of Skaha Lake is likely to increase significantly as climate change continues.

If you did not already know, there is a 15% chance that the noted area will be flooded within the next 30 years.

Considering wetlands act like giant sponges and help reduce floods and ease the worst effects of drought, please help me understand; **does the BC government consider protecting these last remaining riparian wetlands a high priority?**

In the Penticton Herald published (Feb 20, 2021) an article stated that the "Penticton Indian Band, syilx Nation ... does not consent to development at Sickle Point. Sickle Point has been utilized by the people of snpink'tn, syilx Nation, for hundreds of generations."

**Can you also please help me understand why the BC government is not respecting nor listening to the snpink'tn, Syilx Nation?**

I have recently moved to Kaleden and enjoy the trail. I was shocked when I learned about this from locals and various other sources.

As I have also come to learn, 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 save this important wildlife habitat.

Before Sickle Point is lost forever, **we are all pleading with you to PLEASE ACT QUICKLY.**

**Intervene now, to help our community conserve these wetlands in perpetuity** and as a result keep the KVR trail free from motorized vehicles.

**Sincerely,**

**Shira Newell-Wallace**

Cc: Hon. John Horgan, Premier [Premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.bc.ca)

Cc: Hon. Rob Fleming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure [Rob.Fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Rob.Fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Cc: Hon. George Heyman, Minister Environment and Climate Change [ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Cc: Hon. Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation [IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Cc: Roly Russell, MLA, Boundary Similkameen [Roly.Russell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Roly.Russell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Cc: Richard Cannings, MP, South Okanagan West Kootenay [Richard.cannings@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Richard.cannings@parl.gc.ca)

Cc: RDOS Board of Directors [info@rdos.bc.ca](mailto:info@rdos.bc.ca)

Cc: Save Sickle Point Committee [savesicklepoint@gmail.com](mailto:savesicklepoint@gmail.com)