

Brian Paterson

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April 12, 2021

To: The Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

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

Dear Minister Conroy:

I am writing to request both your Ministry's and BC government's financial support towards 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 this time, the land is privately owned but in receivership. Our community has voiced strong disagreement regarding the development of the Point since the 1990s. We believe that this is the last opportunity to protect this important wildlife habitat and maintain the land and its natural features for future generations, as well as supporting the preservation of its cultural significance for the Sylix First Nations.

Not only is Sickle Point one of the few remaining pieces of marshland in the Okanagan, but it is also located on the KVR which is used recreationally by thousands of people year-round from tourists and locals alike. This area is only for non-motorized traffic, however should Sickle Point be developed it would create much more traffic, reduce the value of the trail for recreation, and potentially become more dangerous. As a retired educator from Okanagan Falls Elementary, I regularly brought children on bicycle trips and hikes to look at the rock formation along the way, beaver dams, plant life, and the marshlands at Sickle Point. We have an amazing ecological opportunity along this public trail... it would be a terrible shame to lose that.

To date, over 200 people have pledge almost \$300,000 towards the proposed purchasing of the land. We need the help of your government to purchase the precious land before the opportunity disappears so that it may be restored to its former wildlife habitat.

I also request that there be an immediate stay on any development of Sickle Point under the Environment and Land Use Act, to protect this last example of a rare habitat before it is lost forever.

Sincerely,
Brian Paterson

